



TALKS FOR GROWING CHRISTIANS TRANSCRIPT

Talk Genesis 34:1-12: The Sad Account of Jacob's Daughter Dinah at Shechem

"Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land. 2 And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her and lay with her, and violated her. 3 His soul was strongly attracted to Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the young woman and spoke kindly to the young woman. 4 So Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, "Get me this young woman as a wife."

5 And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter. Now his sons were with his livestock in the field; so Jacob held his peace until they came. 6 Then Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him. 7 And the sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard it; and the men were grieved and very angry, because he had done a disgraceful thing in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, a thing which ought not to be done. 8 But Hamor spoke with them, saying, "The soul of my son Shechem longs for your daughter. Please give her to him as a wife. 9 And make marriages with us; give your daughters to us, and take our daughters to yourselves. 10 So you shall dwell with us, and the land shall be before you. Dwell and trade in it, and acquire possessions for yourselves in it."

11 Then Shechem said to her father and her brothers, "Let me find favor in your eyes, and whatever you say to me I will give. 12 Ask me ever so much dowry and gift, and I will give according to what you say to me; but give me the young woman as a wife."

Background Notes

After the happy reunion between Jacob and Esau in Genesis 33, Jacob settled in a place called Succoth, on the east side of the Jordan River. We don't know how long Jacob lived there, but it was long enough to build a house and barns. After some time Jacob moved across the Jordan River and settled in the area of Shechem. The Hivites, a pagan tribe, lived in Shechem at that time (v2). The Hivites were one of the groups that God would tell Joshua and the children of Israel to drive out of Canaan at the time of the conquest. In Joshua 24:11, God recounted the conquest of the land under Joshua: *"Then you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. And the men of Jericho fought against you—also the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. But I delivered them into your hand."*

So the Hivites were one of the Canaanite tribes that lived in the land. Jacob settled near Shechem; he raised his family there; he bought land there, and he dug a well there, which became known as Jacob's well. It was at this same well that the Lord Jesus met the Samaritan woman, many years later (John 4). You can visit Jacob's well today and still draw water from it. Ancient Shechem is the present-day city of Nablus.

The sad events of Genesis 34 took place while Jacob was living near Shechem. His daughter Dinah was raped by Shechem, the son of Hamor, who was the ruler of the area.

"And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her and lay with her, and violated her" (v2).

Shechem showed no remorse for his sinful act, but he had fallen in love with Dinah and at least he was willing to marry her. The laws of these pagan people did not condemn Shechem's violent act -- after all, he was the prince, so he could do whatever he wanted. In fact, he may have been admired for his "conquest"! Hamor, his father, did not rebuke his son. Instead, Hamor and Shechem tried to work out a deal with Jacob and his sons, not only for Shechem and Dinah to be married, but also for intermarriage and trade between the two peoples for the future.

Doctrinal Points

1. Concerning the wickedness in this world, the Bible tells it like it is!

Genesis 34 is not one of the pleasant chapters of the Bible. We not only have the rape of Dinah in the first half of the chapter, but we have a massacre in the second half of the chapter, when the sons of Jacob killed all the men of Shechem. So this is not a chapter of the Bible that gives you a nice warm devotional feeling as you read it. In fact, Genesis 34 is not an easy chapter from which to preach. When was the last time you heard a sermon from Genesis 34? Maybe never! It's interesting to notice that many commentaries pass completely over this chapter, or they may only pause to make a few remarks and then move on.

Why would God put a chapter like this in the Bible? Because the Bible "tells it like it is," when it comes to the wickedness that is in this world. The Bible does not sweep sin under the rug. The Bible does not euphemize wickedness. Concerning the wickedness in this world, the Bible tells it like it is!

Although this chapter is not pleasant reading, it is evidence of the authenticity and the inspiration of Scripture. If the story of Jacob were merely a "Jewish legend" of human origin (as some of the liberal critics of the Bible like to say), there would be a tendency to omit or cover up ugly events and have Jacob emerge as a squeaky-clean hero. After all, Jacob was one of the great patriarchs of the nation of Israel! But in Genesis 34 Jacob appears as a failing father, who didn't properly care for his daughter Dinah and or properly train and control his sons!

Well, this chapter is no "Jewish legend"! This is the inspired Word of God, and the inspired record does not hide the truth. The Bible tells it like it is! Sin and failure are **not** omitted or glamorized or covered over in Scripture. The ugliness of sin is included. Concerning the wickedness in this world, the Bible tells it like it is!

2. Concerning the wickedness in this world, let the believer beware!

You've heard the expression, "Let the buyer beware!" -- right? In other words, don't get taken in -- don't get ripped off! On our tours to the Middle East, before we go into the market place, we always tell our tour members, "Let the buyer beware!" In other words, don't be deceived or taken in and ripped off by unscrupulous merchants.

When it comes to the wickedness in this world, let the believer beware! The world may seem like a fun, friendly, inviting and entertaining place, just like Shechem. But let the believer beware! Jacob should have been more aware of the dangers of Shechem. After all, Shechem was a city of this world. The inhabitants of Shechem were not believers – they were pagans! Jacob should have been more concerned about the possible negative effects of Shechem on his family.

In verse 1 we read in verse 1 that Dinah, who was Jacob and Leah's daughter, went out to visit the daughters of the land. Dinah was probably a teenager at this time. Like all teenagers, Dinah wanted to go out to the "Shechem Mall" to meet her friends. It was natural for Dinah to want to have some girlfriends, but Jacob and Leah should have been more concerned about the Dinah's whereabouts. Maybe they should have asked some of Dinah's older brothers to go with her. Or perhaps Dinah went out to see her friends without parental permission. We don't know all the details, but in any case, Jacob should have been aware of the situation! Shechem was a city of this world, and this world is wicked.

Let the believer beware! We live in a wicked world. Don't ever get the idea that this world is really not so bad after all. The values and attitudes of this world system are not only contrary to the biblical standards, but the world system is out to **undermine** God and His Word.

Recently we saw an appalling example of just how wicked this world really is. For political reasons, the US Senate voted to continue the horrible practice of "partial birth abortion." It is hard to believe that this procedure is actually legal and occurs on a regular basis in our country. To allow a living infant to be almost born, and then insert the points of s scissors into the base of its skull in order to suction out the brains, is **worse** than tragic! The excuse that the health of the mother is at risk is blatantly false. It's an outrageous lie. The bottom line is, this is a wicked world!

Don't be fooled into thinking this world is fun or good or loving -- the world is **filled** with wickedness, and Satan is out to deceive whomever he can. Let the believer beware!

Practical Applications

1. Parents, consider your children when deciding where to live.

Apparently Jacob didn't consider his family when he decided where to settle down. Jacob was a wealthy herdsman. No one forced him to move to the vicinity of the pagan city of Shechem. This was a huge mistake, especially while his children were growing up. Clearly, they were heavily influenced by the pagan culture and immorality of Shechem.

There's a lot of pressure on us today as to where we live, because of jobs and careers, etc., etc., etc. However, parents, I hope that at least you **consider** your growing children when you decide where to live. Look first for a good church for your family to attend. Find out about the youth program. Take a good look at the community. Find out about the schools and the influence of the school environment. Consider your children when deciding where to live!

2. Teenagers, honor your parents for considering your wellbeing.

Teenagers, right now you probably think that your parents poke their noses into your affairs way too much -- right? Well, remember, that's because they love you! And (believe it or not!) they know more about the dangers of this world and the wickedness of this world than you do.

You may not agree with me now, but a few years from now you will! Do you remember the familiar quotation, spoken by Mark Twain about his father? "When I was fourteen years old, I thought my father was a fool. By the time I was twenty-one, I was amazed at how much he had learned in just the last seven years!" So true!

Teenagers, even though it seems hard right now, honor your parents for caring for you, and considering your safety and wellbeing in their decisions. They really do know more about this world and the wickedness of this world than you do at this point! Even though you think some of their decisions are so stupid, and they don't understand, and they're wrecking your life, and so on, remember that they love you, and they're looking out for you! Teenagers, honor your parents for considering your wellbeing.