

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

You are “God Almighty,” the God of blessing. You intervene in our lives, changing our character (our name) and calling us to holiness and obedience. I praise you today for the salvation which came to me through Jesus, the descendent of Jacob. How marvelous are your ways! (Ps 86:10).

Today in Your Word

Today you told me how Shechem raped Leah’s daughter Dinah. Jacob remained strangely silent when he heard about it, but Dinah’s full brothers, Simeon and Levi, were furious when they found out. They deceived Hamor and Shechem with an offer of intermarriage for circumcision, then killed every male in the city and took Dinah from Shechem’s house. The rest of the brothers plundered the city, making off with everything: flocks, herd, possessions, women and children. Jacob condemned Simeon and Levi for their violence and cruelty, and he feared that the Canaanites would destroy them all in retribution. But you came to Jacob and told him to return to Bethel. Jacob cleansed his camp of all idols and set out in obedience. You caused a terror to fall on the cities around him, and he arrived safe and unharmed. This story has great significance: (1) it explains why Jacob later cursed Simeon and Levi’s anger and prophesied that they would be scattered in Israel (Gen 49:5–7), (2) it sets the stage for further problems within Jacob’s family (Reuben and Bilhah), (3) it was used by you to call Jacob to renewed loyalty (all idols were removed), (4) it illustrates the danger of settling near a wicked city (Lot in Sodom), and (5) it highlights your supernatural protection of Jacob and your faithfulness to keep your promise in spite of Jacob’s tendency to get himself into trouble. Jacob worshipped you at Bethel, and you blessed him. He continued his journey south and finally returned home to his father Isaac.

Reflection

Simeon’s and Levi’s desire for justice was right, but their way of achieving it was wrong. When I’m tempted to return evil for evil, I should choose to leave revenge in your capable hands.

Request

Father, search my heart today and reveal any idols that have crept into my life. I don’t want anything to take your rightful place of supremacy.

Thanksgiving

Thank you for being patient with me! Your dealings with Jacob show how much you bear with our willful and headstrong tendency to go our own way.

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “[O God, to Whom Revenge Belongs](#)” – Isaac Watts.

Meditation Verse: Genesis 35:3.