

GENESIS Lesson 37 – 7/21/19

Jacob and Esau reunited

33:1: And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids.

33:2: And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost.

33:3: And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

33:4: And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept.

33:5: And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and said, Who are those with thee? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant.

33:6: Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves.

33:7: And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves.

33:8: And he said, What meanest thou by all this drove which I met? And he said, These are to find grace in the sight of my lord.

33:9: And Esau said, I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself.

33:10: And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand: for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me.

33:11: Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough. And he urged him, and he took it.

33:12: And he said, Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee.

33:13: And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children are tender, and the flocks and herds with young are with me: and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die.

33:14: Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me and the children be able to endure, until I come unto my lord unto Seir.

33:15: And Esau said, Let me now leave with thee some of the folk that are with me. And he said, What needeth it? let me find grace in the sight of my lord.

Jacob has just had an encounter with God, and he is now limping. News gets to him that Esau is fast approaching with 400 men.

Jacob is still afraid.

First he sends messengers to Esau, then he sends droves of animals as presents, he then divides his family into 2 bands, and now we find yet

again Jacob is trying to figure out a way to stop Esau, he further divides his family, now into 3 bands.

The concubines and their children together, Leah next and Rachel last.

This is Jacob's plan, he never learned to fully trust God. What Jacob did are examples of unbelief and the use of human wisdom versus faith in God.

A. W. Pink says, "It is one thing to be privileged with a special visitation from or manifestation of God to us, but it is quite another to live in the power of it."

Prov. 21:32: The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the LORD.

But when Jacob sees Esau out in the distance he hobbles over passing everyone as he went and bowing as he went. Stopping and bowing, and then taking a few more steps and stopping and bowing again—Jacob does this for a total of seven times. We may be tempted to say, "Finally, Jacob displays some courage."

But Jacob's impromptu display of humility is simply a demonstration of his fear. Just like the kid who's been caught and doesn't stop talking in an effort to hide his guilt.

As Jacob stands after the 7th time, the horror of horrors, Esau is now running towards him. Jacob froze like a deer in the headlights.

But Jacob's worst fears never materialize, as soon as Esau sees him, he runs up to him, hugs him, and kisses—"How are you my brother, it has been so long!".

Jacob suddenly realizes that Esau doesn't want to kill him, he's simply glad to see him.

Esau has changed, he first enquires about Jacob's family and then about the droves that Jacob had sent as a present.

Esau tells Jacob, I don't need or want anything, I have enough. But Jacob insists and Esau acquiesces.

Jacob felt that by accepting the gift, Esau no longer had ill will towards him.

Esau now offers his men to accompany Jacob, Esau assumes that Jacob will join him—but Jacob leads Esau on.

In verse 14 Jacob tells Esau, "You go on ahead and I will travel at the pace of the children and the flocks until I come to my lord unto Seir."

Jacob was glad to be reconciled with his brother, but he was still afraid of Esau. Too afraid to tell Esau that God told him to go home to dad in Hebron. So Jacob acted like old Jacob, the perpetual deceiver—he once again deceived his brother.

He agreed he would go far to the south with Esau to Mount Seir, instead, he allows Esau to go a few days ahead him and then cuts tail and heads west towards Succoth.

Jacob hasn't given one word of testimony about what God wanted him to do, nor has he said one word about God telling him to return to Hebron.

We have the same problem Jacob has, we are too afraid of the world, never giving a testimony of what God has told us to do.

Jacob goes to Shechem

33:16: So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir.

33:17 And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him an house, and made booths for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called Succoth.

33:18 And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padanaram; and pitched his tent before the city.

33:19 And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred pieces of money.

33:20 And he erected there an altar, and called it Elelohe-Israel.

So Esau returns home and Jacob settles in Succoth; he builds himself a house and booths for his livestock. What do you notice?

God had told him to go back home with Isaac. What does Jacob do? He settles down. Spurgeon says this was an, "...overt disobedience of command..."

We suffer the same fate, settling down instead of going to the place God has called us to go.

We are not told how long Jacob stayed in Succoth, but he eventually left, crossed the Jordan and came to Shalem, a city in Shechem.

When Jacob arrives in Shechem, he buys some land and pitches his tent toward the city. What could go wrong? Does this remind you of anything or anyone?

Gen. 13:12: Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.

And while Jacob was there he erected an altar and called it El Elohe Israel. El Elohe Israel means “God, the God of Israel.”

It was a good thing for Jacob to build an altar for God, the altar was good, but complete obedience was better. God wants obedience first, then sacrifice.

1 Sam. 15:22: And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

Jacob and his family would pay a dear price for his unbelief and disobedience during this period of time.

A. W. Pink says, “Divine retribution did not sleep. We have only to read what happened to his family while Jacob abode at Shechem to discover how, once more, Jacob was called upon to reap that which he had sown — Jacob’s sojourn in Succoth was followed by the ruining of his only daughter!”

In addition, Reuben, Simeon and Levi all lose the birthright from what transpires in Shechem.

Dinah is defiled

34:1: And Dinah the daughter of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land.

34:2: And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her, and lay with her, and defiled her.

34:3: And his soul clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damsel, and spake kindly unto the damsel.

34:4: And Shechem spake unto his father Hamor, saying, Get me this damsel to wife.

34:5: And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter: now his sons were with his cattle in the field: and Jacob held his peace until they were come.

This chapter contains one of the most sordid incidents in Israel's history. Simply put, Dinah the daughter of Leah was raped.

But her brother's response was worse than the crime. Only a book like the Bible can show its leaders and heroes in such unsavory light.

Dinah is about 14 to 16 years of age when this occurred, she was probably around a year younger or near the same age as Joseph, and Joseph is 17 years of age in chapter 37, so we back track to estimate her age.

Here, I must tread lightly, because, yes the rape of Dinah was horrible—but we must also take note of a key detail the Bible gives us.

We are told that Dinah went to see the “daughters of the land.” Her desire was understandable, a house full of boys, no sisters, no female friends. But her decision proved to be unwise. Did anyone try to stop her? Why was she alone? Why wasn’t she supervised. What compelled her to go “downtown?” But try telling this to a teenager like Dinah!

To allow your daughter to mingle with the devil’s crowd is unwise; unsupervised socialization in a pagan world is a colossal parental failure.

They were now in the land of Canaan, the Canaanites were different than the Syrians.

Henry Morris says, “Unattached young women were considered fair game in cities of the time, in which promiscuity was not only common but, in fact, a part of the very religious system itself.” This was particularly true of the Canaanites; they were corrupt and known for their sexual immorality (see Lev. 18). The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah were also Canaanites.

It was to Bethel that God wanted them to go; yes they were to head toward Hebron where Isaac dwelled, but we are later told God wanted Jacob in Bethel (Gen. 35:1). The time Jacob spent in the city of Shechem did much harm to his family.

After Shechem had his way with Dinah, he turns to his dad and says, “Get me her as wife.”

Both Shechem and his father never thought they had done any wrong. The Canaanites morals were so low, that rape was just part of the

culture. We never see father or son apologizing for what had been committed or even expressing what they did was wrong.

We could imagine how Dinah felt; but we never hear from her. Not one word of what she said or thought is recorded in the Bible. During this time, she was kept at Shechem's house; no doubt taken and placed in his harem.

Gen. 34:26 And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out.

In 1970 Walter Mischel and Ebbe B. Ebbesen conducted the first "Marshmallow Test" at Stanford University. The purpose of the study was to understand when the control of delayed gratification develops in children. When does a child begin to have the ability to wait to obtain something that he wants?

A researcher gives this choice to a four-year-old: "I am leaving for 15 minutes to run an errand, and you can have this marshmallow while I am gone, but if you wait until I return, you can have two marshmallows."

The researchers followed up with the children a dozen years later and they found the kids who grabbed the single marshmallow tended to be more troubled as adolescents. The one-marshmallow kids also scored an average of 210 points less on university entrance exams. Learning to delay gratification is important.

Dinah wanted go and "sow her wild oats." Jacob should have put his foot down; instead, he let her go.

When Jacob hears what happened, he remained quiet until his boys come home from work and then tells them what Shechem did to Dinah.

Let's just say it didn't go over too well.

The Deal to marry Dinah

34:6: And Hamor the father of Shechem went out unto Jacob to commune with him.

34:7: And the sons of Jacob came out of the field when they heard it: and the men were grieved, and they were very wroth, because he had wrought folly in Israel in lying with Jacob's daughter; which thing ought not to be done.

34:8: And Hamor communed with them, saying, The soul of my son Shechem longeth for your daughter: I pray you give her him to wife.

34:9: And make ye marriages with us, and give your daughters unto us, and take our daughters unto you.

34:10: And ye shall dwell with us: and the land shall be before you; dwell and trade ye therein, and get you possessions therein.

34:11: And Shechem said unto her father and unto her brethren, Let me find grace in your eyes, and what ye shall say unto me I will give.

34:12: Ask me never so much dowry and gift, and I will give according as ye shall say unto me: but give me the damsel to wife.

34:13: And the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father deceitfully, and said, because he had defiled Dinah their sister:

34:14: And they said unto them, We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one that is uncircumcised; for that were a reproach unto us:

34:15: But in this will we consent unto you: If ye will be as we be, that every male of you be circumcised;

34:16: Then will we give our daughters unto you, and we will take your daughters to us, and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people.

34:17: But if ye will not hearken unto us, to be circumcised; then will we take our daughter, and we will be gone.

34:18: And their words pleased Hamor, and Shechem Hamor's son.

34:19: And the young man deferred not to do the thing, because he had delight in Jacob's daughter: and he was more honourable than all the house of his father.

Shechem has now fallen madly in love with Dinah and his dad heads to Jacob's house and tries to see what deal they can strike so that Shechem can keep Dinah as his wife.

When Hamor reaches Jacob's household, all the boys are waiting for him. Hamor proposes unification; let Shechem marry Dinah and we will all be one happy family.

That's what the royals did in Europe, but did it bring them peace? Europe has been the site of hundreds of conflicts, just in the last 1000 years.

Hamor says, "You let your daughters marry our boys, and we will do the same. Let's live happily ever after."

Shechem couldn't wait, he pipes up, "Whatever you ask for, name the price, only let me have Dinah!"

Jacob's boys having learned from dad, answered the men deceitfully. They said we cannot allow you to marry our girls because you guys are uncircumcised. If you get circumcised then our families can unite. We can marry your daughters and you can marry our daughters. And we'll let you have Dinah."

The men thought about for a while and said, "It's a deal." But Jacob's sons had a sinister plan in mind.

Jacob's sons are out for revenge

34:20: And Hamor and Shechem his son came unto the gate of their city, and communed with the men of their city, saying,

34:21: These men are peaceable with us; therefore let them dwell in the land, and trade therein; for the land, behold, it is large enough for them; let us take their daughters to us for wives, and let us give them our daughters.

34:22: Only herein will the men consent unto us for to dwell with us, to be one people, if every male among us be circumcised, as they are circumcised.

34:23: Shall not their cattle and their substance and every beast of theirs be ours? only let us consent unto them, and they will dwell with us.

34:24: And unto Hamor and unto Shechem his son hearkened all that went out of the gate of his city; and every male was circumcised, all that went out of the gate of his city.

34:25: And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males.

34:26: And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out.

34:27: The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and spoiled the city, because they had defiled their sister.

34:28: They took their sheep, and their oxen, and their asses, and that which was in the city, and that which was in the field,

34:29: And all their wealth, and all their little ones, and their wives took they captive, and spoiled even all that was in the house.

34:30: And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites: and I being few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house.

34:31: And they said, Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot?

Hamor and Shechem return with the good news and convinced all the men of their tribe to get circumcised; they used greed to do this.

It was obvious that Jacob had much livestock evidenced by the statement Hamor makes to his men: “Shall not their cattle and their substance and every beast of theirs be ours? only let us consent unto them, and they will dwell with us.”

They figured through intermarriage and integration they would become wealthy. This was a dangerous challenge to the national identity of Jacob’s family—God had plans for them and now they were in jeopardy. The Israelites were facing assimilation into Canaanite culture.

Missionary dating rarely works, believers are only to marry believers. Someone said, “The church is only one generation away from extinction.”

But on third day knowing that the men were sore from the procedure Simeon and Levi loaded their weapons and headed to town.

Like gangbusters they ripped through town taking down every male who lived there—that’s the modern translation. They spared no one.

They then spoiled the city taking everything, including all the livestock and all the young girls; they turned the tables on the men of Shechem.

Dad didn’t do anything, so his boys decided to take matters into their own hands; they had no example. So they did something terrible in response.

When God’s leaders don’t take appropriate action, a void is created, which is often filled sinfully. Jacob’s sons defended the family honor their own way.

What Simeon and Levi did was cruel and disgraced God's covenant of circumcision; we know that this was the way a gentile could come into covenant with God.

Gen. 17:12: And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed.

They deceptively used God's covenant to accomplish their dastardly deed.

Dr. Barnhouse said, "The boldness with which they executed their foul plan shows the hardness of their hearts."

So Simeon and Levi plunder the city and rescue Dinah.

When Jacob hears what his boys did he reacts and says, "Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land."

Once we study Jacob's reaction we will find that he reacted out of fear.

"I being few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house.

Jacob is starting to reap the consequences of his actions; he was never a role model to his children.

Dr. Barhouse says, "Jacob! You brought that trouble on yourself. You passed your own deceitful nature into your boys. You set them a constant example of guile. They heard you lie to Esau at Peniel and start northwest after he went southeast. They saw your interest in the fat pastures when you pitched your tent in Shechem. You said nothing

when Dinah was violated... Talk to God about your own sin before talking to these boys about theirs.”

At their father’s rebuke the boys simply reply, “Should he treat our sister like a harlot?” This was Simeon and Levi’s only reply.

But their behavior does not go unpunished. Before he passes, Jacob prophesied over each of his 12 sons.

This is what he said about Simeon and Levi:

Gen. 49:5: Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations.

Gen. 49:6: O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: for in their anger they slew a man, and in their selfwill they digged down a wall.

Gen. 49:7: Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.

What Jacob prophesied came to be.

The tribe of Simeon was given an inheritance of Simeon among the tribe of Judah and was apparently absorbed by Judah.

Joshua 19:1: And the second lot came forth to Simeon, even for the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families: and their inheritance was within the inheritance of the children of Judah.

The tribe of Levi, thought they were priestly tribe, was also scattered, they were given an inheritance among all the tribes.

Joshua 21:3: And the children of Israel gave unto the Levites out of their inheritance, at the commandment of the LORD, these cities and their suburbs.

Actions have consequences.