

Genesis 34 – The Consequences of Indifference

I. Jacob's Passive Indifference Brings Conflict (1-7)

A. Jacob's Daughter is Defiled (1-4)

1. Shechem Rapes Dinah (1-2)

a. Dinah goes out to see the women of the land (1)

- i. The text makes sure we know it is Leah's daughter (Jacob's least favorite wife)
- ii. Dinah is the full sister of Levi and Simeon
- iii. Dinah leaves the protection of her father's tents to "see" the women of the land
 - this implies that Dinah wanted to adopt the customs of the women of Canaan
 - she is the only daughter in a house full of brothers

b. Dinah is defiled by the prince of Shechem (2)

- i. Notice the same language used here as in Genesis 6
 - Shechem "saw" her and "took" her
 - Just as the sons of God saw and took the daughters of men
- ii. Dinah is raped by Shechem
 - Literally the text says – he took her, layed with her, and humbled her
 - these same verbs appear in 2 Samuel 13:14 to describe Amnon's rape of his half sister Tamar

2. Shechem Desires To Wed Dinah (3-4)

a. Shechem's heart is taken with Dinah (3)

- i. Literally – his soul clung to her and spoke to her heart
- ii. "speaking to her heart" – probably means he tried to comfort her
 - speaking to the heart means comfort in Isa. 40:2
 - It means to speak kindly in Ruth 2:13
- iii. Shechem truly loves her after violating her

b. Shechem seeks to marry Dinah (4)

- i. "this girl" – none of the participants in the story use her name
- ii. She is mediated for as a commodity
- iii. It is common for a father to negotiate the marriage for his son – in fact it is his responsibility

B. Jacob Is Passive In Leading His Family (5-7)

1. Jacob Holds His Peace (5)

a. Jacob hears of Dinah's defilement

b. Jacob is home while the brothers are out in the field

- i. Jacob is responsible for allowing his daughter to wander off
- ii. Jacob has a responsibility to care for and oversee his family

c. Jacob does absolutely nothing when he finds out

- i. Is he scared? Worried about his reputation? Is he waiting till the boys come home to use them as leverage?
- ii. At this point we don't know the answer, though it will become clear at the end

d. Jacob is seen as passive and indifferent to the suffering of his daughter

2. Hamor Actively Seeks Out Jacob (6)

a. Hamor (Shechem's father) takes initiative to fulfill his responsibility to his family

- i. This is in stark contrast to Jacob's behavior
- ii. It doesn't even appear that Jacob ever speaks to Hamor or Shechem – his role in this chapter is completely passive

b. Hamor goes out to find Jacob

3. Jacob's Sons are Angry (7)

a. The sons are indignant about what happened to their sister

b. The sons are angry because of the outrageous act perpetrated

c. Jacob has shown now leadership with his daughter, and he will show none with his sons

- i. Notice that although Jacob is passive in this chapter, he seems to be the focus of the writer
- ii. The boys are called the sons of Jacob, and Dinah is called Jacob's daughter
- iii. Jacob will continue to hold his peace

II. Jacob's Passive Indifference Brings Disastrous Sin (8-29)

A. The Sons Negotiate With the Hivites (8-17)

NOTE: Hamor negotiates with them all, but only the sons answer, Jacob continues to hold his peace and do nothing

1. The Hivites Make an Offer To Israel (8-12)

a. Their Requests (8-9)

- i. They request Dinah be given to Shechem (8)
 - He claims that Shechem love the girl
 - He makes no mention of the crime committed
 - Perhaps as a ruler, he thinks the prince was entitled
 - He desires to take her as a wife

NOTE: We will find out that through all this, Dinah is being held in the household of Shechem

ii. They request Israel intermarry with them (9)

- This should alert us to what is truly going on
- Intermarriage with the people of the land has always been a source of temptation and a threat to God's people
- This was the issue in Gen. 6 – God refused to allow the line of the seed to be corrupted (Abraham and Isaac also didn't intermarry)

~ If they would have agreed to intermarry, would Jacob have cared?

~ What happened to the Jacob that wrestled with God?

b. Their Offer (10-12)

i. Hamor offer full rights to the land (10)

- the family of Israel is offered full rights to the promised land
- the temptation to see God's promise fulfilled – but not fulfilled by God Himself
- He wouldn't have to struggle in the land anymore. He wouldn't have to wait on God any longer

NOTE: Jacob has already demonstrated a half-hearted obedience in settling near Shechem (After this, God will command him to go back to Bethel)

ii. Shechem offers to pay whatever they ask (11-12)

- In addition, Shechem speaks up and offers whatever price the family decides
- He seems impulsive but he also seems to truly be in love with Dinah (or still lusting)

2. The Sons' Deceitful Counter Offer (13-17)

a. The Angry Sons Deceive The Hivites (13)

- i. The writer alerts us that the sons of Jacob are scheming
- ii. Genesis clearly condemns the actions of the brothers although they will try to justify themselves

b. The Son's Propose a Counter offer (14-17)

NOTE: Why are the sons negotiating?

i. She cannot be married to one uncircumcised (14)

- circumcision is the sign of the covenant, the sign of the family of God
- they are right about intermarrying but this is a ruse for their real plan

ii. All Males in the city must be circumcised (15-16)

iii. This stipulation is non-negotiable (17)

B. The Sons Murder And Plunder The City (18-29)

1. The City Agrees With Israel's Demands (18-24)

a. Shechem is circumcised immediately (18-19a)

- i. This pleased them? Really?
- ii. Shechem wants the girl. Hamor wants the wealth.
- iii. Shechem is circumcised right there!

b. The Offer is presented to the city (19b-23)

- i. Let us dwell with them (21a)
- ii. Let us intermarry with them (21b)
- iii. Let us agree to their condition (22)
- iv. Let us benefit from their prosperity (23)

c. The men of the city are circumcised (24)

- i. Really? Just for a good business proposition?
 - 2. The Sons of Jacob Attack The City (25-29)
 - a. Simeon and Levi kill all the men (25)
 - i. Two of Dinah's full brothers "took" swords – just like Shechem "took" Dinah
 - ii. The sons of Jacob have used the sign of God's covenant to murder the men of the city
 - they have defiled the covenant as Dinah was defiled
 - they have taken vengeance and sinned against God
 - they have become murderers
 - b. Simeon and Levi rescue Dinah (26)
 - c. The Sons plunder the city in vengeance (27-29)
 - i. The remaining sons take the wealth and families of the city
 - ii. They plunder the city because of what Shechem did to Dinah
 - iii. They have far exceeded the Lex Talionis
 - iv. They have become raiders and plunderers
- III. Jacob's Passive Indifference is Explained (30-31)
 - A. Jacob Only Cares About Himself (30)

NOTE: Here Jacob's reasoning for being passive is explained

 - 1. Jacob worries about his reputation in the land
 - a. He is not concerned about Dinah
 - b. He is not concerned that his sons have sinned against God
 - c. He is not concerned that his sons have slaughtered and enslaved a city
 - d. He is worried that his reputation among the people of the land will suffer
 - 2. Jacob worries about his survival in the land
 - a. Jacob's motivation is fear of being exterminated by the people
 - b. Jacob fears that his household will be destroyed
 - c. What happened to Jacob's faith in the promise?
 - B. The Sons Feel Justified in Their Actions (31)
 - 1. The sons believe what they did was right
 - 2. The sons believe that deception and murder are justified