

Study Guide

Pray: Pray that God will show you something new in His Word and that you will be fully present as you consider these questions.

Read: Begin by reading Genesis 33 & 34 straight through, as you would read the chapters of any book.

Questions:

1. Was there anything in the passage read during the week or in the lecture (Friday morning) that was of particular interest, surprised you or caused you concern in the chapters these weeks?
2. **In Genesis 33:1-16**, we read of the meeting of Jacob and Esau, what about the reunion warms your heart and what surprises you (or not) about how Jacob divided up his household group?
3. What phrase is repeated in the passage (**V8,10,15**) that shows Jacob's hope for reconciliation and a change in their old patterns of interaction? In your opinion, was that hope realized, was Jacob's desire for a right relationship sincere or self serving?
4. (Personal question) Where do you see the need for reconciliation in your own life (family/work/community)? What have you learned from Jacob that inspires you to take steps toward reconciliation, or what have you seen Jacob do that you do not want to repeat?
5. Recall God's original promise in **Genesis 12:6-7**. Why is Jacob's arrival back in the region an important moment in his pilgrimage?
6. **Genesis 34** begins many years after **Genesis 33** ends. Jacob's children are now adults and they have remained in Shechem although God had called Jacob to Bethel (**Genesis 31:13**). Read **Genesis 34:1-4** and summarize the situation and crime chronicled there.

7. From **V5-7**, contrast Jacob's reaction to his sons' reactions. Considering what you know about Jacob, what are some possible reasons for his lack of response?

8. **V8-12**, what is the bargain that Hamor and Shechem try to strike with Jacob and his sons and what are the potential advantages of the "deal" from each point of view?

9. Comment on some of the dangers of interfaith marriage for those who seek to follow God's ways. Refer to **Deuteronomy 7: 3-6** or **Ezra 9:10-12** for God's view on this subject. What were Rebekah and Isaac trying to avoid when they sent Jacob to Laban in Genesis 28v.1.

10. What was the reply of Jacob's sons to Hamor and Shechem according to **V13-17**, and how did they appeal to the men of the city to get their agreement (**V18-24**)?

11. **V25-31** recounts a very disturbing incident resulting in the loss of innocent life, which stirs a range of emotions in us. Who was involved and what happened? What became of Dinah?

12. Have you seen or struggled with sin patterns in your own family, and how has this incident in Jacob's story been a sober warning about the consequences of sin or partial obedience?

Reconciliation and revenge have featured heavily this week. Take time to read **2 Corinthians 5:18-21** (in the New Testament) to understand that we can be reconciled to God through Christ, and once reconciled, are no longer condemned for our sin. That is great news in a harsh, sinful and unjust world.