

Genesis Ch. 33

V: 1 If you've ever thought that all you've done is go from one trial to the next, then you can relate to Jacob.

- No sooner is Laban gone, than Esau appears on the scene.
- Jacob is being obedient to what God called him to do – returning to the land of Canaan, unto the land of his kindred. (Genesis 31:13)
- The Christian life isn't necessarily one of ease or comfort, it is filled with challenges that will produce greater and greater degree's or levels of faith – all very much by God's design.

James 1:2-4 ²My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; ³knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. ⁴But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect (mature) and entire, wanting nothing."

V: 2 "Jacob" – not "Israel" – he's acting like the old man – he's afraid.

2 Timothy 1:7 "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

- Jacob has either forgotten or is ignoring God's word:

Genesis 31:3 "And the Lord said unto Jacob, return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee."

Genesis 28:13-15 "... I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to they seed; ¹⁴And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and the to he east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. ¹⁵And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

- Believing God's word, faith in God's word – the reality of it is not just a lofty ideal, or a doctrinal position – **it is a way of life** – a vary practical day to day way of life.

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- Jacob divides up his family, ranks them seemingly from the most expendable to the least.
 - A father, husband, or leader of any kind has a tremendous amount of influence on their families and those they are responsible for.

- If Jacob had been fearful, this certainly would have been communicated even in non-verbal ways to his family. It couldn't have been comforting to Bilhah, Rachel's hand maiden, as she led Dan and Naphtali to the front row.

Rookie / vest / point man...

V: 3 Jacob does the man thing – and goes out before his family – he exorcises real leadership.

King David exhorted his son from his death bed:

1 Kings 2:2-3 “²I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man; ³And keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it its written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all the thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself.”

- David didn't say show yourself a man of God – he said show yourself a man.
- King David's understanding of a real man meant that he was a “man of God.”
- It was summed up in walking in God's ways and being obedient to His word.

As for Jacob:

- Distant and gone are the days when he might have gloated about his success in obtaining the birthright or the blessing he's learned some very practical lessons.

Micah 6:8 “He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doeth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”

- Bowing 7 times was something reserved for kings.

V: 4 Esau “ran” (97 years old) to meet Jacob and fell on his neck and kissed him.

- Jacob's fears were un-warranted. Somewhere in the process of time, God had changed Esau's heart towards his brother.

Proverbs 21:1 “The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever He will.”

- Esau was happy to see Jacob.

V: 5 When Esau asks about the women and children, Jacob's family – Jacob gives glory to God, acknowledging that God has blessed him with children.

V: 6-7 The wives and children approach, following Jacob's example and bow themselves down before Esau.

V: 8-11 Esau asks what's up with the droves of cattle that he met en-route.

- Again Jacob gives God credit for being gracious to him and blessing him.
- Both brothers realize that gifts aren't necessary – no need for appeasement or further reconciliation.
- Esau tries to divert the gifts back to Jacob, but as Jacob insists, Esau is gracious in turn and accepts the gifts.
- Jacob is no longer taking or seeking for himself – he is giving. Esau is doing likewise.
- How God works to change men's hearts.

[Luke tells us about a tax collector named Zachaeus who had a change of heart:](#)

Luke 19:1-10 “¹And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. ²And, behold, there was a man named Zachaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. ³And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was a little of stature. ⁴And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way. ⁵And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zachaeus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house. ⁶And he made haste, and came down, and received Him joyfully. ⁷And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, that He was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. ⁸And Zachaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. ⁹And Jesus said unto him, this day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

V: 12-15 Esau offers to escort Jacob back to Seir, his home, understandable after a 20 year separation.

- Jacob had probably driven the cattle and people pretty hard in the first 10 days of their journey as they fled from Laban.
- This now becomes the reason or excuse to decline Esau's help.
- Jacob may have realized that God has separated him from his brother for a reason – they weren't on the same page – God didn't look at them in the same way.

Amos 3:3 “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?”

- Jacob / Israel has a capacity for spiritual things, Esau doesn't – and that probably hasn't changed.
- I believe that there is another more important reason that will become apparent in the next few verses.

V: 16-17 Esau returns home to Seir, to the South, and East of Canaan in what would later become the land of Edom.

- Jacob heads west towards the land of Canaan – in obedience to God word.



- Jacob stops in Succoth for an unknown amount of time; he builds booths or barns for his cattle.
- For nursing children and weary wives, along with all the cattle their stay in Succoth was probably much needed.

V: 18-20 Jacob and his family then cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan coming to the city of Shechem – fulfilling God’s direction for them.

- Jacob buys a parcel of land in advance of inheriting the whole thing.
- He at some point digs a well, later referred to in John 4:6 – Jacob’s well / Samaritan woman. He’s located in a fertile plain, a good place for cattle.
- Shechem is also the place where God first appeared to Abraham after he left the Ur of the Chaldees.
- Jacob erects an altar – he worshipped God in that place, using his new name:

“El-EI-o-he-Israel” – “God is the God of Israel”

Looks good, but... under the surface – evil.

Shechem is a place that both Abraham & Isaac visited – didn’t do either of them any good. No place to stop. James 4:4 Psalm 1:1-2

Genesis Ch. 34

V: 1 Dinah goes out to visit with her neighbors.

- No indication how long Jacob had been camped near Shechem. Dinah was one of the last born, youngest kids and may have only been an adolescent teen.
- Was she escorted? Did she have permission? Supervision?

1 Corinthians 15:33 “Be not deceived: evil communications / companionships corrupt good manners.”

2 Corinthians 6:14 “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?”

2 Corinthians 6:17 “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,”

V: 2-3 The very thing that Abram & Isaac were concerned about in times past comes to pass with Jacob’s daughter – basically Dinah is raped.

- Jacob didn’t learn the lesson of his fathers regarding Shechem, like Lot – he saw that it was a good place for cattle – prosperity.
- Jacob failed to fully obey God’s word – which would have been a protection to him and his family.

Genesis 31:3 “And the Lord said unto Jacob, return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee.”

- Isaac was last seen in Beersheba, he is eventually buried in Hebron / Mamre and may have been there – both of which are still some distance away from where Jacob has stopped with his family.
- Shechem “loved” Dinah, but not enough to respect her, her family, or their God.
- It would appear that neither Hamor nor Shechem remembered the lessons of the forefathers regarding Abraham & Isaac.

Romans 6:23 “The wages of sin is death...”

- And we will see this played out in literal fashion.

V: 4 It was common for the parents to arrange marriages for their children, he may have been hiding behind his father's power. Probably would not have been his only wife.

V: 5 Jacob hears of it, but doesn't respond; waiting for his sons to come back out of the field.

- Fear? Planned on letting the boys deal with it? Not sure what to do?

V: 6-10 Hamor spoke to "them" meaning Jacob & his sons – there seems to be a lack of identifiable leadership on Jacob's part.

- Jacob had lingered in Shechem long enough for his boys to become "men" presumably in their 20's – guessing at 8-10 years at that location.

Hamor:

1. My son wants Dinah.
2. We can all be one big happy family.
3. Ignores the offense / crime that took place.
4. No common values, God is not part of this plan.
5. Offering worldly prosperity.
6. God has already assured Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that they will prosper under His blessing.

V: 11-12 Name the dowry / your price, we'll pay it.

- Treating Dinah more like a prostitute than a wife that he loves.

V: 13-17 Jacob's sons are the one's answering – deceitfully.

- The end does not justify the means.
- The sons of Jacob take circumcision, something that God ordained for the sanctification of His people, part of the covenant between God and His people – and use it to weaken and deceive their enemy – blasphemy.

V: 18-19 Hamor and Shechem move quickly because they were both overwhelmed with desire:

- Shechem with lust for Dinah.
- Hamor with lust for wealth.

1 John 2:15-16 “¹⁵Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”

V: 20-24 Hamor & Shechem convince all the men to go along with the plan, out of greed.

V: 25-26 While the Shechemites are all hurting, Simeon & Levi attack and kill all the men of Shechem, including Hamor and Shechem.

- An extreme over reaction.
- Afraid of reprisal from potential survivors?
- #1 son Reuben – not part of it, disagreed? Later stops his brothers from killing Joseph.

“... and took Dinah out of Shechem’s house...”

- Was she being held captive against her will?
- Too ashamed to come home?

V: 27-29

- All the brothers join in now.
- Loot the city.
- Taking captive presumably as slaves all the women and children.

Romans 12:19 “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.”

V: 30-31 Jacob’s concern is more for their good name as opposed to the sin against God.

- Jacob left matters in his son’s hands as un-prepared and unguided as they were, then complained about how they dealt with the situation.
- Their witness had gone from holiness and moral purity to a façade of spirituality / blasphemy to bloodshed and looting – they looked no different than the rest of the world.

Three main lessons from this chapter:

1. A vacuum in leadership will not go un-filled – someone has to be the spiritual leader.
2. If we make friends with the world, we shouldn’t be surprised when our kids act like the world.
3. Had Jacob exercised spiritual leadership, and had he been obedient to God’s word – none of this would have happened.