

Daily Devotional, June 8, 2020

“Instruments of Cruelty”, (Genesis 49:5, NKJV)

“Simeon and Levi are brothers; Instruments of cruelty are in their dwelling place.”
(Genesis 49:5)

On his deathbed, Jacob, who is also called Israel, cursed these two of his sons. He went on to say, *“Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce.”* This is a reference to what is known as the Dinah Incident, which is recorded in Genesis Chapter 34. Shechem had raped Dinah, the daughter of Jacob, and sister of Simeon and Levi. Simeon and Levi were not satisfied to bring justice upon Shechem only. Instead, they killed Hamor the father of Shechem also. *“The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and plundered the city, because their sister had been defiled”* (Genesis 34:27). They took justice beyond what is reasonable, killing the innocent in addition to the guilty, and then they engaged in looting of the city. Jacob their father was not a part of their lawlessness, and when he saw what had been done, he rightly rebuked his sons.

We see this today. Consider those innocent folks who have been injured and even died as collateral damage in violent acts in response to a crime that had been committed elsewhere. David Dorn, a 77-year old retired police captain was murdered by looters in St. Louis. His life mattered. Mr. Dorn was a member of the human race. If the color of his skin is important to you, look it up for yourself. But I know that he, Mr. Floyd, all of the men and women of our police departments, and all of you, were created in the image of God, objects of God’s love, so much so that He sent His Son to die for us all. We pray the violence stops soon.

Let us finally bring forth a personal application. If some injustice has been done to you, please do not take retaliation. Maybe someone at work is besmirching your reputation. Maybe your neighbor is doing something annoying to you. Maybe your spouse has offended you. If a just response is needed, let it be done honorably and lawfully. Choose the way of Christ whenever you can. Choose to forgive rather than retaliate. *“All who take the sword will perish by the sword”* (Matthew 26:52). Let not your anger and bitterness fester. *“Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men”* (Romans 12:17). *“Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God”* (Matthew 5:9). Friends, we proclaim the name of Christ. Let us never partake and be *“instruments of cruelty.”*