
SG020117

The Whole Counsel of God – Genesis 34-36,38

Got questions? Email Pastor Jason at jasonduff7@gmail.com

(You can download this message as a podcast by searching Jason Duff on I-Tunes)

Introduction & Overview of the Section

Introduction

Even though Jacob will live until the very last chapter of the book of Genesis, after this week the focus of the book is going to shift from his life, to the life of his most famous son, Joseph. But for one more week we get an insight into the life of Jacob and the life of His family.

Jacob's Family – Genesis 34-36,38

#1 – His Daughter – Genesis 34

Jacob does not fully obey the Lord and moves to Bethel. He stops 20 miles short in the town of Shechem. This decision would prove costly for the family. His daughter Dinah, wanting to see and be seen, goes into the wicked community, is raped by the prince and a family war breaks out.

#2 – His Wife and Father – Genesis 35

For a while in chapter 35, revival takes place in the family of Jacob, but once he leaves the city of Bethel where God commanded him to be, the tragic death of his wife and father follows. Not that Jacob caused those events, but as we see with our lives, sin makes life harder not easier.

#3 – His Brother – Genesis 36

Chapter 36 chronicles the family and lineage of Jacob's brother Esau. As has happened a few times in the text, the scripture will follow the unbelieving family line for a generation or two and then the text gets back to the main story of the Jewish nation and the lineage of their Messiah.

#4 – His Son – Genesis 38

Jacob had some strong moral failings and he passed those traits onto his kids. Judah and his sons commit some disgusting sins in this chapter, but what Moses is getting us to see once again is the line of Christ is filled with real people with real sins for which He eventually would come to die.

Key Issues or Words

“El Bethel” (35:7) – After some wrong turns in his life, Jacob comes to Bethel, and exhorts his family to truly walk with God, putting away their idols. Then he worships the Lord and renames “Bethel” which means, “House of God”, to “El Bethel” which means “The God of the House of God.” What Jacob is showing here is he is moving from simply knowing that God was in that place (Gen 28:16), to knowing the God of that place, personally for himself. This is the same thing that must take place in each of our lives.

By the way...

Genesis 35:22 – “Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine...

Rubin, Jacob's eldest son sleeps with Bilhah, one of his father's other wives. What we understand from the culture is this was a move to gain the inheritance. Taking the concubines of your father was seen in Near East culture as a validation of power. This is what is taking place later in the scriptures when Absalom, King David's son, would do the same thing. (2 Sam 16:20-22)

Homework 4 Next Week – Read Genesis 37,39-41

W020116 – 01/16/13

Genesis 34-36,38

“The Life of Jacob – part three”

Introduction

- Tonight we are going to continue our study in the foundational book of the Old Testament and really all of the Bible
 - Remember the content is not hard to remember, because the title says it all

The word Genesis means “beginnings”

- And truly so many things in scripture have their beginning in the book of Genesis
 - The universe
 - Life in general
 - Man, marriage
 - Sin and evil
 - Language, government, nations
 - Specifically we will see the nation of Israel
- In fact, understanding that this book means and is about beginnings really is a good way to divide up our look at this book as you can see in your book intro sheet

Outline for the Book of Genesis

Chapters 1-11 – The Beginning of all nations

- Chapters 1-2 – The Creation
- Chapter 3 - 5 – The Fall
- Chapter 6-9 – The Flood
- Chapters 10-11 – The Tables of Nations

Chapters 12-50 – The Beginning of the Jewish nation

- Chapters 12-23 – Abraham
- Chapters 24-27 – Isaac
- Chapters 28-36 – Jacob
- Chapters 37-50 – Joseph

Tonight we are going to finish up our study in the life of Jacob – He is going to live until the end of the book of Genesis, so don't get too sad - but the focus is going to shift from Jacob being the main character to Joseph – and we will begin his life next week – can't wait – such a great man to study – but for tonight we are going to wrap up Jacob

- We have seen Jacob go from being a heel catcher at birth, to stealing brother's blessing by deception
 - To being all alone, sleeping on a rock in the wilderness
 - To be deceived himself by his Father-in-law
- To now being the Father of the nation of Israel

And tonight we are going to explore that family a little further in looking at, if you are taking notes tonight

Jacob's Family – Genesis 34-36,38

#1 – His Daughter – Genesis 34

#2 – His Wife and Father – Genesis 35

#3 – His Brother – Genesis 36

#4 – His Son – Genesis 38

- And we look at each of these sections briefly and see the outflow of Jacob's life affecting his family
 - Before we get to this section tonight we need to understand some background

20 years before this event we find Jacob in a place he names Bethel

- He meets God in a real and wonderful way

But then spends 20 years wondering away

- He gets married (four times)
 - He has 13 children
 - The 12 sons will become the 12 tribes
- God blesses him financially

But then God calls him to get out of the place of his uncle Laban and return to Bethel, return to the place where he experienced the presence of God

- and Jacob goes from Laban
 - but then stops short of Bethel
 - In fact he ends up in Shechem (which is technically in the promise land), but 20 miles from Bethel
- And Shechem is a place of real carnality and sin

And though there will be grace – there are serious consequences to Jacob's compromise – and they all involve his family

- that is what we sometimes forget – our sin doesn't just affect us – it affects our kids, and others
 - and we see the tragic effects of compromise in Jacob's life through his family tonight
 - and we begin with his daughter – [let's start reading in chapter 33 verse 17 for context tonight](#)

Jacob's Family – Genesis 34-36,38

#1 – His Daughter – Genesis 34

- Jacob falls short of what God calls him to do, instead of moving to Bethel, which means - "the house of God"
 - He moves to Shechem, this place of compromise and sin

And the first evidence that this is true, we see in his daughter Dinah

- she wants to go out, so wants to see and be seen
 - and we understand this, this is part of our cultural as well
 - but it was not right
- In that culture, everything we have indicates girls of marriageable age were not permitted to leave the tents of their people without a chaperone.

In fact the Hebrew, "went out" bears a sense of impropriety.

- Not to diminish at all the sin of what happened to her, but she was putting herself in a compromising position

- And of course the first thing I think about is where was her Dad?

You see Dad's you have an important role, your daughters don't know boys, you do

- they think they know boys and how they operate
 - they say things to you like, you don't even know him Dad
 - listen – I know him, he is a boy, if you have met one and been one, you know them – kind of one size all for men
- She doesn't know boys
 - And if you have a dad that is running interference for you, you may think that is the worse thing in the world – but I praise God for your Dad
 - And if you don't have a Dad, then you need to be wise
- Again this is not to diminish the sin of what happened to her, this is not to say what happened to her was her fault – I don't believe that in any way
 - I am just saying, precious gals, be wise, be wise

Dinah wants the world, she wants to have friend

- her brothers have each other
 - But she is alone – and wanting friends, wanted to be part of what they were about.
 - So she goes to Shechem, this wicked and worldly carnal town, and starts to mingle with the sisters of the city

But while she is there, this man Shechem, from the city of Shechem, meaning he is the prince, (the good looking prince girls), comes to her and takes her sexually.

- Now in the language it is not entirely clear whether this was rape, which it could have been.
 - Or because she was in her mid teens the language can suggest that it violated her for that reason.
 - The Hebrew word used says that she was “defiled or violated” – it could be that she was raped
- But the same term would have been used if she had willingly went to bed with him, but the Bible stills see it as defiling, as violation because she is not married to this man – we say, that's not defiling, the Bible would beg to differ

We sometimes try to put our values on God and His Word, I don't feel that's wrong, God doesn't feel that's wrong

- but His word is clear
 - physical intimacy outside of marriage defiles and violates you
 - and God loves you, He is for you, but you need to repent, you are being defiled!
- Dinah was defiled
 - And as we read in the rest of the chapter, they actually have her, basically captive in their house

And then, shows you how messed up this family is, this son that just probably raped this girl, now thinks he loves her and wants to marry her

- the young man and his dad come and offer a marriage proposal

In fact they start saying, let's have a family merger – you marry our girls, we will marry your girls

- it will be great for you, you can go anywhere in the land – let's do this

And Jacob is just silent, he is not taking any leadership in this – but then the brothers show up – the young prince Shechem obviously doesn't realize Dinah has 11 redneck brothers that are fresh off the farm and they are not happy – Jacob isn't leading, so they will

- and men this is truth we need to hear
 - if you will not lead your family, like Jacob seems like he is struggling to do, then someone will fill that leadership gap
 - it might be your wife, it might be your kids or scarier yet, it may be someone outside your family

The brothers take charge and say – we would love to combine families, but there is this little issue, first you need to get circumcised – we can't have you uncircumcised men marrying our girls

- circumcision was the covenant symbol of Israel
 - it is the equivalent today of saying, oh you need to get saved before we can get married
 - and of course Dinah's brothers had ulterior motives for suggesting this – they were not planning on intermarrying with these guys, they were planning on killing these men not bringing them into the family
- But I think it is profound that the men of Shechem go along with this
 - This is a big deal to agree with
 - “They want us to do what?”- these grown men must have said

But the King and his son say, listen guys, just do this and you'll get to have a beautiful girl and some money

- and I find it so amazing what guys will do to get a girl, to get some money
 - that is why you must be careful ladies, - saying, Oh I don't date non Christians, and then the guy says back, well lucky for you, where do I sign up, I am very interested in church - be careful ladies
 - these men were willing to be circumcised in order to get a beautiful girl and some money
- you think your guy won't go to church, won't set through some services – you are kidding yourself

These men of Shechem go along with this, but then on the third day, the worst day of the pain, when these men couldn't really move, Simeon and Levi, come to this town

- which most scholars believe would have had at least 200 men, and these boys kill them all, then take their wives and their stuff and their kids as their own

Its horrible, its genocide, it's going far beyond what the Law would eventually say, taking an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth

- those laws were given by God not to say, well you poked my eye out, so I need your eye
 - it was about limiting the retribution – it was limiting what we see here
- What our flesh wants to do, what we want to do when someone has done something to us, we want to destroy them, we want to take it to a whole other level - That is normal and that is what the brothers are doing
 - The prince of this town, raped or at the very least violated the young girl in sleeping with her
- But these brothers kill all the males in the town, a vicious ending to a vicious story – Jacob has had enough – chapter 35...

Genesis 34-36,38 – Jacob’s Family

#1 – His Daughter – Genesis 34

#2 – His Wife and Father– Genesis 35

Revival sometimes follows dark circumstances

- as we get to chapter 35 Jacob has been facing some hard circumstances in his life
 - but before we begin to feel bad for him, remember we need to see that these hard circumstances are a result of some heavy choices Jacob had made

God told Jacob “you need to get out of the land of Uncle Laban and come to Bethel - “Jacob journeyed to Succoth and there built himself a house...”

- Jacob, who was suppose to go to Bethel, where he had once met the Lord, instead goes to Succoth, and then Shechem
 - And more than that – Jacob who like his grandfather Abraham and his father Isaac was suppose to dwell in tents (showing they were just passing through) is here building a house or taking up residence

What is the big deal why are you going into all this detail about insignificant things

- the reason is these things are not insignificant
 - you see Succoth and Shechem were towns known for their carnality and sinfulness
 - the Las Vegas of Jacob’s day and age

And here is Jacob, who is called to head to Bethel, the place he met God

- and instead he is settling in Shechem, a place of wickedness and sin
 - And just as there were devastating effects upon Lot and especially his family, so will be the result of Jacob’s lack of desecration

By the time we get here to chapter 35 – there is tension in Jacob’s home, murder on the part of his sons, his daughter has been raped

- all tied to his decision to settle in Shechem
 - and then the Lord speaks to him....
- “Jacob you have failed, what a loser... - no
 - “Jacob I am done using you, I’m picking a new father of my people....
No

The God of all grace and mercy, the God who is the same yesterday, today and forever. The same in the New Testament and the same in the Old says...

- “Jacob, arise, go to Bethel and dwell there
 - Jacob go to the place where we first met, where you first felt My presence and stay there Jacob, abide there, dwell in Bethel

And Jacob responds verse 2, “we’re going, family put away those foreign Gods, let’s get pure, let’s go to Bethel

Awesome Jacob, you’re getting it, and notice what happens immediately as Jacob obeys the Lord

5 Effects of Obedience

#1 - Revival in his family

- His kids, his wives, who were evidently involved in this worship of foreign gods, they hand them over – we are through with this stuff

#2 - Reconciliation of the family,

- where just moments earlier we read in the end of chapter 34, a mutiny ready to break out between Jacob and his boys. “Why won’t Dad defend Dinah who had been raped”
 - Now there is revival and reconciliation in his family

#3 – Worship in the heart

Next there is worship again in Jacob’s heart

- oh 20 years before He had met the Lord, and poured out his heart and life before him
 - but there had been a dryness in Jacob’s life, during this time
- But now he is back in Bethel – and worship becomes vibrant again
 - Revival, reconciliation in the home
 - Worship in Jacob’s heart and life

#4 - The Word of God returning to Jacob

- God is speaking to him again, revealing Himself to Jacob
 - Giving him promises and blessings
- Revival, reconciliation in the home
 - Worship in his heart
 - The Word of God to his ears
 - And finally..

#5 - Growth in Jacob’s life

- Jacob after worshipping and receiving the word of God, renames Bethel, **“El Bethel” = The God of the House of God**
 - Jacob goes from just knowing God was in that place to knowing the God of that place, personally, deeply

Jacob, after much defeat, after watching his family devastated, ripped apart. After experiencing dryness in his own life

- after all of that Jacob obeys and goes back to Bethel, to the house of God
 - and He watches revival happen in his house

- And worship back in his heart
- And the Word of God spoken to his ears
- Growth again in his life

Yet all of this is what makes verse 17 of chapter 35 amazingly sad to me.

“Then they journey away from Bethel...”

- Jacob – what are you doing???
- God said to dwell, to stay, to hang out in Bethel
- What are you doing????

But Jacob leaves and sadly the consequences are devastating

- The next passage we read is Rachel traveling in labor, then her death, the next passage we read about the death of his father Isaac
 - Now whether or not this would have happened in Bethel we can not say for certain
 - But it is interesting to me that Jacob is told to dwell, to stay in Bethel and when he leaves, problems follow

But why did he leave????

- there is only one indication in our text, and if you don't read carefully you could even miss it
 - We read in verse 8 that while in Bethel, Deborah, Rebekah's nurse died – so what???
- In those times and culture, Rebekah being Jacob's mom, her nurse would have had a huge part in the responsibility of raising Jacob

There would have been a tremendous emotional attachment to Deborah on Jacob's part. He buries her under what is translated, “The tree of mourning”

- it seems to be that this emotional disappointment, this circumstantial setback caused Jacob to leave the place God had called him to stay at

Jacob's grandpa Abraham also left Bethel, do any of you remember his reasoning

- there was famine in the land

So you see the picture

- Grandpa leaves for financial reasons

Jacob leaves for emotional reasons

- And yet with both cases, trouble and pain follows this decision to leave Bethel

Now why I am focusing so much on this

- the reason is there is a great lesson for us in this
 - because you and I are called to abide in the vine
- In John chapter 15 – Jesus makes the point I am the vine you are the branches – without the vine we can do nothing – so we must, we are called to abide, to dwell, to hang out and stay with the Lord
 - For many of us that translates in staying plugged in to God's word and the Bethel, the house of God, He has called us to be a part of

But even though we know this, there is always the temptation to not abide, to not hang out, to not be plugged into the house of God

- for some of us we do for a time, for a season, but then, we go into a season of not seeing the importance and the value
 - and why we do it is similar to Abraham and Jacob
- We are told to abide, but then problems arise in our lives

Sometimes they are financial problems

- sometimes they are emotional problems
 - But we are at Bethel and we wonder why these things happen to us when we are going for it with the Lord
 - So we drop out, we give in, we leave the House of God, Bethel

But friends I need you to see this – for those of us who are tempted to walk this path

- the road for Abraham and Jacob as they left Bethel was anything but easy
 - in fact more than just being hard it was followed by tremendous sin

Where do you find yourself this tonight? – Shechem?, debating leaving Bethel? – Don't do it

Abide in Bethel – hang out in Bethel – hang out where God wants you to be

- the reality is it was only 20 miles from where He was before
 - and the difference between us flourishing in our relationship with the Lord and failure, is often not that great
 - little decisions, little priority shift
 - huge ramifications

Genesis 34-36,38 – Jacob's Family

#1 – His Daughter – Genesis 34

#2 – His Wife and Father – Genesis 35

#3 – His Brother – Genesis 36

We are not going to read this chapter because it is mainly a genealogy

- God gives us the history of Esau for a chapter but then lets it go because remember the purpose of the Old Testament is to show us how we get to Jesus
 - So Esau is followed for a chapter and then we get back to the study of Jacob and his sons which will become the 12 tribes of Israel which of course Jesus is from
- Now something interesting to note in this genealogy is verse 11 one of Esau's sons is Eliphaz and he was from Temna – in the book of Job, one of Job's counselors was Eliphaz the Temanite and so many Bible scholars believe this guy is one in the same dating the book of Job about the time of Jacob, and Josephs

In fact in verse 33 we read of a ruler by the name of Jobab – and from what we know about Job from the book of Job is that he was wealthy and powerful – so some bible scholars think this could be one in the same

If that was true then Eliphaz would have been Job's uncle coming to advise him in his trouble

- We can't be certain but I love things like this that kind of tie the rest of the Bible together
 - Most Bible scholars believe this is around the time frame of Job
 - And what we are going to do, is when we finish Genesis, the children of Israel will be in bondage for 400 years – while they are there, we are going to take not 400 years but 4 weeks to study the book of Job together, and then get back to Exodus – so chronologically moving through the Bible – more on that in a few weeks

Now we will get into chapter 37 next week as we look at the last section of this book – The Life of Joseph

- but chapter 38 is just a little story on its own that show us more of the background of Jesus
 - now you think that would mean a good story is about to follow, but let's read it quickly together and I will make a few closing comments and then we can close in some worship so your minds can be cleansed from disgusting chapter 38...

Genesis 34-36,38 – Jacob's Family

#1 – His Daughter – Genesis 34

#2 – His Wife and Father– Genesis 35

#3 – His Brother – Genesis 36

#4 – His Son – Genesis 38

We have in these verses the sad picture taking form

- Judah, a son of Jacob
 - Leaves his homeland, and marries this pagan girl

His kids are incredibly wicked also

- Er, the Lord kills him
- Onan killed also
 - The reason had to do with a law at the time, that if the older brother died before having kids the younger was to father one in his place
- This would mean he would be the father of someone who had more honor than him
 - Onan wouldn't do it, so he was killed.

Some use this passage to preach against birth control

- But that isn't the issue at all
 - the Bible is silent about the issue of birth control - And where the Bible is silent, we must be silent
- When the Bible is silent we can lean on Romans chapter 14 where we are exhorted to be fully convince in your own mind

The picture gets darker

- Because Tamar knows she is never going to get the third son, she pulls this plot

Judah, again being were he shouldn't falls into sin

- Notice, so important, she asks for possessions – the cord (like bracelets), - his position, the staff – and his very person, the ring.
 - He gives these to her thinking he will get them back.

This is sin, men and women, and it always behaves the same.

- You think you can handle the price
 - But it will end up taking your possessions, your position and even your very person.

When I was a little kid, we didn't have veggie tales, there were two major Christian kids programs. One was Psalty and kids praise, but another was by Jimmy Swagert. I loved it. Jimmy Swagert is a man gifted by God to preach. And yet this man let pornography which led to his encounter not once but twice with a prostitute. His ministry was taken away, his position was ruined and his very person, a name that used to gather respect, now is the butt of jokes.

- sin will behave this way with you.

Judah finds out Tamar is pregnant, and he wants her burned, he must be a Christian, there is no hypocrisy like this except in the church – he has to be saved to act like this

- She must die
 - And that is the command until she says, okay, but this is whose child it is. Does this staff look familiar, what about this bracelet, how about the big J on this ring here – familiar?

Judah has to concede and Tamar has the twins.

Conclusion...

- Christ came from normal people
 - Your dysfunctional family can not be an excuse to use
 - Christ came to identify with us
- He has a crazy background
 - The question the Lord has for us, is what are you going to do now
 - He didn't say to Jacob – Jacob, you loser, He says, arise and go to Bethel – its time to get right Jacob

Chapter 35

I think fear fell on them because Simeon and Levi were crazy and they looked it – they just slaughtered a whole town by themselves