

# (Genesis) Genesis 33:18-20

by J. Vernon McGee

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*The sermon explores Jacob's journey, the significance of his altar, and the lessons on spiritual growth and family dynamics.*

**Duration:** 5:44

**Scripture:** Genesis 24:3, Genesis 25:19-20, Genesis 25:28, Genesis 27:46, Genesis 28:2, Genesis 33:20, Genesis 35:1

**Topics:** "Genesis"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the sad and sordid chapter in the life of Jacob, who is now known as Israel. Jacob's life reflects a growth and development in his relationship with God. The speaker emphasizes that as Christians, our growth is slow and we may stumble along the way, but it is important to keep getting up and seeking a close walk with the Lord. The sermon also highlights the importance of heredity and environment in the lives of believers, as seen in Jacob's family and the troubles they faced.

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## Transcript

And now I read verse 18. And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padanaim, and he pitched his tent before the city. And he bought a parcel of field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamar, Shechem's father, for a hundred pieces of money.

And notice this, and he erected there an altar, and he called it El Elohi Israel. Up to this time, you'll find that this boy has not erected many altars to the Lord God of his fathers. He just hasn't done that.

But now he becomes a testimony for God. Now we are going to see, when we get to the next chapter here, that he made a mistake in stopping in this place. And we're going to see that there's a scandal in the family of Jacob, that Dinah, the daughter of Jacob, by Leah, is defiled by Shechem, son of Hamar the Hivite.

And Simeon and Levi, her brothers, her full brothers, they avenge this act by slaying all the inhabitants of the city of Hamar. And you can't justify that. And this is a dark blot on the family of Jacob.

And it reveals the fact that he didn't get away too soon when he left his uncle down in the land of Haran. We need to see that, that God was right in getting him away from that environment. There are two things that God in Genesis spends a great deal of time doing, and I must pause to call attention to it.

I think I have mentioned it once or twice. I've mentioned these things separately, but now let me mention them together. First of all is the heredity.

God is very much concerned that a believer marry a believer and that a believer not marry an unbeliever. That's important for the sake of heredity. Now the second thing is the environment of the individual.

And you see that especially in the life of Jacob. He has a big family. Not only were there 12 sons, there were daughters.

We are only given the record of this one because she features in this chapter here. And it's a sad one. It's a very sad one.

Now, therefore, there's something else for us to note here as we come to it, because this is important to the understanding of Genesis. And that is that there's trouble in the families. Have you noticed that? There was strife and trouble in the family of Abraham.

There was strife and trouble in the family of Isaac. We saw there that here was Isaac having a favorite. Esau was his favorite.

And Rebecca, well, her favorite was her son Jacob. And that caused trouble in the family a great deal. Now we see there's a great deal of trouble in the family of Jacob.

Well, he has quite a few offspring about. Now, he did stop here in Shalem. And he stayed here for a while.

And it's going to cause a great deal of sorrow that'll come to him. And very frankly, chapter 34, and we may not spend too much time with it next time, but it's a sad and sordid chapter here in the book of Genesis. We have another one coming up.

But this is a sad and sordid chapter. And it must have been a heartbreak to old Jacob at this time. And probably we ought to call him Israel because that is his new name.

And he's built an altar. And there's one thing that's for sure. He's giving now a testimony to the living and true God.

There is a change in his life. And it's a growth. It's a development.

And again, I want to make this statement because this is a lesson for us today. Don't expect that as a Christian that you're going to become full grown overnight. Now, God adopts you into the family as a full grown son where you're able to understand divine truth because the Holy Spirit is your teacher.

But your growth and my growth is slow. Progress is very slow because we may learn truths in the Bible, but we will find that in our lives that you and I go through very much like Simon Peter, stumbling here and falling down there. Thank God Simon Peter kept getting up and brushing himself off.

And there came the day when he had a very close walk with the Lord. In fact, he walked to the cross even as our Lord did. But you and I need to recognize that in our own lives, the growth is slow and therefore the growth in others.

Don't expect too much. I know sometimes parents of children that are converted, they expect too much of them. Let's not expect too much of other folk, but let's also expect a great deal of ourselves.

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