

**Bible Devotions: Lock Stock & Barrel**  
**Devotional Reading for Outdoorsmen**  
**(Old Testament)**

Genesis 34:26; 49:5-7  
Uncontrolled Anger

*And they killed Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah from Shechem's house, and went out.*

*Simeon and Levi are brothers; instruments of cruelty are in their dwelling place. Let not my soul enter their council; let not my honor be united to their assembly; for in their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they hamstrung an ox. Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; and their wrath, for it is cruel! I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel.*

Simeon and Levi, Jacob's second and third sons, literally went on the warpath when Shechem, prince of the country of the Hivites, defiled their sister, Dinah. Their plot for revenge was deceitful and cunning – very much like father like son. With weapons in hand, they plundered and destroyed Shechem's city, as well as Shechem and his father, Hamor.

The story is not pretty. In one chapter we find lust, greed, deceit, anger, pain, death, passion, enslavement, destruction, and fear. Jacob himself was critical of their actions. In Genesis 34:23, we read, "Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, 'You have troubled me by making me obnoxious among the inhabitants of the land...'" He had reason to be concerned. Other people of the land were a threat to his welfare. He sure didn't need his two mean sons fueling that fire. Later on his deathbed, Jacob had more harsh words and reminders, words that also speak to believers today.

*Let not my soul enter their council...* Jacob wanted no part of Simeon's and Levi's deeds. Likewise, a Christian's irresponsible actions will cause others to disregard the merits of what he has to say. That would be devastating when we're trying to tell someone about Jesus.

*Let not my honor be united to their assembly...* In an effort to protect what good name he had, Jacob placed distance between his honor and the dishonorable acts of his two sons. For the Christian, honor is a large part of our integrity. Honor influences others as we carry out our personal and group ministries. But people are driven away or led astray by dishonorable behavior.

Jacob reminded Simeon and Levi that their violent anger and self-will were the reasons he would not enter their council or join their assembly. Note that self-will is associated with anger. It could be that when someone is violently angry, it is because he cannot get his own way. It is oppressive and terroristic for one to harm and scare others to get his own way. As believers, we are to yield to God's way. John spoke about this when he said of Jesus, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30).

*I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel...* Finally, Jacob told Simeon and Levi that there would be consequences for their fierce anger and cruel wrath. Years later, Simeon's territory was included in Judah's share (Joshua 19:9). The tribe of Levi was not granted a territorial allotment since their inheritance was the Lord and their dwelling was among all the Israelites (Deuteronomy 10:9). Both Simeon and Levi were eventually divided and scattered. As Christians, we must be aware that anger, uncontrolled and cruel in its display and practice, will always cause division.

For the Christian sportsman, there's no place for uncontrolled anger when it comes to the right to keep and bear arms. In embracing this right, we can be glad that arms-bearing Americans are the safest people around. Unfortunately, some folks resort to cruel and angry means in order to bring harm to their fellow man, usually in an effort to get their own way or satisfy their desires. It's a shameful thing to do and it's indignant of a nation to let it go unanswered, just as it would have been for Jacob to have remained silent about his sons' actions.

Every Christian will eventually find himself facing a horrible act or a really bad person. Anger, then, might be justified. The anger we express must be kept under control, tempered with righteous determination to thwart, out-manuever, and defeat spiritual wickedness. Armed or not, there's no room for uncontrolled anger in daily living for Jesus.

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## Bible Devotions: Hook Line & Sinker (study guide)

Genesis 34:26: 49:5-7

Uncontrolled Anger

### HOOK

1. What wrong-doing makes you most angry or upset, especially regarding the outdoors?

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2. In your view, how is liberty in America strengthened by the right to keep and bear arms?

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3. List three acts of honor you personally practice and how you guard each one.

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### LINE

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Do you have an anger problem? If so, what sets you off? How will you change this behavior? If not, how do you manage anger? Be specific.

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How do you respond to others who express excessive anger, to the point of wanting their own way? What clues you in as to why they are angry? How will you express your firm resolve?

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### SINKER

Take a few minutes to write your thoughts on this devotional. Reflect on your own experiences.

Key words:    anger                    honor                    oppression and/or terrorism

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