

Steps Toward Revival

Brian received Christ when he was a young man. His life changed dramatically: he stopped partying and drinking, began reading his Bible, became a faithful churchgoer, and developed a network of Christian friends. He was enthusiastic about his new life in Christ. Over time, however, the “new” seemed to wear off. Brian’s Bible reading and church attendance became less regular. He was no longer as interested in spending time with his Christian friends.

Brian knew something was wrong. Spiritually speaking, he needed to get back where he had been in the early years after he was saved. He needed spiritual revival and renewal in his life.

If Brian came to you for advice, what would you tell him? If he asked how to experience revival, what would you say? In the final analysis, revival is the merciful work of God upon the heart of a straying or cold-hearted Christian; but there are some steps we can take to lead us toward revival. You will discover these steps as you learn about Jacob’s path toward revival.

Gen. 35:1 “And _____ said unto _____, Arise, go up to _____, and dwell there: and make there an _____ unto God, that _____ unto thee when thou _____ from the face of _____ thy brother.”

In Genesis 28 you learned that Jacob had a meaningful encounter with the Lord at Bethel. That was twenty years earlier.

Gen. 35:2 Jacob gave three instructions to his family & servants:
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Many ancient people owned and worshiped small statues of their gods. Rachel stole her father’s household idols (Gen. 31:19), and Jacob’s concubines and foreign servants possessed many more.

Gen. 35:3 He said they were going to **Bethel**. What was he going to do there?

Gen. 35:4 What did his family & servants give him?

In ancient times earrings often represented devotion to false gods. Under God’s protection, Jacob and his family traveled to Bethel.

Gen. 35:6 Luz was an ancient name of Bethel (Gen. 28:19).

Gen. 35:7 What did Jacob do when they got there?

In Hebrew, “*el*” means God and “*beth*” means house. Jacob called the place “*El-beth-el*,” which means “God of the house of God.”

- Gen. 35:9** What happened when Jacob worshiped at his altar?
- Gen. 35:10** “And God said unto him, Thy name is _____: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but _____ shall be thy name: and he called his name _____.”
- Gen. 35:11** God identified Himself as _____. What did He say about Jacob’s descendants?
- Gen. 35:12** What did He say about the land?

Wow! Jacob (Israel) had a personal encounter with Almighty God. Let’s see what he did to remember this important spiritual event.

- Gen. 35:14** “And Jacob set up a _____ in the place where He _____ with him, even a _____ of _____.”
- Gen. 35:15** What did Jacob call the place?

Jacob experienced revival: a real encounter with Almighty God. Were all his troubles behind him? Getting right with God doesn’t keep our troubles away, but God enables us to handle them.

- Gen. 35:16-19** As they continued southward, Jacob’s beloved wife Rachel went into hard labor. She died in childbirth but delivered Jacob’s 12th son, **Benjamin**.
- Gen. 35:22** What other trouble came into Jacob’s family?
- Gen. 35:28-29** What other heartache befell Jacob?

Concluding Thoughts: We have discovered the following steps Jacob took toward revival and what he did after revival came.

1. **Go back to where you used to be with God** (v. 1, 3). For Jacob, that meant going back to Bethel. For you, it may mean returning to regular church attendance and daily Bible reading.
2. **Put away your strange gods** (v. 2). Anything that takes God’s rightful place of love and devotion in your life is an idol. You must get rid of idols to get right with God.
3. **Be clean and change your garments** (v. 2). Stop doing unclean things and don’t wear worldly garments spotted by sin.
4. **Recall God’s blessings in the past** (v. 3).
5. **Do what’s necessary to worship God** (v. 7). Jacob had to build an altar. You must come to God through Jesus Christ.
6. **Listen when God speaks to you** (v. 9-13). Today God speaks primarily through His written Word, the Bible.
7. **Do something to remember this experience of renewal** (v. 14-15). What “pillar of remembrance” do you need to erect?

Do you need revival in your spiritual life? If you sincerely want to be right with God, then follow the steps listed above and ask God to renew your spiritual life. Start right now.

Project: Memorize **Genesis 35:2-3**. Thank God for spiritual renewal. Spend time with the Lord and in His Word every day.