

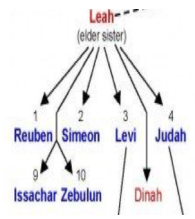
## e-concepts

### A Weekly Publication of Relational Concepts Inc.

#### Lessons from Jacob's Blessing of Simeon

By Jerry Collins

*"Simeon and Levi are brothers; Their swords are implements of violence. Let my soul not enter into their council; Let not my glory be united with their assembly; Because in their anger they slew men, and in their self-will they lamed oxen. Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; And their wrath, for it is cruel. I will disperse them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel"* (Genesis 49:5-7).



**Verse 5—Simeon and Levi are brothers**—The mentioning of *brothers* seems to mean more than biological, but that they were in this blessing together due to being in league with one another. They were brothers in particular by joining together in common actions. In this case, the adage “partners in crime” would be apropos.

- **Their swords are implements of violence**—These would have been the knives of circumcision they had used against the man Shechem who had seduced their sister Dinah (Genesis 34:13-15). The circumcision was merely a ruse so that Simeon and Levi could slaughter the people. *Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, each took his sword and came upon the city unawares, and killed every male. They killed Hamor and his son Shechem with the edge of the sword* (Genesis 34:25-29). They were men of anarchy and violence.

**Verse 6—Let my soul not enter into their council; Let not my glory be united with their assembly**—Because of the violence of Simeon and Levi, Jacob would have nothing to do with their deeds or thoughts.

- **Because in their anger they slew men, and in their self-will they lamed oxen**—They had acted in pride and anger and their revengeful rampage had been violent and ruthless.

**An Application**—We should not act under the impulse of uncontrolled anger. The point is the need for self-control. Solomon warned *like a city that is broken into and without walls is a man who has no control over his spirit* (Proverbs 25:28).

**Verse 7—Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce and their wrath, for it is cruel**—The cursing of such violence eliminated these brothers and their tribes from the leadership of the nation as well.

- **I will disperse them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel**—Simeon was later swallowed up in the tribe of Judah, and Levi eventually received an honorable dispersion among all the tribes as the priestly tribe.

**PT**—God makes a moral judgment on the wicked vengeance and violent slaughter of Simeon and Levi. By doing so, God distinguished holy war from such hostile and vindictive behavior. Vengeance is mine says the Lord. Revenge is God's business.



#### Observations from the Tribe of Simeon

- The tribe of Simeon decreased in number from the beginning to the end of the wilderness wandering. In Numbers 1:23 their adult male population was recorded as 59,300, while in Numbers 26:14 (the second census nearly 40 years later) it was at 22, 200.
- It's difficult to know what happened to Simeon when the United Kingdom was divided into the northern and southern kingdoms during the reign of Rehoboam, son of Solomon. But along with other tribes, some Simeonites *set their hearts on seeking the Lord God of Israel... to sacrifice to the Lord God of their fathers* (2 Chronicles 11:16).
- During the reign of King Hezekiah, many from Simeon migrated farther south to the land of Edom, where they conquered and displaced Amalekites who dwelt there ... *from the sons of Simeon, five hundred men went and destroyed the remnant of the Amalekites* (1 Chronicles 4:42-43).
- Regardless of the outcome for the tribe, their small number and few references are testimony to the truth of Jacob's prophecy: *I will disperse them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.*

Census of the Tribes of Israel at the Beginning and End of the Exodus						
	Numbers 1		Numbers 26		Difference	
	Tribe	Camp	Tribe	Camp	Tribe	Camp
Camp of Judah (East)						
Judah	74,600		76,500		1,900	
Issachar	54,400	186,400	64,300	201,300	9,900	14,900
Zebulun	57,400		60,500		3,100	
Camp of Reuben (South)						
Reuben	46,500		43,730		-2,770	
Simeon	59,300	151,450	22,200	106,430	-37,100	-45,020
Gad	45,650		40,500		-5,150	
Camp of Ephraim (West)						
Ephraim	40,500		32,500		-8,000	
Manasseh	32,200	108,100	52,700	130,800	20,500	22,700
Benjamin	35,400		45,600		10,200	
Camp of Dan (North)						
Dan	62,700		64,400		1,700	
Asher	41,500	157,600	53,400	163,200	11,900	5,600
Naphtali	53,400		45,400		-8,000	
National Total	603,550		601,730		-1,820	

**An Application**—Having an aggressive spirit and attitude is not a quality developed of the Holy Spirit. Intimidating, conniving, and controlling others may get you ahead, but will also bring you in conflict with God. Remember, James said that *the anger of man does not bring about the righteousness of God* (James 1:20).