

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2004**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, ISAAC, AND JACOB**

Message Fifteen

The God of Jacob

(5)

El-bethel—the God of the House of God, the God of the Church

Scripture Reading: Gen. 35:1, 6-15, 27

- I. Everything in Jacob's life was a type to be fulfilled by us—Rom. 9:11; 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 2:21-22.**
- II. God's building is the desire of God's heart and the goal of God's salvation—Exo. 25:8:**
 - A. We were saved that we might be a part of God's building—Acts 4:10-12; 1 Pet. 2:4-5.
 - B. God's building is the Triune God as life being wrought into us so that we may become His corporate expression—Eph. 3:17a, 19b, 21.
 - C. God's building is the mingling of God with man; the principle of God's building is that God builds Himself into us and builds us into Himself—John 14:20; 15:4a; Eph. 3:17a.
- III. In Genesis 35 there is a crucial and radical turn from the individual experience of God to the corporate experience of God—the experience of God as the God of Bethel—John 14:2-3, 20; Eph. 3:17-21; 4:4-6:**
 - A. In Genesis 35:7 we have a new divine title—*El-bethel*, God of the house of God:
 - 1. Before this chapter God was the God of individuals—28:13a.
 - 2. Here God is no longer just the God of individuals but El-bethel, the God of a corporate body, the God of the house of God—Psa. 84:1-4, 10.
 - 3. When Jacob reached Bethel, he came to know God as the God of His house.
 - 4. Our God is the God of Bethel, the God of the church—1 Tim. 3:15.
 - B. Bethel signifies the corporate life, which is the Body of Christ; thus, in calling God the God of Bethel, Jacob advanced from the individual experience to the corporate experience—1 Cor. 12:12:
 - 1. The altar Jacob built at Shechem was called *El-Elohe-Israel*, the name of God as related to an individual—Gen. 33:17-20.
 - 2. The altar Jacob built at Bethel was called *El-bethel*, the name of God as related to a corporate body—35:6-7.
 - 3. The altar at Shechem was an individual altar, but the altar at Bethel was a corporate altar—the altar for the house of God.

- C. The All-sufficient God is revealed for the building of Bethel; only at Bethel is it possible for us to realize the all-sufficiency of our God—v. 11a:
 - 1. The purpose of God’s revealing Himself as the All-sufficient One is for His building; the All-sufficient God is for God’s building.
 - 2. We cannot experience the All-sufficient God in an individualistic way; in order to experience the All-sufficient God, we must be in Bethel, in the church life.
 - 3. God’s all-sufficiency requires the Body; we need the house, the building, in order to experience this aspect of Him—Phil. 1:19.
- D. The Father, the Son, the Spirit, and the church are four-in-one—Eph. 4:4-6:
 - 1. Ultimately, the church is a group of people who are in union with the Triune God and mingled with the Triune God—3:16-21:
 - a. The Father is embodied in the Son, the Son is realized as the Spirit, and They are all in us; God and man are united, mingled, and incorporated—John 14:9-11, 16-20.
 - b. The Father, the Son, and the Spirit are one and abide in us; therefore, we are four-in-one, a divine and human constitution—vv. 2-3, 20.
 - 2. Because the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are all one with the Body of Christ, we may say that the Triune God is now the “four-in-one God”; these four are the Father, the Son, the Spirit, and the Body—Eph. 4:4-6.

IV. The function of Bethel, the house of God, is to express Christ—Eph. 1:22-23:

- A. God’s ultimate goal is the expression of Christ, and the expression of Christ is not an individual matter but a corporate matter in the house of God—John 17:22; Rom. 9:23; Eph. 3:21.
- B. The bringing forth of Christ for the corporate expression of Christ will cost us our natural choice, our natural desire, and our natural life—Gen. 35:16-20.

V. After experiencing deeper and more personal dealings, Jacob entered into full fellowship with the Lord at Hebron; the fellowship at Hebron means intimacy, peace, joy, and satisfaction—v. 27:

- A. Although we are in the church life, we still need to journey on, passing through deeper and more personal dealings until we come to Hebron and enter into full fellowship with the Lord—1 John 1:3, 6; 1 Cor. 1:9:
 - 1. In the fellowship at Hebron, we enjoy wonderful intimacy with the Lord and have complete peace, joy, and satisfaction.
 - 2. Hebron is also the place where we mature in life—John 14:20; Eph. 4:13; Phil. 3:15; Col. 1:28; Heb. 6:1.
- B. The fellowship at Hebron is not only with God but also with other members of the Body of Christ—Phil. 2:1; 1 Cor. 1:9; 1 John 1:3, 7:
 - 1. At Hebron Jacob realized that he could do nothing on his own; he knew that everything had to be done in fellowship and that nothing could be done outside of fellowship—John 15:1, 5, 16.
 - 2. If our flesh has been dealt with, we will know the life of the Body of Christ, we will see the importance of fellowship, and we will realize that apart from the fellowship of the Body, we cannot live—1 Cor. 12:14-27.