Study of Jacob - Part 7

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Preacher: Rev Kenneth Stewart

[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.
[1:18] 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.

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.
[2:25] 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.

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 Sheolim, a city, and a city is a grand word really, for that it would really be a small village of Sheolim, which is in the land of Canaan, and he pitched his tent before the city.
[3:43] 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. 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.

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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. 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.
[5:04] 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, 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 Paddan Aram.
[6:13] 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.
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.
[7:29] 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. 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.
[8:49] 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 knees, 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.
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.

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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.
[10:01] 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.
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.
[11:09] 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. 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.
[12:13] 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. 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? 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're looking, for a job, when you're looking, for a place to study, for a college, a university, or a house, or anything?
[13:38] 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.
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.
[14:42] And I have served, as a servant, for labor. But no, I am a prince, with God, and a prince, with men. And he raises the altar, to God, the God of Israel.

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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.
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 will say, well if only, you'll raise me, from this bed of sickness, or if only you will help me, or extricate me out of this, I will never cease to praise you. My lips shall never be silent.
[15:49] 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 gloried in a limp.
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.
[17:11] 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.

Jacob 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.
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.
[18:10] 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, the sucker, 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 Echan's sin, when he disobeyed God, and he took, the precious garment, and he hid it, for himself. 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.
[19:19] 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, those people, 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.

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Something people, joke about, it, 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?
[20:25] 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. 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, seems 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 Dinah, 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.
[22:27] 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 is 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 that. You've lost that. They're mixed, and they've gone, and they've slipped, away from you.
[24:13] And you almost, expected them, just to turn out right. And you've lost them. And this happened, and it's began to happen, in a remarkable way, in Jacob's life.

Although strangely, the Lord, was to turn, these things around, 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.

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He's not like, the other man, of whom you read, Tamar, in the 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.
[25:26] 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 son, pipes up, as it were, and he says, whatever you want, he says, ask, name a price, any dowry, he 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.
[26:47] 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's something, that God's people, always have to be careful of, in 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 Hamer, 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. Now, 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.
[28:24] For example, we are told, that when Jacob heard, what had happened to Dinah, he held his peace, until his sons, came home from the field.

Now, perhaps you wouldn't attach, too much weight, 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 are told, that Hamer, 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 Hamer, 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. Now, you all know the story, of Joseph very well. How he was given, the coat of many colours.
[29:42] 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?

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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 heathen, in that kind of way? But Jacob is relenting, and Jacob is letting go.
[30:46] 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 Rehuber, 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.
[31:51] 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 world, he speaks of the same thing. Fathers should chastise, their children, in that precise, same way, the body, as well as the soul, 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?
[33:08] 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.
It 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.
[34:12] 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 covenant, yourselves, to the Lord, then we can mingle, and we can share, with 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.

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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.
[35:20] 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 showing. 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.
[36:27] If sin, has its way, and if the 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 Perizzites.
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.
[37:32] 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.
[38:29] 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, and 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, 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.
[39:47] And at the end of the day, it was the honor, 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.

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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. O my soul, come not, into their secret, unto their assembly, my honor, be not united, with them.
[41:06] 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 true. Simeon was a divided tribe, and came really, to nothing.
But, Levi's dividing, was very different. Levi's dividing, was that it was chosen, to be a tribe, of God, a priesthood, and it was spread, throughout, all the other tribes, the priestly city, was, 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?
[42:23] 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.
[43:32] 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 unequal, 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. 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 what's going on at all. But if we are the Lord's, we'll stand up all right. Even if we are halt, 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.
[44:32] 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. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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