

Your Future Told by Your Past

Genesis 49:1 And **Jacob** called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that **I may tell you *that which shall befall you in the last days.*** 2 Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; And hearken unto Israel your father. 3 **Reuben,** thou *art* my **firstborn,** My might, and the beginning of my strength, The excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power: 4 **Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel;** Because thou wentest up to thy father's bed; Then defiledst thou *it*: he went up to my couch. 5 **Simeon and Levi** *are* brethren; **Instruments of cruelty** *are in* their habitations. 6 O my soul, come not thou **into their secret;** Unto their assembly, mine honour, **be not thou united:** For in their **anger** they slew a man, And in **their selfwill** they digged down a wall. 7 Cursed *be* their **anger,** for *it was*

fierce; And their **wrath**, for it was **cruel**: I will divide them in Jacob, And scatter them in Israel.

1. Jacob's dying words

- a. He told them their future **1** And **Jacob** called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that **I may tell you *that* which shall befall you in the last days.**
- b. He blessed them **28** All these *are* the twelve tribes of Israel: and this *is it* that their father spake unto them, and **blessed them;** every one according to **his blessing he blessed them.**
- c. He commanded them
- d. Jacob's words reveal something about **human character and conduct**
- e. Their **past** would cost them in the future
- f. We reap what we sow in more ways than anyone can explain
 - i. Our children learn from us

- ii. Grace keeps you saved but doesn't deliver you from the consequences of your sin
- iii. Every decision you make is more than a step you are taking but a direction you taking
- g. I want to die instructing my children in the way
 - i. I dream of my last days being them coming near to hear
 - ii. Me instructing them and my grandchildren to follow Jesus and do right
 - iii. Then pulling my feet into the bed and dying **33 And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons,** he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people.
- h. What preparations are you making for your children's future
 - i. Are you leading them right now?
 - ii. Are you giving them a good example?
 - iii. Are you preparing a life that will keep on leading after you die?

iv. Do you know that they what you do says more to your children than what you are saying?

2. Instability will cause you to fail **3 Reuben,** *thou art my firstborn, My might, and the beginning of my strength, The excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power: 4 Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel;* Because thou wentest up to thy father's bed; Then defiledst thou *it*: he went up to my couch.
- a. Reuben is the oldest. His should be the privileges of the firstborn.
 - i. Dignity and honor
 - ii. Leading the family
 - b. Reuben's sin caught up with him **35:22** *And it came to pass, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine:* and Israel heard *it*. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve:
 - i. In his **arrogance** Reuben took his dad's concubine, second class wife
 - ii. He wasn't just lusting and having sexual relations

iii. He was **declaring** that he was now head of the family

1. King David took Saul's wives as his **II Samuel 12:8**

And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if *that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things.*

2. Absalom took David's wives when he took over the kingdom

iv. Reuben was **refusing to wait** to get his inheritance like the **prodigal son**

v. Though grace will keep you eternally you can and will suffer from your sins and wrong decisions

c. Instability, unstable like water speaks of **turbulence and weakness**

i. Unstable here speaks of passion

ii. Unstable is like boiling water

iii. Reuben was **quick to make decisions yet not strong enough to follow through**

d. Put your hand to the plow and do not look back

i. Unstable people don't get anything from the Lord

James 1:5 *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of*

God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and **it shall be given him.** 6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For **he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.** 7 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. 8 **A double minded man *is* unstable in all his ways.**

1. Believing one day and doubting the next
 2. Trusting and then distrusting
 3. Believing then getting discouraged
- ii. Looking back is a sure sign you are not fit [Luke 9:62](#)
And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.
- iii. You can't serve two masters [Matthew 6:24](#) No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.
- iv. Make up your mind to serve God. Die to yourself and your life. That is the only way to serve God

Luke 9:23 And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him **deny himself**, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. 24 For whosoever will **save his life shall lose it:** but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. 25 For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

e. Reuben's family doesn't do well in the future either. It seems that the dad's lifestyle affected those that followed him

i. His family gave leadership to the rebellion of Korah
Numbers 16:1 Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, **sons of Reuben**, took *men*: 2 And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown: 3 And they **gathered themselves together against Moses** and against Aaron, and said unto

them, *Ye take* too much upon you, seeing all the congregation *are* holy, every one of them, and the Lord *is* among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?

- ii. They didn't go into the promised land but stayed on the side where they first saw good land
- iii. They didn't go to battle with Deborah
- f. The way you live as an effect on your children and grandchildren. They are watching and learning
 - i. Don't think you can get away with sin even though you are in grace
 - ii. Don't think that you can arrogantly take for yourself things that God is not ready to give you
 - iii. If you have a problem following through then start with something and finish it
 - iv. Learn to keep going. Don't make excuses and look for reasons to quit
 - v. Decide what to think. Don't get discouraged. Don't accept those thoughts or that way of reasoning

3. Self will and anger will destroy your family 5

Simeon and Levi *are* brethren;

Instruments of cruelty *are in* their habitations. 6

O my soul, come not thou into their secret; Unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: For in their

anger they slew a man, And in **their selfwill** they

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fierce; And their **wrath**, for it was **cruel**: I will divide

them in Jacob, And scatter them in Israel.

a. Dinah got raped [Genesis 34:25](#) And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, that two of the sons of

Jacob, **Simeon and Levi, Dinah's**

brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon

the city boldly, and slew all the males. 26 And they slew

Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword,

and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out. 27

The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and **spoiled**

the city, because they had defiled their sister. 28 They

took their sheep, and their

oxen, and their **asses,** and that which was

in the **city,** and that which was in the **field,** 29

And **all their wealth,** and all their

little ones, and **their wives**

took they captive, and spoiled even all that was in the house. 30 And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites: and *I being few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house.* 31 **And they said, Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot?**

- i. No doubt that the brothers should have protected their sister
- ii. No doubt that they should have judged those that mistreated her

- iii. They lied to take advantage of the men. Telling them to be circumcised and be in a league together
- iv. It appears that justice wasn't their goal but rather an excuse to take their wealth covered up by their sister's tragedy
- v. Even dad seems to have been more worried about his own health and welfare than that of his daughter
- b. Cruelty speaks of being hard, severe, fierce, and to be stubborn
 - i. They had made up their minds
 - ii. They would not be stopped
 - iii. They would not only repay but go over and above giving them more than a just repayment
- c. Anger should be avoided **Proverbs 22:24 Make no friendship with an angry man; And with a furious man thou shalt not go: 25 Lest thou learn his ways, And get a snare to thy soul.**
 - i. There is a right kind of anger-against sin
 - ii. There is a way to be angry and sin not
- d. Self will is the opposite of God's will
 - i. It is placing yourself in God's place to make decisions

- ii. They rebelled against their dad and did what they wanted to do
- iii. The majority of my problems is me making the decisions that I want to make.
- iv. When I am on the throne, deciding, figuring it out and disobeying God then it is pretty obvious that I am my own god
- v. Give up your life and find life today