

## **BACK TO BETHEL**

### Genesis 35

Jacob is now approaching the end of his journey. He's close to one-hundred-years-old. He's fought many battles, carried many burdens, and has even received a few blessings along the way. Now after some family dysfunction and treachery almost too graphic to talk about; God has given him instructions to return to a place he's been before. God has sent him once again to a place of challenge. A place called Bethel!

God's word for us today is that we would go back to Bethel. Go back to that place in the middle of nowhere where God met you, brought you out of nothing, and set you on a course to somewhere.

### **3 PRECEPTS REFLECTED AT BETHEL**

#### **1. Bethel is a place of remembrance.**

Genesis 25:16-17

Bethel is a place where you remember how God set up shop and made a way through the desperate places of your life. I'm going back to Bethel because I need to remember some things. When life gets hard, we are inclined to search for something new to pull us out of the malaise. Maybe the key to where we are going is not learning something new but remembering something we've already seen.

#### **2. Bethel is a place of revelation.**

Genesis 35:3

Jacob has journeyed full circle. He has endured so many distresses, of which a good portion was self-inflicted. He now realizes that God was with him wherever he was. The presence of God is not a place; it's a person.

#### **3. Bethel is a place of response.**

The first time Jacob went to Bethel he was running very well. The second time he limped in. The first time he was making deals with God. He had that tremendous vision of angels on the ladder. And he also made a vow, which ensured that, if God took care of him and he returned safely, he would make the Lord his God and give Him a tenth of his profits. As Jacob limps back into Bethel, he no longer is wheeling and dealing. As a matter of fact, this time Jacob doesn't say word. He just builds an altar.