

STUDY THIRTY TWO

ENVY ROTS THE BONES

Genesis 36 & 37

Introduction

The account of Esau is summed up in chapter 36. From chapter 37 to the end of the book we have the account of Jacob. Jacob's account focuses almost entirely on the story of Joseph. God's hand is seen throughout Joseph's story. It is guiding and arranging everything to work out according to his plan.

Questions for Discussion

1.a) What does 36:6-8 tell us about Esau's relationship with God? (See Gen. 12:6-7)

b) In what ways did God bless Esau (36:5-7)?

c) Does God bless the sinner as much as the righteous? (See Mt. 5:45)

2.a) How did Jacob show favouritism to Joseph (37:3)?

b) What was the result of his favouritism (37:4)?

c) What is the relationship between envy and hatred (37:4, 5 & 8)?

3.a) What were the two dreams that God gave Joseph?

b) When Joseph gave God's message to his family what were the two responses (37:11)?

c) When we give God's message to people what responses should we expect? (See Ac. 17:32-34)

4.a) When the brothers saw Joseph from a distance what did they decide to do to him (37:18)?

b) What sins had they allowed into their hearts that led them to think this way (37:4, 5, 8 & 11)?

5.a) In what way was Reuben's thinking different from his brothers (37:21-22)?

b) Why did Reuben's brothers not listen to him (37:29-30)? (See also Gen. 35:22 & 42:21)

c) What does this tell us about the consequences of sin?

d) If we are forgiven for past sin do we still have to face difficult consequences? (See 2 Sa. 12:13-14)

6. Read Genesis 42:21 and imagine the scene with Joseph crying out from the pit and his brothers eating their meal.

a) How could the brothers be so cruel?

b) How should we react when we see cruelty to ourselves or to others?

For Further Thought And Action

Think of any situation in which you have envied someone else. Do you still envy that person? Thank God for blessing both them and you.

Memory Verse

A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones.

Proverbs 14:30