

BACK TO BETHEL - 2



BACK TO BETHEL - Gen.35: 1-5

Jacob first met God at Bethel on his way to Laban, his uncle in Haran - **Gen.28: 10-22**.

Then, he saw a ladder spanning heaven and earth. He realized God could help him and so, prayed to God for help and vowed

Subsequently, Jacob forgot God and resorted to self-help while with Laban.

Jacob forgot his vow also.

Jacob met God again at Bethel when returning from Haran and wrestled with the Angel of God who blessed him and changed his name from Jacob to Israel.

Again, Jacob forgot this unique encounter with the Angel of God after gaining some rest and respite.

How we behave like Jacobs a lot of times? Little success and temporary victory inflate us and we forget God. We forget our promises and we forget God also.

However, eventually, 30 years after his first encounter, God appeared to Jacob again and challenged him to go back to Bethel.

This challenge in itself had many implications for Jacob.

God's challenge to Jacob has implications for us also.

Meanings & Implications of Back To Bethel:

1. Back To Bethel for Jacob means and implies - Going back to The Lord (Jesus Christ) - The Only Ladder that connects man to God - **Gen.35: 1; 28: 12**. Many are still like Jacob - only religious without real personal relationship with God. Though, they come to Church

yet, they have not truly experienced Christ and be genuinely born again. Such people can come to Christ today.

2. Back to Bethel for some, especially those who once started out with God but are now backslidden means and implies - Going back to the beginning and basics of your relationship with God. It means, Go back to the House of God - where, when and how you started out with God. Go back to your First Love - **Rev.2: 4-5**. Go back to the place and time of intimate fellowship with God, from where you have wandered far away like the prodigal son (**Lk.15: 11-14**). We usually don't have much at the beginning, when we started out with God (financially & materially speaking) but we worshipped and had intimate fellowship with God. Today, many are now a mere shadow of their past; many now are only seeking for material blessing and entertainment in places of worship. Worship for them is boring! Imagine what Moses was doing on the Mountain for 40 days and nights, and imagine what we'd be doing in heaven for the whole of eternity. Come back to the place of pure worship and fellowship! The Lord Himself tells us how we should worship in **Jn.4: 24**.
3. Back to Bethel means and implies - Going back to learn how to live by faith - **Hab.2: 4; Rom.1: 17; Gal.3: 11; Heb.10: 38**. That also means learning how to live by revelation or the revealed word of God - **Matt.4: 4**. How to live trusting God, and God only and not our own wisdom or abilities - **Prov.3: 5-6**.
4. Back to Bethel means and implies - Forsaking all idols or anything that defiles and going back to God - **Exod.20: 3-5; 1Cor.10: 14**. An idol is anything that competes with God in our lives e.g. Money, material wealth, education, job, family, pleasure of life, etc.
5. Back to Bethel means and implies Changing your garments. That is, Forsaking all your bad habits and lifestyle and returning back to God. A Christian though born again can still be carnal with some ungodly habits - **Rom.7: 19 & 24; 8: 5-8**.
6. Back to Bethel means and implies - Total Separation - To separate yourself from ungodly people around you who have influenced or may influence you negatively. God is calling us also to total separation - **2Cor.6: 14-18; 1Pet.1: 15-16**.
7. Back to Bethel means and implies - Learning the Attitude of Gratitude - **Ps.116: 12-14** e.g. The 10 lepers (**Lk.17: 12-19**). It means and implies learning to be faithful in keeping our promises to both God and man also - **1Cor.4: 1-2**.