



Sermon Study Guide  
February 10, 2019  
Part 6: Wherever You Go, There God Is  
Genesis 37

We've been following Jacob around for six weeks now, and if you've been paying attention, you've probably found yourself in his story. Like Jacob, maybe you've dealt with family drama, or maybe you've deceived people to get to where you are. Maybe you've got some coping mechanisms or habits that get you through the day - but they're not exactly healthy. In the long-term, they could actually be destructive. **Where have you found yourself in Jacob's story so far?**

In today's passage (Genesis 37), Jacob has gotten older and now has several grown children. You'd think by now, after all the hard lessons he's learned, Jacob wouldn't be making the same mistakes he made in his youth. And you'd be wrong.

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**Genesis 37:1-20** Jacob lived in the land where his father had stayed, the land of Canaan. 2 This is the account of Jacob's family line. Joseph, a young man of seventeen, was tending the flocks with his brothers, the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives, and he brought their father a bad report about them. 3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made an ornate robe for him. 4 When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him.

5 Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him all the more. 6 He said to them, "Listen to this dream I had: 7 We were binding sheaves of grain out in the field when suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright, while your sheaves gathered around mine and bowed down to it."

8 His brothers said to him, "Do you intend to reign over us? Will you actually rule us?" And they hated him all the more because of his dream and what he had said.

9 Then he had another dream, and he told it to his brothers. "Listen," he said, "I had another dream, and this time the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me."

10 When he told his father as well as his brothers, his father rebuked him and said, "What is this dream you had? Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow down to the ground before you?" 11 His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

12 Now his brothers had gone to graze their father's flocks near Shechem, 13 and Israel said to Joseph, "As you know, your brothers are grazing the flocks near Shechem. Come, I am going to send you to them." "Very well," he replied. 14 So he said to him, "Go and see if all is well with your brothers and with the flocks, and bring word back to me." Then he sent him off from the Valley of Hebron.

When Joseph arrived at Shechem, 15 a man found him wandering around in the fields and asked him, "What are you looking for?" 16 He replied, "I'm looking for my brothers. Can you tell me where they are grazing their flocks?"

17 "They have moved on from here," the man answered. "I heard them say, 'Let's go to Dothan.'" So Joseph went after his brothers and found them near Dothan. 18 But they saw him in the distance, and before he reached them, they plotted to kill him. 19 "Here comes that dreamer!" they said to each other. 20 "Come now, let's kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns and say that a ferocious animal devoured him. Then we'll see what comes of his dreams."

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**What are some examples of the sins Jacob “inherited” from his family?**

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**Deuteronomy 5:9** You shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me.  
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**What does it mean that God “visits the iniquity of the fathers...to the third and fourth generation? Why does the phrase “of those who hate me” matter?**

**Examples of one generation’s iniquities that can be “visited upon” future generations:**

- If a parent is alcoholic, the child is 4-6 times more likely to develop alcoholism.
- 8 out of 10 children of obese parents will become obese.
- If parents are divorced, the child is 40% more likely to get a divorce.
- Sons of sexually promiscuous fathers are twice as likely to cheat on their wives.
- Between 1/2 and 1/3 of all child abuse victims become abusers in adulthood.
- A boy who sees dad beating mom is 5 times more likely to beat his wife/girlfriend one day

**What are some of the tendencies or traits that you’ve “inherited” from your family?**

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**Galatians 3:1-14** You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. 2 I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by believing what you heard? 3 Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh? 4 Have you experienced so much in vain—if it really was in vain? 5 So again I ask, does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard? 6 So also Abraham “believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” 7 Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham. 8 Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.” 9 So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. 10 For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse, as it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.” 11 Clearly no one who relies on the law is justified before God, because “the righteous will live by faith.” 12 The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, it says, “The person who does these things will live by them.” 13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole.” 14 He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.  
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**What does it mean to you that Jesus redeemed you from the curse by becoming a curse? How does that fact change your life?**