



THE BEGINNINGS!

The Book of Genesis

Faith and Family!

Genesis 36:1-37:36

Message #38 of 50 – S940

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Sunday Morning Service

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Faith and Family!

Genesis 36:1-37:36

Opening Comments

- Good morning – we will be in **Genesis 36**
- Today we continue our journey through **Genesis: THE BEGINNINGS!**
- This world not perfect – because people are not perfect
- And we don't need to look out into the world to find imperfect people
- Our own families provide ample examples of the imperfection found in people
- Today, we will begin to look at the life of a young man who grew up in one of the most dysfunctional families in the Bible and faced some of the most difficult circumstances one can imagine – and came out as a man of integrity and seemingly spotless character
- Let's pray and then look at Jacob's son Joseph
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **Faith and Family!**
- Before we get to Joseph, we are given the genealogy of Jacob's brother Esau
- They were twins and even in the womb they struggled with each other
- **Genesis 36:1-3**
- Esau was a man, controlled by his desires
- Married 2 Canaanite women, source of pain for his parents
- **Genesis 36:4-12**
- Amalek = Amaleites - First nation Israelites had trouble with out of Egypt - Wouldn't let them pass through land
- Were bitter enemies for hundreds of years
- **Genesis 36:13-43**
- Descendants of Esau = Edomites
- Edomites harassed & oppressed Israel
- Play villainous roles throughout OT

- Even in NT – Herod- Idumean = Edomite - had 2 year-old boys killed
- Conflict between descendants of Esau and Jacob continues today
- Focus now shifts to family of Jacob
- **Genesis 37:1-2**
- One-quarter of the book of Genesis is used to record the life of Joseph
- As Moses is writing these words down, he is leading the Israelites through the wilderness to the Promised Land
- This reminds them how they ended up in Egypt
- Nowhere in the Bible are we told that Joseph is a type or picture of Christ in the Old Testament
- But as we study his life, the parallels are hard to miss
- Jacob has four wives and twelve sons
- Benjamin was the youngest and he was born very recently by the wife he loved most deeply, Rachel – she died in childbirth
- Joseph is the second youngest of the twelve but the oldest son of Rachel – he was Jacob’s favorite
- ‘brought a bad report’ – not being a tattletale
- Was faced with a choice – look after the interests of his father or compromise and hide the truth of what his brothers were doing from his father
- Joseph knew what kind of men his brothers were
- He desired to please his father more than he feared his brothers
- Jacob didn’t hide his favoritism toward Joseph
- **Genesis 37:3-4**
- Instead of hiding it, Jacob flaunted it
- Coat was a symbol of Jacob’s intention to treat Joseph as the firstborn
- Needless to say, his ten older brothers were not happy about that
- **Genesis 37:5-9**
- Dreams are one of the ways God communicates with people
- They are all throughout the Scriptures
- They are promised as one of the ways God will interact with His people **Joel 2:28**

And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.

- Dreams play an important part in the life of Joseph

- He will be given dreams and he will be called upon to interpret dreams
- Interpretation of dreams is a gift from God
- Sometimes a dream is just what your mind was doing while you were sleeping – other times it is God speaking – God must give interpretation
- Sometimes the interpretation is so obvious that everyone gets it
- **Genesis 37:9-11**
- Jacob interprets this dream to mean that he is the sun, Rachel is the moon, and the eleven stars are Joseph's brothers
- That someday they will all bow down to Joseph
- Will be fulfilled in about twenty years
- This dream also serves as the interpretation for a verse in **Revelation 12:1**

Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars.

- 'woman' = the nation of Israel
- Some question Joseph's wisdom in sharing his dreams
- They were given to Joseph so that he could share them with his family
- God was going to do something – send Jacob and his family to Egypt
- He would send Joseph there in advance
- We will see shortly that it is these dreams are how God causes that to happen

- **Genesis 37:12-14**

- Jacob is concerned about his sons
- They went to Shechem – where the incident with Dinah took place and the atrocity that followed
- Tells seventeen-year-old Joseph to make the fifty-mile journey
- Joseph responds immediately – reminds us of Christ **John 8:29**

And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him.

- One of the ways we love God is by doing what He says – right now!

- **Genesis 37:15-19**

- The dreams of Joseph predicted that they would bow before their younger brother.

- Their envy of him made that inconceivable to them. The dreams were from God.
- They spoke of a future that was as certain as the rising and setting of the sun.
- Nothing the brothers could do would change the result.
- **Genesis 37:20-22**
- Rueben is the oldest – should take a stand for what is right
- Tries to work out a compromise
- **Genesis 37:23-25a**
- Their hatred and jealousy is so intense that they can listen to Joseph's terrified cries while they enjoy a meal
- This is the beginning of a very difficult time in Joseph's life
- But that difficult time was going to be used by God to do something great and good
- God never wastes our pain **Romans 8:28**
And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.
- It is not God's plan that Joseph die in that pit, so He providentially provides a ride to Egypt
- **Genesis 37:25b-28**
- In the blink of an eye Joseph went from being his father's favorite son destined for greatness to being betrayed by his family, stripped, bound, and being dragged away to Egypt
- The Ishmaelites were also relatives – Joseph's grandfather's (Isaac) half-brother's family
- Now it is time for the cover-up
- **Genesis 37:29-35**
- Jacob's grief is understandable
- It was not long ago that the love of his life, Rachel died giving birth to Benjamin
- Now his cherished son Joseph is gone
- He will mourn for him for the next 20 years
- Then the scene shifts back to Joseph
- **Genesis 37:36**
- This sets the stage for the next chapter – look at in two weeks

- Joseph grew up in about as dysfunctional family as you can imagine
- His father had four wives – we can only imagine what kind of drama that produced
- He had ten older brothers who were carnal, selfish, and violent
- His father treated him in a way that guaranteed that his carnal brothers would hate him
- Joseph didn't manifest any of the traits of his father or his brothers
- The Bible doesn't tell us why Joseph was so different – he just was
- But what this does teach us is that your family doesn't have to define you
- Maybe you grew up in a beautiful, nurturing, godly family – rejoice
- But it is probably more likely that you grew up in a family of imperfect people
- If we could pull our hearts out of our chest and examine it – we would see the scars of all the hurts done to us
- We would see the hardness of our heart caused by someone else's bad behaviors or treatment of us
- We would see the wounds that are still causing us pain
- And for most people there is nothing they could do about it
- But Christian, you are not like most people
- There is something special about you **1 Corinthians 6:19-20**
Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.
- Only God can fix the damage done to our hearts by others
- As Joseph is led away to Egypt, we can imagine that his heart is crushed – his own brothers had done this to him
- He will someday stand in the presence of his brothers again
- And he will have the power to take vengeance upon them
- But he doesn't – he sees God's sovereign, providential hand at work
- So, instead of judgment, Joseph loves, forgives, and reconciles with his brothers
- We don't have time to explore that fully this morning
- We will do it once we get to that chapter
- I want to leave you with something to think about

- What if you found yourself in the presence of the person who caused you so much pain? – for some it might be a daily reality
- Are you willing to love, forgive, AND reconcile?
- If you can't answer 'yes' to that question, God probably wants to do some work on your heart
- If you know this is big problem for you – come see me or Kelly or Pastor Randy or Debbie – we might be able to help
- Family is not always easy – too many imperfect people for it to be anything except imperfect
- But God is perfecting us through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit - helping us to live with imperfect people
- And if we cooperate in that process, we will reflect the likeness of Christ into our family and out into the world
- God will be glorified – others will be blessed – and faith will grow
- Let's pray and ask God to bless our imperfect families and to make us willing to be perfected by His Holy Spirit
- **Prayer!**