

Genesis 34: The Failure to Protect

By

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March 16, 2025

"I write to you, little children, Because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, Because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, little children, Because you have known the Father. I have written to you, fathers, Because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one."

-1 John 2:12-14

As we have talked about before, the latter half of the book of Genesis is almost exclusively about the moral growth and development of Jacob. In the previous couple chapters we have seen Jacob go on his own "hero's journey" from a boy to a man. In Genesis 34 we get another major transition in Jacob's life, the transition from young into an elder man. And what we can see from the above verse, is that this is the trajectory for all who walk after God. We begin our lives as little children, with no responsibility or maturity. In this phase, our only real aim is to know the Father and understand His care for us in the forgiveness of our sins.

While this is vital to begin our journey towards God, we are not meant to remain in our state of immaturity. We are then called to become "young men" (which although this passage is using only masculine pronouns is for all believers) and learn what it means to become "strong", to allow the word of God to abide within us, and to learn what it means to overcome the wicked one. This is the phase of life that we associate with Jacob's hero's journey. He is learning what it means to become a man, to overcome his selfish and destructive tendency, to take responsibility for his loved ones, to willingly confront his greatest fears, to submit himself to God's calling for his life, and to take responsibility for his failures.

The next stage is to learn to be a "father". This phase is not undertaken when we have "total victory" over our flesh, but like Jacob we are learning to discipline ourselves and pursue God. This allows us to be a "father" towards others. This is often literal, as we are called to effectively lead and grow our families in God, but it also is taken spiritually as we are called to act as a positive mentor for those less mature than us in the faith.

Unfortunately, we tend to be like Jacob, and many of the other great men and women of the Bible. In that the transition from being an individual trying to seek God, to learning to be a “father” towards others is, in many ways, more difficult than the transition from being a “child” to a “young man”. Beyond that, in many ways, there are less resources for us to learn how to make this transition than there are to move from a child to an adult. For many of us, we received talks from our parents and other mentors teaching us about this crucial transition that would radically transform our bodies and our souls.

But this transition, that arguably changes our bodies and souls even more than the initial transition, and that actually lasts much longer, (since the first phase of our life, being a child, really only lasts twelve or thirteen years, while being an adult only lasts until we are around 40, but the final phase of our lives, for many of us, will be longer than the first two phases of life combined), we are unfortunately left to figure out all on our own. A big reason for this has to do with our culture’s inability to wrestle with our own mortality.

In many ancient cultures, death was an unavoidable reality and one that people were confronted with on a regular basis. But in our culture, we hide from death in all of its forms. We place the sick and dying in facilities away from our society, we don’t kill our own animals to make our own food, and due to the miracles of modern science, death is a rarity for the young. All of this means that we are unprepared to confront our death, which is exactly what the latter half of life is all about. Meaning, that in the beginning of our life, we are rising towards our potential, we are learning to create our own goals, to become our own people and start our own family and legacy. But in the latter parts of our life, we are not moving towards our peak, but our end.

One of the few people that I know of that actually spoke about this reality was the 20th century Psychologist Carl Jung:

“Wholly unprepared, they embark upon the second half of life. Or are there perhaps colleges for forty-year-olds which prepare them for their coming life and its demands as the ordinary colleges introduce our young people to a knowledge of the world and of life? No, there are none. Thoroughly unprepared we take the step into the afternoon of life; worse still, we take this step with the false presupposition that our truths and ideals will serve us as hitherto. But we cannot live the afternoon of life according to the programme of life’s morning—for what was great in the morning will be little at evening, and what in the morning was true will at evening have become a lie.”

-Carl Gustav Jung - “Modern Man in Search of a Soul”

Jung points out that because we are unprepared for this phase of life, we try to solve the problems of old age in the same way that we solved the problems of our younger years, only to find they don't work. The reason for this is simple. In early life you are trying to see how you fit into the larger world, but in older life, you are preparing to leave the world. This is, in many ways, the dual meaning of most fairy tales. In fairy tales, the focus of the stories is the main character who is learning to transition from childhood to adulthood, but there is a hidden second meaning that should be absorbed by the adults reading these stories to their children. The reason why the main character has to face these challenges alone is because the parent is unable to make their own transition to being an elder in their kids life.

Take "The Little Mermaid" as an example. Ariel's father loves her and cherishes her in some pretty amazing ways in the beginning of the story, but when he finds that she is leaving "his world" to be on the surface with the man she loves, he destroys all her connection to "the surface" and storms off. This leaves her open to the predations of the wicked Ursula in order to solve her problem. What's the wisdom here? When we are young, we raise children to be dependent on us, when we get old, we are raising children to be independent of us. To put it another way, when we are young we raise our kids to behave in our presence, when we are older we raise our kids to live with our absence.

But this is just what our modern culture can't accept, that we will one day die and be absent from this world. Instead we grab hold of our youth and refuse to let it go. Later in the same essay Jung makes this observation:

"In primitive tribes we observe that the old people are almost always the guardians of the mysteries and the laws, and it is in these that the cultural heritage of the tribe is expressed. How does the matter stand with us? Where is the wisdom of our old people—where are their precious secrets and their visions? For the most part our old people try to compete with the young. In the United States it is almost an ideal for the father to be the brother of his sons, and for the mother if possible to be the younger sister of her daughter."

-Carl Gustav Jung - "Modern Man in Search of a Soul"

This role for the elderly is all but absent from our culture. The elderly are expected to strive in their careers just like a person in their youth, with no real distinction given to their age or wisdom. Which is supposed to be the main purpose of old age:

"Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day."

-2 Corinthians 4:16

Though our bodies are dying in old age, our minds have accrued much wisdom that can be shared and given to the next generation. However, just like many in our own culture, this transition was not understood by Jacob, and that is why he fails terribly in Genesis 34. So as we go through this chapter I will focus on just two things that Jacob didn't properly do which led to the tragedy that unfolds. The first is that he didn't offer proper protection, and the second is that he didn't administer proper justice.

The Failure to Protect

“Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land. And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her and lay with her, and violated her.”

-Genesis 34:1-2

As we can see from the above verses, in Genesis 34 Jacob confronts a parent's greatest nightmare, the rape and abuse of one of our children. To give a brief summary of the chapter, Jacob's daughter Dina is raped by local tribal leader's son and, seemingly by force, held captive by this man as he tries to negotiate a marriage with Jacob. As a result, two of Dina's full brothers, Levi and Simeon, concoct a plan to avenge their sister by tricking this tribe into undergoing the rite of circumcision so that they can slaughter all the men when they are vulnerable, rescue their sister, steal all their goods, and enslave all their children.

Since the topic of sexual abuse is such a sensitive one, I will try my best to clarify my points in a way that wouldn't lead to misunderstanding. So while in many cases, this type of tragedy is no fault of the parents, unfortunately in Jacob's case he is not innocent in this manner and the author of Genesis makes this clear to us. Notice how this event is introduced to us:

“Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land.”

It should seem a little odd to us that Dinah is introduced as “the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob..” and not simply as “Dinah the daughter of Leah and Jacob”. While the main villain of this story is indeed Dina's rapist, Shechem, it is unfortunately also true that Jacob's failures as a father led to her being abused. This chapter opens with Dina going to hang out with some other local girls. Normally allowing your daughter

to go play with other girls is a completely normal act, but we can tell from this story that there was a real danger to Dina in the culture that they were living in.

After we are told about the rape in some fairly disturbing terms (the phrase translated “violated her” in verse 2 is a Hebrew phrase that literally translates to “made her suffer), the details of the story become a little strange to us as modern people. First, the young man (Shechem) doesn’t just rape Dina, but he keeps her in the village and seems to fall in love with her and brazenly asks his father to barter with Jacob so that he can marry her. The lack of shame that Shechem shows for his actions would demonstrate to us that he doesn’t actually view his action as wrong.

To further expound on this point look at the language he uses to describe his marriage to Dina as well as the language his father uses when negotiating with Jacob’s family:

*“So Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, “Get me this young woman as a wife.”
-Genesis 34:4*

*“And make marriages with us; give your daughters to us, and take our daughters to yourselves.”
-Genesis 34:9*

They speak casually of women as property that can be both “given” and “taken”. This was unfortunately very normal for many ancient cultures, women were seen primarily as property to be bartered with, even look at how Laban treated his own daughters as tools in his plot to manipulate Jacob. Beyond that, the very little respect that women were given within their own tribe was virtually absent when it came to other people’s tribes. Meaning that in many ancient cultures, rape was considered a crime if it was towards a member of one’s own clan, but raping a foreign woman was not considered wrong at all. Notice that Shechem is not described as a delinquent in this chapter, but instead as

*“...more honorable than all the household of his father.
-Genesis 34:19*

In other words, he was one of the most well behaved young men of his tribe, and if this is the behavior of the most honorable of their household, we can only imagine the behavior of the less honorable men. Think back to the stories where Abraham and Isaac lied about their marriages out of fear that their wives would be taken by force and they would be murdered. Although this doesn’t justify their deception, it does show their awareness of this common cultural idea of women. It was only God’s people that

actually showed a difference in opinion towards this concept. This is why Rachel is not “sold” to Isaac, but is directly asked by her father:

“Will you go with this man?” And she said, “I will go.”
-Genesis 23:58

While requiring a woman’s consent for marriage was not unheard of in the ancient world, it was unfortunately quite rare and clearly not a part of the culture that Jacob’s family was living in proximity with. This also seems to be the reason why Esau offered an armored escort to Jacob in the previous chapter; this was a much more lawless culture that dealt with such matters in a truly barbaric and awful way. When we understand this, it makes Jacob’s behavior a little less excusable and points to his lack of care for Leah and her children.

The way we can understand this point in our modern world, when our children are little, our protection looks much different than when they are adolescents. When children are young, they are almost always in environments that we have control over, like our own households. We are always either physically present to protect them, or we have left them in the care of a trusted adult that will do the same.

When children become adolescence however, they will now be in situations and circumstances without direct adult supervision. In order to protect our children in these situations, we certainly can’t stunt their growth by continuing this form of protection, but we also can’t forgo all protection. The failure of Jacob was not to let his daughter go play with other girls, but he had clearly not adequately warned her about the dangers of that culture, nor taken any rational precautions. Jacob had clearly not made any close relations with the people of this tribe so that they could come to an agreement of protection for his family, nor did he send her brothers over with her to look out for her. She was all alone in a culture that did not see any sin within this behavior.

It is our responsibility as parents to prepare our kids to face the unique challenges of our given culture before we send them out into the world. If they don’t know how to protect themselves, and we are offering them no protection, then we have failed in our role as being a protector to our children.

The Sin of Favoritism

As bad as this is, it does seem that at least some of the blame is also due to Jacob’s sin of favoritism. This dynamic of favoritism is something that we have already seen glimpses of in previous chapters, like in Genesis 33, before Jacob knows that his

brother meant him no harm, Jacob intentionally lines up his family in order of his concern for their safety:

“Now Jacob lifted his eyes and looked, and there, Esau was coming, and with him were four hundred men. So he divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and the two maidservants. And he put the maidservants and their children in front, Leah and her children behind, and Rachel and Joseph last.”

-Genesis 33:1-2

Although we can have some measure of grace for Jacob considering the culture he was born into, we have to remember that Jacob is engaging in the particularly damaging sin of polygamy. Although Jacob intended only to marry Rachel, he wound up marrying her older sister Leah, as well as both of their handmaids and had children with all four women. Because of this, Jacob ended up favoring his children on the basis of their mother. Since he loved Rachel the most, he favored her firstborn Joseph above all his other children and gave lower levels of care to the rest of his kids. This is another reason why this chapter begins with this phrase:

“Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob...”

-Genesis 34:1

While this problem of favoritism will reach its absolute climax when Jacob's son Joseph is sold into slavery by his other brothers, we are already seeing some pretty dire consequences here.

While the specifics of this dysfunctional family are completely foreign to us today, the sin of favoritism is one that is all too simple to repeat. To a much lesser extent, this pattern can be repeated fairly closely in a modern blended family. When kids of the same parents have to cohabitate with the children of another parent, it is almost impossible for a parent to not show favoritism to their own children above the children of their spouse.

But even without that dynamic, in our kids' personalities, there will always be factors that make some children more appealing to us than others, and this will tempt us to favor those children above the others. As a result, when children feel unloved by their parents, they ultimately feel unprotected. In this circumstance, it is unlikely that these kids will ask for advice or help from a parent that they feel doesn't care for them.

Although this chapter doesn't make this point clear to us, it is possible that Dina stayed with Shechem by choice and not by force. This would be similar to my earlier reference to "The Little Mermaid". Because Ariel felt unloved by her father (though this wasn't the

case) she turned to an evil and demonic force in order to get what she wanted. It is unfortunately not that uncommon for malicious and evil people to abuse their victims and then manipulate them to stay by their own “free will”. There is even a verse in this story that seems to indicate this:

“His soul was strongly attracted to Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the young woman and spoke kindly to the young woman.”

-Genesis 34:3

Without getting too into the weeds, this young man’s culture had brought him up with a truly twisted view of love and marriage. This led him to believe that his actions were not at odds with showing love to Dina, which in some ways is scarier than the truly wicked person who knows that what they are doing is wrong. But in this twisted state it says that he “spoke kindly” to Dina. Which is a Hebrew phrase that means to “speak to her soul”. A villain like Ursula can speak to a vulnerable soul like Ariel and convince her that her dark designs are actually expressions of compassion for her plight. In the same way, this young man, whether maliciously or not, was able to convince his victim that he loved her and, possibly, get her to stay with him willingly.

This is yet another failure of Jacob, Because he did not exemplify proper love in his own home, his children were not protected from false and evil forms of affection. We are told explicitly in Genesis 29 that while Jacob did not love Leah, he continued to have sex with her and failed to properly care for her children. This toxic form of love was what Leah grew up with and gives us a bit of a clue as to why she would not be able to discern the toxic love of Shechem for what it was.

Once again, I want to be careful here, this does not mean that every child who is taken in by a rapist or a manipulator is because the parent failed to protect them. After all, we are not in the place of God as parents and can’t force our children to make right decisions. However, this does not negate our responsibilities to our children or our ability to offer some protection to them from these dangers. Once again, this is not a simple principle to learn though. The type of protection that we are offering our children at this phase of life is more through preparation and example than anything else.

The Lack of Justice

This whole situation gets even worse though when Jacob refuses to seek justice. When we are young, our responsibility is only to ourselves and we need to learn to take care of ourselves. As such, when we are young we really only know how to seek vengeance and don’t understand what true justice is all about. This is shown by the reaction of her

brothers. The reason why Simeon and Levi, who were two of her full brothers, seem to react this way to the news is because they had become accustomed to standing up for their side of the family. Since Jacob favored Joseph above them all, Simeon and Levi have had to act more like Dina's father than Jacob. And when they see their father acting passively in the fall out of this situation, it motivates Simeon and Levi to take matters into their own hands.

"Then Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him. And the sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard it; and the men were grieved and very angry, because he had done a disgraceful thing in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, a thing which ought not to be done. But Hamor spoke with them, saying, "The soul of my son Shechem longs for your daughter. Please give her to him as a wife. "And make marriages with us; give your daughters to us, and take our daughters to yourselves. "So you shall dwell with us, and the land shall be before you. Dwell and trade in it, and acquire possessions for yourselves in it." Then Shechem said to her father and her brothers, "Let me find favor in your eyes, and whatever you say to me I will give. "Ask me ever so much dowry and gift, and I will give according to what you say to me; but give me the young woman as a wife." And they said to them, "We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one who is uncircumcised, for that would be a reproach to us. "But on this condition we will consent to you: If you will become as we are, if every male of you is circumcised, "then we will give our daughters to you, and we will take your daughters to us; and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people. "But if you will not heed us and be circumcised, then we will take our daughter and be gone."

Genesis 34:6-17

Notice in the conversation, that while Jacob is unaware of his son's guile, he also doesn't take the lead in this conversation, nor does he seek any justice for his daughter. In fact, he seems more than ready to accept the deal that Hamor and his son are offering to him. While this doesn't at all justify the actions of Simeon and Levi, it does give a fairly good reason for them to act in the way that they do.

"The righteous shall rejoice when he sees the vengeance; He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked, So that men will say, "Surely there is a reward for the righteous; Surely He is God who judges in the earth."

-Psalm 58:10-11

As gruesome as the above Psalm might seem to us modern people, it expresses a truth that we don't understand very well anymore. The fact of the matter is that when leaders in a society show correct justice, they are actually manifesting the righteous justice of God upon the earth. They are revealing to those who trust them the nature of reality and

describing for us the reward of the just and the unjust. While this manifestation is not meant to replace the justice of God or to act in its place, seeing justice upon the earth gives the righteous a cause for trusting in God's ultimate justice and for allowing our wrath to subside in the comfort of God's good judgement.

But when correct judgement is not offered, people will wrestle with the goodness of God and might even see sin as being positive. Even in the New Covenant the apostle Paul says this about judging someone engrossed in sin:

"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us."

-1 Corinthians 5:4-7

Notice that the apostle Paul is worried, both about the soul of the one committing the sin as well as the overall well being of the church in question. When injustice is allowed to stand, it has a permeating effect within the culture that allows for iniquity to remain unjudged. In our modern culture we tend to think that a lack of justice is somehow merciful, not understanding the consequences of this type of thinking. Paul states that a person whose sin is not judged is unlikely to understand just how terrible their behavior actually is. If those who know the righteousness of God won't call out sin for what it is, who will?

Jacob's family were supposed to be salt and light to the tribes around them. Instead, Jacob tacitly endorses their negative behavior, first by not seeking justice, but second by agreeing to intermarry with the culture near to him. This has the effect first of making his own daughter feel as though what was done to her deserved no justice which denies healing to the victim. Second, it fails to show the one who did the wrong that his behavior has consequences. What stories like the one of Sodom and Gomorrah show us is that any society who fails to show even the most basic protection to foreigners is doomed. We can show false mercy to someone who commits wrong, but that doesn't change the moral order of the universe, and sooner or later the natural consequences of sin will always come upon the one who does wrong, both in this life and the next.

"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap."

-Galatians 6:9

The fact is, no one gets away with anything in this life. God's moral order stands and those who violate it will receive the consequences of their behavior. The more you study the wicked tyrants of the last century, the more you realize that even with all the wealth and power that they can accrue in their debauchery, they still end up miserable, paranoid, and alone. They sacrificed their eternal soul for mere scraps of pleasure within this world. This is the truth that Asaph saw when he lamented the, seeming, prosperity of the wicked:

“Behold, these are the ungodly, Who are always at ease; They increase in riches. Surely I have cleansed my heart in vain, And washed my hands in innocence. For all day long I have been plagued, And chastened every morning. If I had said, “I will speak thus,” Behold, I would have been untrue to the generation of Your children. When I thought how to understand this, It was too painful for me— Until I went into the sanctuary of God; Then I understood their end. Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction. Oh, how they are brought to desolation, as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors.”

-Psalm 73:12-19

Third, the failure to punish wickedness pollutes the society at large. Not only because the ones performing the wrong are permitted to continue in their actions, but also because the young within the culture can be swayed into thinking that this behavior is not wrong. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn was a journalist who survived the atrocities of the Soviet Gulag system (the Soviet equivalent of the concentration camps). After surviving he wrote about the evils of this system in his now famous work “The Gulag Archipelago” towards the end of the Soviet Empire. But he ominously warned that if the Soviet people did not demand a reckoning from the evils committed there, if they only mourned about what happened but did not seek justice out of a sense of “mercy”, he says this will be the outcome:

“In keeping silent about evil, in burying it so deep within us that no sign of it appears on the surface, we are implanting it, and it will rise up a thousandfold in the future. When we neither punish nor reproach evildoers, we are not simply protecting their trivial old age, we are thereby ripping the foundations of justice from beneath new generations. It is for this reason, and not because of the “weakness of indoctrinational work,” that they are growing up “indifferent.” Young people are acquiring the conviction that foul deeds are never punished on earth, that they always bring prosperity. It is going to be uncomfortable, horrible, to live in such a country!”

-Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn - “The Gulag Archipelago”

Now in retrospect, after over 30 years since the Soviet collapse, we can see the prophetic nature of his words. Without true justice, similar atrocities will continue to permeate the culture that fails to judge. So if our so-called mercy doesn't protect the victims of crimes, it doesn't protect the society at large, and it doesn't even help the ones committing the crimes, what possible reason, aside from cowardice, do we have to ignore our responsibility for justice?

And unfortunately, that is Jacob's motive. While Jacob doesn't struggle with the murderous vice of his brother Esau, he does struggle with the sin of passivity. He seems to avoid conflict at all costs and only confronts people when he is put in a position where he has no other choice. This is something that Jacob eventually works through, but his family suffers for his cowardice. Even after this series of events, Jacob can't even bring himself to judge the sin of his own sons.

"Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have troubled me by making me obnoxious among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites; and since I am few in number, they will gather themselves together against me and kill me. I shall be destroyed, my household and I."

-Genesis 34:30

Jacob's rebuke towards his sons is ultimately pragmatic and lacks any moral clarity. He doesn't declare their behavior wrong, he only says that they had "troubled" him by making him "obnoxious among the inhabitants of the land..." This is a selfish and weak rebuke. So beyond not actually physically disciplining his sons or bringing them to any form of justice, he can't even bring himself to correctly condemn their behavior. Is it any wonder that these same murderous sons who have been taught by their fathers failures that bloody vengeance actually works eventually turn their wrath against their father's favorite son? As stated before, Jacob does eventually learn this lesson and says this to his sons when he is nearing death:

"Simeon and Levi are brothers; Instruments of cruelty are in their dwelling place. Let not my soul enter their council; Let not my honor be united to their assembly; For in their anger they slew a man, And in their self-will they hamstrung an ox. Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; And their wrath, for it is cruel! I will divide them in Jacob And scatter them in Israel."

-Genesis 49:5-7

It is beautiful to see that he eventually got this point right, but many suffered on his way to figuring this point out.

Finally, this failure of Jacob's directly motivated these brothers actions. Because they saw no true justice come from their father, they genuinely felt that the only justice that could come was through their hands. And because they didn't have their father guide their hands, they struck these men without mercy or wisdom:

"Now it came to pass on the third day, when they were in pain, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, each took his sword and came boldly upon the city and killed all the males. And they killed Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah from Shechem's house, and went out. The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and plundered the city, because their sister had been defiled. They took their sheep, their oxen, and their donkeys, what was in the city and what was in the field, and all their wealth. All their little ones and their wives they took captive; and they plundered even all that was in the houses."

-Genesis 34:25-29

In this ruthless slaughter, the sons of Jacob waited for the men to be at their weakest and they butchered them in their beds, taking as plunder the women and the children. Meaning that the vengeance of Simeon and Levi resulted in even more innocence being sold and abused. It is true that they had good reason to be angry, but a just cause for anger does not excuse its excesses.

"So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God."

-James 1:19-20

While there is a way for young men to be able to forgive and control their wrath, without true justice as their guide, this is almost impossible. This failure of Jacob can be a manifestation of a stern warning within the Scriptures:

"And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord."

-Ephesians 6:4

While there are numerous ways that a father can provoke his children to wrath, this is certainly one of them. So as we conclude this study, let us have a sober meditation on the severe consequences that can befall us when we don't learn this lesson well. But let's also rejoice in the knowledge that our Father in heaven perfectly does all of these things in an ultimate sense. For the cross of Christ is both the perfect protection for His people, as well as the perfect manifestation of justice on this earth. God who is perfect in His justice and His love, did not simply wave His hand and pretend away the

wickedness of this world, but He judged sin fully on His own Son that we might be forgiven, (not excused), from our sin.

“But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.”

-Romans 3:21-26