

February 3-Genesis 34

Genesis 34 records for us a truly horrible account of lust, sexual immorality, deceit, and violence. Truthfully, there is absolutely nothing exemplary or even passable about the actions of all parties in this chapter. The account begins with the rape of Dinah by Schechem a Hivite. To make matters worse, the family of Schechem evidently decided that the best course of action was not extreme discipline. Instead, they chose to attempt to reconcile the situation by having Dinah wed her attacker! This obviously did not sit right with Jacob's sons, but their indignation which may have begun as righteous soon turned into their own sin of deceit and unmitigated violence.

Chapters such as Genesis 34 are written for our instruction. They are not to be emulated of course, but the wise believer is one who can learn from the mistakes of others. Obviously, there are many mistakes to choose from here, but one underlying influence may not be quite so noticeable. While Jacob's sons are the ones who deceive the Hivites in verse 13, the astute reader would no doubt observe that their behavior mirrors that of their own father. In fact, all the way back in Genesis 27 we read the account of Jacob's deceit in dealing with his father Isaac and brother Esau. In fact, Jacob was known as a deceitful and cunning man. He was accustomed to not operating in a truthful and righteous manner and now we see his sons following in dad's footsteps.

There is an important biblical truth at work in this text. The truth is this, that one reaps what he sows (Galatians 6:7, Job 4:8, Proverbs 22:8). This principle is bound by the truth that we serve a righteous and just God. God cannot and will not allow sin to go unpunished. While we may think that sin works to our advantage it always costs us in the end. This is true not just in our own personal lives but also in our influence and example to others. Parents, your lives are being closely and meticulously observed by your children. What you do is what they believe to be acceptable. Many times, the "crop" of our actions are manifest in the lives of our children. Be careful what you say and do, guard closely the way you act towards others because, so often your deeds of today are the seeds of your children's actions in the future!

Of course, there is one glorious biblical truth that we must meditate on today. While it is true that we reap what we sow and that God in His righteousness cannot overlook sin, it is also true that God in His love and mercy sent Christ to pay the ultimate price for our iniquity. This does not mean that there are not temporal consequences for our actions but it does mean that God allows us to reap the rewards of the faithfulness of Christ. Ultimately, it is the righteous seed sowed by Christ that yields our salvation. This salvation then is not of our own doing but given to us freely by God. But how can a righteous God give us what we do not deserve? The answer is that God is free to give us salvation because Christ took our wrath upon Himself. God did not overlook sin, instead He punished Christ so that you and I could stand before Him owing nothing! 2 Corinthians 5:21 tells us exactly how this took place as Paul writes, "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." It is because of the love of Christ that we reap the rewards of righteousness!