

Jacob 7

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[0 : 00] The Lord's blessing will turn to the portion of scripture we read, Genesis chapter 34.

And verse 30. Genesis 34 and verse 30. And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, you have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perisites. You have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land. Now after God wrestles with Jacob beside the brook Jabbok, Jacob is in many respects a changed man. He learns at that point to lean less to his own understanding and to follow the wisdom of God. He learns patience with that incident.

And you never see Jacob in quite the same way trying to outrun God or trying to bring God's providence about for him. He learns more to wait upon the Lord.

[1 : 29] And interestingly, right after that wrestling in chapter 33, he meets finally with his brother Esau. And when Esau meets him, we're told that he put his arms around his neck and he kissed him.

Esau ran to meet him and embraced him, fell on his neck and kissed him. Now that wasn't because of all the presents that Jacob had sent in droves before him.

It was just because God had softened the heart of Esau. We're told in the scriptures that when a man's ways are pleasing to the Lord, then the Lord makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.

And that is what Jacob learned here, that once he dealt rightly with the Lord, then the Lord prepared his way before him. And how often sometimes have you fretted maybe about meeting a person or walking into a certain situation and you feared it for all you were worth.

And you went and you took it to the Lord and you found that the Lord had changed the heart of that person. He had changed his countenance and the path was just prepared like that before you by the power of God.

[2 : 37] Well, that is the way it was for Jacob. I'm sure he was surprised, but he saw the work of the Lord when Esau ran to him, fell on his neck and kissed him. And after their reconciliation, they again parted ways.

Esau made his way again towards the district of Mount Seir, where he had already established himself and where he became the father of the Edomite people. And Jacob, meantime, carries on on his own way back to Canaan, the land of promise, to become the heir of his father's property and of the spiritual birthright.

And you find his progress marked out in verse 17 of chapter 33, where we're told that Jacob journeyed to Succoth and built himself a house and made booths for his cattle.

Therefore, the name of the place is called Succoth. And he came to Shalem, a city. Now, city is a grand word, really, for that. It would really be a small village of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan.

And he pitched his tent before the city. And then he buys a parcel of ground in verse 19, where he had spread his tent, and he bought that parcel of ground for a hundred pieces of money.

[3 : 53] And as soon as he buys it, in some respects, he really consecrates the land or he dedicates it to the Lord by building an altar and calling it El Elohi Israel, which means God, the God of Israel.

Now, it would seem here that Jacob is again doing everything right. He's gone back, as God had told him, into the land of Canaan.

He's settled there. And he's built an altar immediately and dedicated himself to the Lord. But remarkably, there is something again wrong here in Jacob.

Now, I say remarkably because you would have thought that when his thigh was put out of joint, that that would be the end of wrong things in Jacob's life. But that's not the way it is. It was the end of a certain kind of wrong thing in Jacob's life.

But that doesn't mean his life became perfect, that he had no more need for discipline or no more need for chastisement. In fact, remarkably, when one thing is dealt with, another thing appears.

[4 : 55] And it is something that requires the Lord, again, to deal with it. And that only reminds us, my friend, of how patient the Lord is in his dealings with us. How many obstacles his grace has to overcome.

How many difficulties we present, as it were, I speak with reverence, before his way. How many things he has to deal with. How many rough edges to chop off before he forms and fashions us into the people that we are meant to be.

And he has scarcely finished dealing with one thing in the life of Jacob and dealing with it decisively when another thing raises its head. And the Lord has to move in, as it were, and to deal with that.

Now, what is wrong? Well, what's wrong, basically, is this, that Jacob has forgotten his vow. Now, the vow that he made was the vow when he was going out of Bethel, when he was going out of Canaan, over 20 years previously.

He vowed when he received that dream, and when he saw the stairway to heaven, that he would return immediately. And that he would build a house to God there in Bethel.

[6 : 02] That he would worship the Lord, and that he would thank God for all his care of him. For leading and for guiding him all the time when he was in the wilderness in Parna-ran.

But interestingly, here, on his way back, he stops short of Bethel. He settles on the kind of borderland of Canaan, in a place called Succoth.

And there he builds himself a house, and there he settles down with his family. Now, you would have expected him to come back and to repay his vow in a hurry. You would have thought that he would have the spirit of David, who said, that I will not give sleep to my eyes until I find a place for the Lord.

I will not rest until I find a place for the Lord. But he's not that diligent. For some reason, he stops short of Bethel. And you'll notice, that's in spite of the way that God called him back to Canaan.

Now, when Jacob had finished his service to Laban, God called him back and said the time was right to go back to Canaan. Now, it's interesting the words which God uses in telling him to go back.

[7 : 14] And the words are these. I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed the pillar, and where you vowed a vow. Now, arise and get out of this land, and return to the land of thy kindred.

It's as though the very preface to that vow was telling Jacob what to do and what to do immediately. I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed the pillar.

Now, rise and get up and return to the land of thy kindred. It is as though God is saying, I have been faithful to you, and I have performed all my promises. Now, you honor your vows and repay them to the Lord.

But Jacob, as I said, stops short of Bethel. Not only does he stop short, but you'll notice an interesting thing in verse 17 here of chapter 33.

When he arrives at Succoth, he makes booths for his cattle, but he also makes a house for himself. Now, the word in the Hebrew is emphatic.

[8 : 17] It means a house, a permanent residency. Now, this is a remarkable thing. Here you have the pilgrim, who was supposed to be a stranger and a pilgrim in this world, like Abraham dwelling in tents, like Isaac dwelling in tents.

He builds himself a house in Succoth. He's built himself a house. And not only that, but we'll find that just nearby, he buys a parcel of ground, and he buys it for a hundred pieces of money.

Now, here again, they were not supposed to own the land, but he buys a portion of the land for himself, for a hundred pieces of money. And interestingly, John chapter 4 in the New Testament tells us that he also purchased a well, or there was a well in the land which he purchased.

Now, that would be an important thing. To be without a well was pretty disastrous in those days, and he purchased a well, because the woman of Samaria met Jesus at Jacob's well.

So what you find here is Jacob settling down on his leaves, as though he's saying to himself, well, my trials are all over. The hardship is past, and now I'm going to sit down, as it were, and take my ease a little bit.

[9 : 33] I'm going to rest, and I'm going to live in peace, and I'm going to raise the family, and all will be well with me. Now, here's the other flaw.

This time, it's not a lack of patience in Jacob. It's nothing to do with that at all. All it is this time is the subtle snare of the love of the world, and the love of ease taking hold of his heart.

Instead of being ready to fight for God, and to be a pilgrim for God, and to keep the word of God in that way, and to hold it forth as an example to others, he settles into a kind of conformity with the world around him.

He becomes like the other princes and the other people of the land. He buys his house, he settles in, and he seeks to mix in with the people in a way in which he should not.

Now, maybe he doesn't himself, but as we'll see, his family are going to, and that's going to cause some problems. Because the fact is, Jacob has become rich. The Lord himself tells us to beware of riches.

[10 : 42] Riches entice a man very easily into covetousness. The more a person has, the more likely he is to set his heart upon it. The more likely he is to love mammon, rather than to love God.

And Jacob, in the last seven years, serving Laban, became a very rich man. And it's obvious from this move that that has already begun to have some kind of impact upon the way he thinks, and the way he acts.

Now, Succoth was a pleasing place. Succoth and Shechem were at the crossroads of a very busy trading route. Now, I'm sure that was attractive to his sons as well.

They were growing up now into their teenage years, and these things would have been attractive to them, and that's going to become important in a moment. So this was pleasing to him, and it was a good place to pitch his tent, and in fact, nearby to build a house, and to buy a parcel of land.

And so he does. In other words, right at this point, he is making Lot's choice. Lot looked up when Abraham said, take what you want.

[11 : 47] Lot looked up, and he saw the well-watered, fertile plains of Sodom, and we're told that he pitched his tent towards Sodom. And before he knew where he was, he was in Sodom.

When you pitch towards something, it's not too difficult to end up one day in it. And of course, Jacob here pitched his tent on a parcel of ground which he himself bought.

And he'll discover in a very short time that it was not a wise thing that he did at all. It was not wise at all. And in fact, it comes out most clearly with respect to his family, as we'll see in a moment.

Now it's amazing how often those who are professing people of God put other considerations first other than spiritual ones at many points in their lives. I've quite honestly been staggered at the amount of people I met who have chosen places to live and where to build houses without any consideration whatsoever to how near they are to a place of worship or how near they would be to the Lord's people or to where the Lord's name was faithfully and truly proclaimed.

It is as though that came far down on the list and it was sowing the wind and these people reaped the whirlwind. And how many people when they decide a whole lot of things like where to get a house or where to go for a holiday and so on, they never consider am I near the house of God?

[13 : 16] Is God's word preached here? Can I go to a place belonging to God on the Lord's day? Or am I going to be in a no man's land in a barren place? What is it that we are seeking?

That is the question. What is uppermost in your consideration when you are looking for a job, when you are looking for a place to study, for a college, a university, or a house, or anything?

What is it that matters to you? What matters? Now Jacob chose this house, whether it was his own choice or his son's choice, who knows?

But he chose this place at Succoth and Shechem and he settles there and he stops short of Bethel. Now it's interesting that he builds his altar and he calls it El Elohe Israel.

Now that sounds good. God, the God of Israel. But what God said to him back in Paddan Aram was, I am the God of Bethel.

[14 : 16] Would it not have been better for this man to have moved further on into the promised land and to have built his own altar in Bethel? It's as though he focuses on what happened to him when God made him a prince.

God, the God of Israel. As much as to say, that is now my name, that is now my dignity, and that is now my standing. For years, he says, I have had nothing. All my life, I have had nothing.

And I have served as a servant for labor. But now, I am a prince with God and a prince with men. And he raises the altar to God, the God of Israel.

Has he forgotten the rock from which he was hewn? Has he forgotten how humble his own circumstances were not so many years before? He has definitely, to some extent, or in some kind of way, he has forgotten when God met him at the hour of crisis and the hour of need and showed him the stairway to heaven.

And Jacob was so full of promises and he made a vow and said, surely I'll come back here and pay it back to you. But when he becomes wealthy, he forgets to do it.

[15:22] He forgets to do it. In this respect, his heart has become hardened. He's been taught in one area, but he's unlearned something in another. And how often it is that God comes to us in the midst of hardship and difficulty and we vow, I vow unto the Lord and we'll say, well, if only you'll raise me from this bed of sickness or if only you'll help me or extricate me out of this, I will never cease to praise you.

My lips shall never be silent. I will praise the Lord as long as I live. And the crisis happens and prosperity comes in. And what happens to your vow? What happens to your resolutions? What happens to mine? Does God have to come back to us to remind us with another blow that we ought to pay our vows unto the Lord and to forget not when we have vowed to repay it, to repay it. It is an important and a solemn thing to pay our vows to God. Maybe he gloried in his limp for all you know. It's quite possible when God perhaps gives you some kind of token of blessing. And it may be a kind of war wound. Still you can glory in a war wound. God, the God of Israel. God who met me as a wrestler and bruised me. Well, if he's going to glory in a limp, the Lord is going to show him that he would be better not having glory in the limp.

[16:46] He'll give him a thorn in the flesh in case he's too exalted with the abundance of the revelations. Many people are given these kind of things, great things from God and they are exalted with them.

So the Lord gives a thorn in the flesh to keep these people low. And like Lot who regretted that he went to Sodom, Jacob would regret that he ever built a house, house in Succoth.

Now, he stayed here for several years. Now we know that because Dinah would have been approximately seven years old when they left Paddan Aram.

And she is of sufficient age here to be taken advantage of by Shechem, the son of Hamor. So you can probably add on somewhere in the region of ten years.

And that means that Jacob has been approximately ten years in Shechem settling on his leaves in his prosperity before this blow comes to him from the hand of the Lord.

[17:50] And these ten years are a period of gradual spiritual decline in Jacob's life. And I think we'll see that more clearly as we go on. And maybe when we look at that kind of decline in his life we might see it in our own.

Now I want to look at the particular incident that took place here. And then more fully the way in which Jacob responded to it.

Now first of all the incident itself. You'll notice chapter 34 and verse 1. Dinah took her and lay with her and defiled her or humbled her.

This was the rape of the daughter of Jacob. Dinah. And that act is described in verse 7 as folly. The man had brought folly in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter.

Now that word folly is far too weak really to translate the original word. The original word should be translated really wickedness. It is the same word that's used of eich and sin when he disobeyed God and he took the precious garment and he hid it for himself.

[19:02] It's the same word it was a great wickedness that was wrought in Israel. Now the world has lost sight of that largely. This crime has not really been punished in the way that it should in our own society for many many years.

Rape has been trivialized as something that is not really worth being punished whereas the word of God says that it is a grievous wickedness and that sentences should be heavy against this particular crime and those people who think and those men especially who think that to force themselves in that kind of way is something that's not too serious in the eyes of the Lord are grievously mistaken.

It was a great sin and a great wickedness in the sight of God and our own legal system should reflect that still today as it should with adultery which has become a joke to people something people joke about and they give it little euphemisms that make it not too serious calling it an affair or something of that kind when adultery again is a grievous sin in the sight of the Lord and our legal

system should again reflect that.

Now that was the crime here she was violated by Shechem the son of Hamel. Now what was the occasion for it?

Well we're told that Dinah the daughter of Leah went out to see the daughters of the land. Now that is very suggestive. In the original language again it implies habitually that this was a thing she started doing and she did again and again she went out to see the daughters of the land.

[20 : 48] Not only is it a habitual thing it's a precarious thing because she's straying into a heathen worldly society. She's moving in a worldly company and she's moving in the social cliques that belong to the world.

Where the world gathered where the heathen people of Shechem gathered and the young girls of Shechem gathered Dinah left the confines of her family home and she strayed out with the covenant and she went to mix with those who were of a different belief of a different faith of a different religion and before she knows where she is at first all things seem to be going well but then before she knows where she is she is violated and the harm is done.

And again it comes back to this the sheer danger that is always on the outside when you mix in that kind of way for recreation or for social company or things of that kind where the world is giddy and where the world has its amusement before you know where you are you are sucked in and you can be taken advantage of and Diana at a very young age finds herself in this situation because she went out to see the daughters of the land how she wished she had never been so curious how she wished she had stayed in the confines of the home in the place of safety that the Lord had ordained for her instead of stepping out beyond the line and stepping over into the place of danger the place where the world has its way and there she falls and there a situation of disgrace begins to develop now let me say in connection with that this when Jacob chose to live here in the midst of these people of

Shechem I'm sure he thought he could cope with it just as Lot thought that he could cope with Sodom or could cope with the neighborhood of Sodom now we all think we can cope with everything that belongs to us we think we can cope we think we can be immune or we can think there's no real danger here and very often the danger is not to yourself it is to your family how often you find that Lot comes out of Sodom but look at the conduct of his daughters look at what his daughters did to Lot outside of Sodom you know the incident with the drunkenness and so on you can hardly bring yourself to say the thing would that have happened or would his daughters have even thought like that had not Lot ventured into Sodom would Dinah have ended up in this situation had Jacob been more careful about where he was and where he pitched his tent and for that matter how he allowed Dinah to go out and to mix and to exchange with these people and we have to watch very often in these choices that it's not just ourselves it's other people that are at risk and sometimes you might have the strength yourself perhaps it comes from some place in your background or some way in which you've been brought up so that you can escape with the skin of your teeth and you think your sons can escape with the skin of their teeth and your daughters and you find they cannot whatever it is that makes you just escape by the grace of

God they don't have it and you find that you've lost them you've lost them they're mixed and they've gone and they've slipped away from you and you almost expect them just to turn out right and you've lost them and this happened and it began to happen in a remarkable way in Jacob's life although strangely the Lord was to turn these things round in a remarkable way and let that be an encouragement to men and women in seeking to bring up children and some who mourn perhaps for the waywardness of others the Lord brought this round in quite a remarkable way now Shechem the son of Hamor has a proposal you see he has genuinely been smitten by Jacob's daughter and he desires to marry her he's not like the other man of whom you read Tamar in the

[25 : 02] Old Testament who when this act was done hated the woman it was different with him he desired to marry her and he has a proposal to Jacob and that is that Jacob gives his daughter to Hamor as wife and that the two people mix that the daughters are given the sons there's an exchange and there's intermarriage and they settle and they have a happy establishment and they trade together there one with another he proposes really a fully fledged alliance make ye marriages with us give your daughters to us and take your daughters to you and you shall dwell with us and the land shall be before you dwell and trade therein and get you possessions therein but then Shechem himself the gave a price any dowry says we will give you but you give me the damsel to wife now that's the proposal and what's the response well perhaps you could first ask what should

the response be well it should first be that full reparation according to law be made for the violation of their sister or the violation of

Jacob's daughter that should be repaid in full according to biblical law and then with respect to the alliance what should they do well they should either decline it and say no we are a separate people or else they should make a careful covenant whereby they guard their separation as the people of God for example it would not just be adequate to give their sons and to give their daughters and to intermarry like that if there was to be a covenant then let the covenant be on a right and proper and biblical footing so that the people of God will continue to be distinct and that God's people always have to be careful of entering into any kind of covenant or even business agreement or anything of that kind that the people of God and the church of God is always kept in holiness and in purity so either decline the offer or define it so as to preserve the purity of God's people but that's not what happens the response of

Jacob and his sons is very very different let's read now let's follow it carefully chapter 34 and verse 13 and the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamar his father deceitfully and said because he had defiled Dinah their sister they said to them we cannot do this thing to give our sister to one that is uncircumcised for that were a reproach to us in this we will consent if you will be as we be and that every male of you be circumcised no there are some things coming through in this passage that are very interesting and they begin to reappear later on in Jacob's life and the first one is this notice how Jacob is losing the initiative if he ever had it and it is his sons who are seizing the initiative at every turn for example we're told that that when

Jacob heard what had happened to Dinah he held his peace until his sons came home from the field perhaps you wouldn't attach too much weight to that in the first place Jacob just doesn't respond to the people until his own sons come home from the field perhaps you wouldn't attach too much to it but then in verse 6 we're told that Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to commune with him with Jacob and then you'll find in the next verses that it's the sons of Jacob who come in and they do all the speaking in dealing with Hamor and Shechem they take over and they seize the initiative right up to the point where they tell in verse 13 what's going to happen they say we cannot give our sister to the uncircumcised you be circumcised and then we will give you our sister and we will give our daughters and you will give your daughters and so on it is their plan and it is their arrangement they went to talk to

Jacob Jacob has no part to play in it no you all know the story of Joseph very well how he was given the coat of many colors how his brother sold him and so on all the time you see a weak Jacob at the head of the household now are you not seeing it here right at the beginning before even Joseph has grown up properly you're seeing it right here Jacob is not ruling his own household his sons are ruling his household and if a man know not how to rule his own house how can he take charge of the house of God that is what the apostle says and here he has lost the initiative he's being guided by his own sons now that makes me wonder quite honestly if it was the eldest sons in the family who decided to stay in Shechem and Succoth and to build the house there and if the matter was as it were seized out of Jacob's hand and again it causes me to think this why did Dinah have such liberty in the first place anyway was he watching over her as he ought should he not as the head of the household have ensured that she was not in danger that she was not mixing with the heath and that kind of way but

[30 : 43] Jacob is relenting and Jacob is letting go and that takes me back to this now I hope you will not think that all this is too speculative if you put it together you'll see how it all hangs together he's married to two wives two sisters there's continued conflict in the family and there's no doubt he's probably playing one off against the other all the time and he's trying to keep the peace in the whole situation and the rod is not brought into play as it should be brought into play the discipline is relaxed in the home and when the discipline is relaxed in the home you have sons growing up like Reuben who is unstable as water you have Simeon and Levi cruelty are in their habitations these oldest sons are running riot and the daughter is going out unchecked in such a way that she has a great fall that brings such distress into the whole family now my friends the rod is important God requires us to discipline our children and to raise them in the fear of the

Lord now I know that discipline is not very popular in many circles today and people say that well you should never for example inflict physical punishment upon your children well let me just say quite categorically that that is the wisdom of man and it is not the wisdom of God now have it if you like and believe it if you like but know in believing it that you are rejecting the Lord's word in doing

so and that you are claiming your own superiority to God because it is God who says to spare not the rod the symbol of physical punishment and to administer physical punishment to the child look my friend God chastises us and he doesn't just chastise our soul you'll notice that God chastises our bodies also there are times when God sees fit to afflict our body and he puts that along with the affliction of the soul to do his good and when he speaks of fathers chastising their children in this word he speaks of the same thing fathers should in measure properly in a loving righteousness but it should be like that and you just wonder with everything that happens and the way that it's unfolding if that had gone in the house of

Jacob after all was it to be Leah's children that were to be punished or was it to be Rachel's you can see earlier on how those two are continually disagreeing with one another and what happens is that the family is raised without the proper discipline of God being exercised in the home oh my friend what we can sow for ourselves by not chastising our children and the tragedy is that many people think that it's love not to chastise them well whom the Lord loveth he scourgeth scourgeth whom the Lord loveth he scourgeth I know it can be difficult to chastise your family might bring a tear to your eye that's why sometimes you have to do it by faith by faith not because you like it but because you know it must be done and God tells you if you don't that you'll pay down the road and they'll pay down the road and things are starting already to go far wrong in the family of

Jacob now the next thing is this not only are the sons already taking the initiative and they're deciding on the plan but the plan is an obnoxious one it sounds good and it sounds plausible if you be circumcised we can interact with you it's as though they're saying in other words what stands between us and you is religion we are covenanted to the Lord if you one another but as long as you are serving heathen gods then we cannot do it it sounds as though they're taking the moral high ground as it were or the religious high ground it sounds as though they're standing for God it sounds as though Simeon and Levi I love the Lord and the love is cause you be circumcised and we can ally with you and we're told in verse 13 that they are answering deceitfully because in their hearts they're saying our sister has been defiled and we will demand repayment for it and that's what they do

Shechem and Hamer persuade their village to have the male circumcised in order that this marriage can go ahead and on the third day when the men are incapacitated and unable to move Simeon and Levi come in with their sword and they wield the sword that they consider to be a righteous sword and they cut down the males of that village because they said that our sister was defiled as they say themselves to their father should he deal with our sister as with a harlot now here again as I said a minute ago the character of the family is shown Simeon and Levi the second and third child I think in the family are showing themselves to be not Christian men and what a grief that is to their father perhaps he never thought that this was in their heart but here is their wickedness and it is revealed as plain as day and that is sore to any father you imagine the grief in Jacob's heart when he discovers what his sons are capable of oh my friend what we are all capable of if sin has its way and if the

[36 : 30] Lord lifts his restraining hand what we are capable of we don't know it we don't know it but their character is showing itself and notice this and what happens well it's this instead of commending the faith of God to the heathen around them they bring it into disrepute because you'll notice they're doing it all in the name of religion you be circumcised they said and we will live with you and then they execute this bloody massacre and they bring the name of God into disrepute in the whole land of Canaan you said Jacob have caused my name to stink among the Canaanites and the parasites now how many things my friend have caused the name of the people of God to stink in the nostrils of people down through the years not only this but many things the crusades the inquisition the torture chambers the many things done in the name of

Jesus that have not been done in the spirit of Jesus how many things there have been done with the cloak of his name that were not really for his cause at all contrary to his name they were done and this is one of them and these things cause the name of God's people to stink in people's noses and people will often say to you well how do you explain this or how do you justify the crusades I'm not in the business of justifying the crusades I'm not going to justify the crusades or the inquisition or any of these things many a black and foul deed has been done by those who have professed to love the Lord and it made the name of this man stink amongst the inhabitants of Canaan that will happen that will happen but you my friend must look further than that and I must look further than that with you I must not look to Jacob or to Simeon and to Levi I must look to the God of Jacob and I

must not form my ideas of

God through Simeon and Levi if I try and understand what God in heaven is like by looking at that person nine times out of ten I will be disappointed sometimes I may meet a person and I may say he reveals to me the God of heaven in his walk and in his holiness and so on but very often it will be a contradiction it will be a contradiction and this act was done in God's name but it brought reproach upon the cause of Christ it's not too long since I think since I referred to David's own action in that way and he was a man of God after his own double crime did the Lord not say to him because he says you have caused my name to be blasphemed among the people the sword shall not leave your house because you have caused my name to be blasphemed among the people and instead of doing the people of

Shechem good they ended up doing them evil and at the end of the day it was the honor of their own family that mattered to them more than the honor of God it wasn't the cause that Simeon and Levi loved it wasn't circumcision or the Lord it was just their own family and Dinah should he deal with our sister like that and that shows the unregenerate or worldly spirit that is pervading these men they could never say that we are executing the vengeance of God it was nothing but plain revenge and plain human revenge at that without a drop of grace involved in it and that is why Jacob says you have troubled me and made me to stink among the inhabitants of the land and later on Jacob speaks of it in an even more severe way when he is about to die himself chapter 49 and verse 5

Simeon and Levi are brethren instruments of cruelty are in their habitations oh my soul come not into their secret unto their assembly my honor be not united with them for in their anger they slew a man and in their self will they dig down a wall whatever that was we don't know what that incident was but in their self will they dig down a wall cursed be their anger for it was fierce and their wrath for it is cruel I will divide them in Jacob and I will scatter them in Israel but even there again you know there's there's a strange thing because the Lord has a way of bringing good out of evil this appeared to be a curse I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel now this is telling the future of the tribes and that is a tribe and it was chosen to be a tribe of

[41 : 57] God a priesthood and it was spread throughout all the other tribes the priestly cities were all spread and the priests lived among the people in their own cities God turned that curse as it were into a blessing God overrules evil with good and he brings his own purposes to pass now what effect does this have on Jacob well he's conscious that it's made him to stink and he begins to fear he begins to be afraid for his life among the Canaanites and the Perizzites now again there's no doubt that that's what follows from backsliding when a person gets cold in his spirit and when covetousness or something like that takes hold then this is how it eventually works itself out a person becomes fearful he loses his strength he loses his power and he begins to slink as it were into the background but that has its own effect Jacob begins to turn at this point and to call upon the name of the

Lord and you'll notice how wonderfully chapter 35 opens then God said to Jacob arise and go up to Bethel and dwell there that's where the emphasis goes arise go to Bethel and dwell there and make there instead of in your succoth make there an altar to God that appeared to you when you fled from the face of Esau your brother in other words remember Jacob where you began go back to the rock from which you were hewn and build there an altar unto me and forget the grand schemes of being a prince or of being an equal with the people of the land but go back to being a pilgrim and to living the life of a pilgrim and to living a life of faith in other words God really came to Jacob here again in another chastisement to deal with another thing in his life and he deals with it by dealing with his family or he deals with him through dealing with his family the

Lord knows how to deal with every single one of us and there are times when we question if we can stand up to all right even if we are hauled like Jacob we'll stand and the Lord will bring us through fire and water and to a wealthy place we'll see Jacob's return to Bethel God willing next time if we are spared may he bless our meditation on the truth let us pray our gracious God show us the path of life teach us to keep thy commandments and not to be in love with this world or the things which belong to it keep us from seeking to emulate the world around us or to be like them may we learn to live separately as the people of God governing all our lives and governing our families according to the word of truth which lives and abides forever take away your sins for

Christ's sake Amen yes son say say mother some saying say ha are lazy to die and return night bye Many fake cash bag 2023 Sai