



Genesis – 34:1-31  
A False Love  
(Lesson #43)

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**Outline for this week:**

- Dinah visits some young girls in the land (34:1)
- Dinah is kidnapped and raped by Shechem (34:2)
- Shechem desires for Hamor to secure Dinah as his wife (34:3-4)
- Hamor pleads his case with Jacob and then Jacob's sons (34:5-10)
- Shechem adds to the offer (34:11-12)
- The sons of Jacob deceive Hamor and Shechem (34:13-17)
- Hamor and Shechem convince the Hivite men to be circumcised (34:18-24)
- Simeon and Levi kill the men of the city (34:25-26)
- The sons of Jacob, plunder the city (34:27-29)
- Jacob expresses his concerns that their actions have put the entire family into danger (34:30-31)

**34:1** Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to see the women of the land. 2 And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, the prince of the land, saw her, he seized her and lay with her and humiliated her. 3 And his soul was drawn to Dinah the daughter of Jacob. He loved the young woman and spoke tenderly to her. 4 So Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, "Get me this girl for my wife."

**Vs 34:1** - We have **no idea** how long they have dwelt in the land of Shechem, but at some point, after Israel had moved to Shechem from Succoth, Dinah, the only daughter mentioned by name, the daughter as Moses reminds us that was borne of Leah went out to see the women (likely young ladies) of the land. Likely, this was not a one-time event, but rather reflects that Dinah began to interact with the **young ladies of the land**.

**So you know...** The phrase "women of the land" is used only one other time by Moses:

*"Then Rebekah said to Isaac, "I loathe my life because of the Hittite women. If Jacob marries one of the Hittite women like these, one of the women of the land, what good will my life be to me?" (Ge 27:46 ESV)*

It is possible that this carries some type of negative connotation, but I do not believe that is necessarily the case. Rather it seems she began to interact with **young Hivite ladies** of her **own age**.

Before we advance the story, we wonder... **How old is Dinah?** The best estimate is a **young teenager**. The oldest she would be is likely 17. **So, 13-16 is probably a good estimate.**

**Vs 2a** - As she is interacting with some of the young ladies of the land she draws the attention of at least one young man of the Hivites and his name is Shechem.

The **Hivites**, who are they:

*"15 Canaan fathered Sidon his firstborn and Heth, 16 and the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, 17 the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, 18 the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites. Afterward the clans of the Canaanites dispersed." (Ge 10:15-18 ESV)*

The **Canaanites**:

*"24 ¶ When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him, 25 he said, "Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be to his brothers." (Ge 9:24-25 ESV)*

Let's start with what we know about the person involved and then move on to the back half of the verse.

**First the person:**

- 1) We can already imagine this is a **significant person**, for the city is named after him. Shechem the son of Hamor
- 2) He is a **Hivite (Canaanite descent)**
- 3) He is **“the prince of the land”**
- 4) We saw last week:  
*“And from the sons of Hamor, Shechem’s father, he bought for a hundred pieces of money the piece of land on which he had pitched his tent.” (Ge 33:19 ESV)*

This is one of the sons of Hamor (who is **likely the king** or at a minimum **the chieftain**) who Jacob purchased the plot of land from. This was someone they were familiar with and who was politically very well positioned and very powerful.

**Now the actions:**

**Vs 2b** - Now let’s look at this horrible crime that was executed against this young lady. The details are sparse, but here are the base facts that Moses tells us:

- 1) Shechem **saw her**, so in her coming and going as she interacted with the local ladies, Shechem saw her, she was likely beautiful, he was likely lusting after her, he saw her.
- 2) He **seized her**. The Hebrew word brings with it the idea of **taking, capturing, or stealing**. It is likely the idea is that he **grabbed her, he over-powered her, he kidnapped her, he abducted her**, and likely he took her to the royal home of his father.
- 3) He **lay with her**, he had forced sex with her.
- 4) He **humiliated her**. He **forcibly raped her and he defiled her, he humbled her, he afflicted her**.

Equally, as best we can tell, so that you see it now, she has become more or less a prisoner in the **royal house**.

As far as I can tell this is the first case of rape in the Bible. It occurred as a **Hivite (Canaanite) Prince raped an Israelite teenage girl**.

**Two things here:**

**We now have an additional hint** as to why God cursed the Canaanites, for the wicked people they would become. You will see that begin to play out today.

**There is a New Testament principle** that we should keep in mind:

*“Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?” (2Co 6:14 ESV)*

**Vs 3** - So what appears to have **started as lust** that drove Shechem to **abduct and rape** Dinah, further develops in **some type of strong desire** to keep her as his wife. A strong **desire to marry her**.

Further, Moses tells us that he **“loved”** the young woman and he spoke tenderly to her. **This statement about love** is all following his **lust driven craze** that caused him to **both abduct her and to rape her**, all of these tender feelings are following him **humiliating her**.

We do not know what is happening as the text is developing. Is Dinah being held captive unable to leave Shechem’s home or palace? That is what it looks like.

So now we are told he loves her. Now let’s be clear, this is not “agape” love, this is not a godly love. If we are using Greek words and ideas this is “eros” love, a passion, or a carnal love.

**APPLCIATION:** If your partner is abusing you, your partner does not love you! Lust cannot wait to get, real love cannot wait to give (ICor 13).

**Vs 4** - Shechem then speaks to his father Hamor and says: *“Get me this girl for my wife.”* So what started as **lust, abduction, a violent attack and rape** is now turned into, please work to **get me this girl to be my wife**.

It seems that Hamor knows everything that has occurred. Assuming that is true, and we will see it develop, we wonder, why he does not correct his son, why he does not rebuke his son?

It seems to me, Hamor has become an **accessory after the fact** to **kidnapping, rape, and false imprisonment!**

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*5 Now Jacob heard that he had defiled his daughter Dinah. But his sons were with his livestock in the field, so Jacob held his peace until they came. 6 ¶ And Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him. 7 The sons of Jacob had come in from the field as soon as they heard of it, and the men were indignant and very angry, because he had done an outrageous thing in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, for such a thing must not be done.*

**Vs 5** - We are not sure if this is all in the **same day**, or if this has **been developing over days**. But it seems like the same day. Somehow Jacob learns that Shechem has defiled Dinah.

**Had this become common knowledge in the town?** We cannot know for sure, but it appears to be a possibility.

We are then provided the additional details that his sons, **his eleven sons**, were all out working his massive flocks and herds of livestock.

Jacob, now likely **over 100 years old, but less than 108 years old** learns what has happened to his **oldest and only named daughter** (Dinah)

Imagine all the thoughts and feelings that are going through Jacob's mind! But with his sons in the field, Jacob takes no immediate steps but instead "holds his peace" until they come home.

**Vs 6** - Hamor dispatched by his son (**the rapist**) goes out to Jacob to speak with Jacob. **Now imagine you are Hamor, what will you say to Jacob?**

We have no idea **about everything that was said in this exchange** and we **wonder** if this is when Jacob learned about the crime against his daughter, or did he already know when Hamor showed up?

Bottom line, Hamor is trying to secure Dinah as a wife for Shechem, so he goes to Dinah's father (Israel or Jacob) and speaks with him.

We have **no indication** that Hamor was **shocked, surprised**, or even **saddened** by what his son had done. There is no indication that Hamor **apologized** for what his son had done.

By the way, as you picture this, I am holding back something, I am going to say it so that you picture this correctly in your mind, it appears that **Shechem is with Hamor** this whole time!

**Vs 7** - Ultimately as the day is drawing to a close, all of the sons of Israel (Jacob) come in from the field and **now they learn what has happened to their sister Dinah**. Upon learning about what had happened they were:

- 1) **Indignant:** They were **grieved, vexed, hurt, or even tortured**.
- 2) **Very Angry:** They were **exceedingly, much, or abundantly angry**, the Hebrew word translated angry is **חרה (charah)**, it means **hot, furious, burning with anger**.

Then Moses clearly tells us why they were filled with fury and burning anger: **because he had done an outrageous thing in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, for such a thing must not be done**.

This act by Shechem against Dinah was an **outrageous thing**, it was a **disgraceful thing**, it was a **profane thing** that had been done against Israel and against Dinah. Notice "**in Israel**", here the title Israel is applied to the entire group, the four women, the 11 sons, and Dinah.

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*8 But Hamor spoke with them, saying, "The soul of my son Shechem longs for your daughter. Please give her to him to be his wife. 9 Make marriages with us. Give your daughters to us, and take our daughters for yourselves. 10 You shall dwell with us, and the land shall be open to you. Dwell and trade in it, and get property in it." 11 Shechem also said to her father and to her brothers, "Let me find favor in your eyes, and whatever you say to me I will give. 12 Ask me for as great a bride price and gift as you will, and I will give whatever you say to me. Only give me the young woman to be my wife."*

**Vs 8** - So the boys have come in from the field and a conversation that started with Israel (Jacob) now includes **Israel's eleven sons!** Keep in mind, you will see it in a second, **Shechem is there the whole time.**

You will **notice from this point forward that Jacob is silent**, his sons do all of the talking, his sons do all of the negotiating, Jacob becomes silent.

Hamor speaks with them, but he is completely **bypassing the crime** that has been executed by Shechem, this is **lacking any remorse** by the father **or the villain.**

Notice Hamors words at the end of verse 8: *Please give her to him to be his wife.* This is so insensitive that it is breathtaking!

**Vs 9 - Further Hamor says:** And **not just Shechem and Dinah**, let us make marriages between our peoples. Between you the sons and daughters of Israel and between the Hivites.

This was never God's plan. Here is what God said to the nation when they came out of Egypt (De 7:1-4).

If you are a believer, this is not God's plan for your life either. *Do not be unequally yoked.*

**Vs 10 - Further Hamor says:** It is more than just marriages between our two peoples. You can **dwell with us**, the land will be open to you. You can dwell in the land, you can trade in the land, you can acquire more property in the land. This is an **offer of citizenship.**

**Arnold Fruchtenbaum:** *"Ancient records show that the land of Canaan was comprised of city-states with nomads around the periphery who hoped to become citizens of these city-states."*

Here **Jacob receives an offer of citizenship** and its **associated rights and protections.**

You see the offer. We will not treat you like outsiders but instead like **you are among our people.** You are nomads, **we will bring you into our clan.** That is the offer this chieftain is making to the sons of Israel!

**APPLICATION:** The world is continuously making us the same offer, just compromise on one or two points and join us, life will be so much easier!

**Vs 11-12 - Vs 11 is at first surprising.** For we see that **Shechem speaks. It is likely that he has been here this whole time.** He has been quiet as his father has worked to secure a deal that would cover the heinous act that he hoisted against Dinah.

The abductor and rapist who is currently holding Dinah in his house, speaks and it is not to apologize, or even to own his heinous acts, but instead to work a deal!

Let me find favor in your site – So asks the unrepentant rapist, and I will pay (monetarily) whatever you ask.

**Vs 12** – I will pay any bride's price as well as any additional gift you might ask. We have talked about the bride's price before, in particular with Jacob as he paid 14 years of wages for Leah and Rachel.

As we have discussed the bride's price was common in the ancient Near East.

**Shechem** seems to be willing to **pay anything** to have Dinah as his bride.

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*13 The sons of Jacob answered Shechem and his father Hamor deceitfully, because he had defiled their sister Dinah. 14 They said to them, "We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one who is uncircumcised, for that would be a disgrace to us. 15 Only on this condition will we agree with you — that you will become as we are by every male among you being circumcised. 16 Then we will give our daughters to you, and we will take your daughters to ourselves, and we will dwell with you and become one people. 17 But if you will not listen to us and be circumcised, then we will take our daughter, and we will be gone."*

**Vs 13** -Here Moses provides us some **additional commentary that** we will see play out in the coming verses. Namely that Jacob's sons answered Shechem and Hamor **deceitfully**. Within their answer was, as you will see, **a plan**.

**Jacob's sons take the lead in the negotiations** and Jacob simply drifts out of the picture. We have **nothing he thinks**, nothing **he says**, nothing **he does**. It seems from my perspective that, for the moment, **Jacob is MIA!**

**Arnold Fruchtenbaum:** *"The brothers took the lead in the negotiations, which was not unusual in that society. Earlier in the book, Laban took the lead for the negotiations for Rebekah (24:50, 24:55-59)."*

Again, a lot we do not know, we can imagine after Hamor and Shechem spoke, there was a time that Jacob's sons stepped away to consider the plan, it was there that they likely **conspired** to accept Shechem's plan. Equally, it appears that the eleven were able to hatch this plan and Israel (Jacob) knew nothing about it. Had he left the discussion, we simply do not know where Israel is during discussion and agreement.

We have talked about this before, here the **Bible is descriptive, not prescriptive**.

**Vs 14** – So, they say to Shechem, this sounds like a great plan, **but we cannot do this thing**. We cannot **allow our sister to be given to**, to marry a man who is not **circumcised**.

It would be disgraceful for us. **It would be a reproach for us**. Now it has been many chapters since we have discussed circumcision, so a refresher is in order (Gen 15:6; 17:1-5; 17:9-12; 17:22-24).

So, although nothing has been said about it since. It is clear that **Isaac circumcised Jacob and Esau**. Equally clear is that **Jacob circumcised his sons born of Leah, Bilha, Zilpha, and Rachel**.

**Vs 15-16** - But the sons of Israel (Jacob) offer a **counterfeit counteroffer**. There is a single condition that would cause us to agree with you. You need to become like us. Namely, every male in your tribe, in your clan, the Hivites, at least the ones that dwelt in the city of Shechem, need to become circumcised.

But where is Jacob (Israel) at this point in the story? Israel is strangely absent and strangely silent!

**Vs 17** - If **all the men of the city will not** do what we ask and become as we are by being circumcised, then we will take Dinah our sister and we will be gone.

That is the only way this can ever work. This is the **counterfeit counteroffer** that is made by Israel (Jacob's) sons. It is an all or nothing, there is no middle ground and **this is done under deceit**.

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*18 Their words pleased Hamor and Hamor's son Shechem. 19 And the young man did not delay to do the thing, because he delighted in Jacob's daughter. Now he was the most honored of all his father's house. 20 So Hamor and his son Shechem came to the gate of their city and spoke to the men of their city, saying, 21 "These men are at peace with us; let them dwell in the land and trade in it, for behold, the land is large enough for them. Let us take their daughters as wives, and let us give them our daughters.*

**Vs 18** - So when the story opened, Shechem was **being driven blindly by lust** he is now **being driven blindly to have Dinah** as his wife. Hamor, it appears, is being **driven by a strong desire to make his son happy**, to smooth over his **sin** and **injustice**, and to give him his way, whatever the cost.

**APPLICATION:** You and I should not live life by what seems right or reasonable, but instead what the word of God says!

*"There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death." (Pr 14:12 ESV)*

But, this plan pleased both Hamor and Shechem. It seemed reasonable to both of them. **But it was a ruse, it was a trick and this was their undoing!**

**Vs 19** - Then we are told that Shechem, **did not delay to do this thing**. It is almost like he immediately found someone who could execute this surgical procedure and had it done immediately.

Notice, Moses had already informed us that Shechem was a prince and now he tells us the he was the "most honored" of all of Hamor's household.

He was a young man who was well respected, the Hivites thought highly of Shechem, they looked up to Shechem. He was well respected. He was the **most honored** of his father's house!

**Vs 20-21** - Next it appears that Hamor and Shechem went to the gate of the city of Shechem and spoke to the men as they entered into or left the city. The gate is where all of the official business occurred. Moses even records the substance of what they were telling the men of the city, let's walk through their **proposal**:

- 1) These men are at **peace with us**, they are peaceful, they are not here to hurt us.
- 2) Let's let them **dwell in the land and trade with us**.
  - a. The land is large enough to contain them. Here the offer is to **bring them into the inner circle**.
- 3) We can take their **daughters as wives**.
- 4) We will give **them our daughters**.

So the proposal seems straightforward enough, but **why would the men of Shechem agree to such a plan?**

Hamor and Shechem are saving the best for last, if you will. Here we go!

*22 Only on this condition will the men agree to dwell with us to become one people — when every male among us is circumcised as they are circumcised. 23 Will not their livestock, their property and all their beasts be ours? Only let us agree with them, and they will dwell with us." 24 And all who went out of the gate of his city listened to Hamor and his son Shechem, and every male was circumcised, all who went out of the gate of his city.*

**Vs 22** - They go on, these people, these descendants of Israel (Jacob) are willing to do this, **but only if we become like them**. Every male here in Shechem must be circumcised.

Now again, you should be asking yourself, **what is the win for the people of Shechem?**

**Vs 23** - **Ahhhh, here is the real pitch**. Shechem and Hamor have been saving this to the end. Here I believe we have the win for the men of Shechem.

Israel is a wealthy man, with much livestock. He has many goats, sheep, camel, donkeys and possibly other animals as well. Here is the win: **over time his property and his animals can become ours**.

**It is the lust of the eyes**, it is the **sin of Lot** that will be their snare and downfall. It is their **desire to acquire** what **belongs to someone else**, it is that they are coveting the massive flocks that God has blessed Israel (Jacob) with!

Your **pain now** can result in **great gain later**. That is the pitch to the Hivite men.

The love of wealth, the desire for stuff is a various dangerous hobby!

*“10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. 11 But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness.” (1Ti 6:10-11 ESV)*

**Vs 24** - Thus this plan was accepted by all the men who went to the gate. You can imagine the word was swirling there in Shechem and every man who heard any rumor about it headed to the gate to learn more.

And we read, all who went out to the gate listened to Hamor and Shechem, who let's be honest were being driven by their own set of items. Thus the men of the city of Shechem **all had themselves circumcised**.

They took upon themselves the mark of the covenant that Yahweh had given Abraham, not because they believed in Jacob's God, we have no indication that He has even been mentioned, **but instead because they were hoping to get Jacob's stuff!**

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*25 On the third day, when they were sore, two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, took their swords and came against the city while it felt secure and killed all the males. 26 They killed Hamor and his son Shechem with the sword and took Dinah out of Shechem's house and went away. 27 The sons of Jacob came upon the slain and plundered the city, because they had defiled their sister. 28 They took their flocks and their herds, their donkeys, and whatever was in the city and in the field. 29 All their wealth, all their little ones and their wives, all that was in the houses, they captured and plundered.*

**Vs 25** - Men, as you might imagine if you are circumcised as an adult it comes with great pain and soreness. On **the third day**, as they are very sore, the pain would have been at the height, they would have been weak and nearly incapacitated.

Simeon and Levi took their swords and went on a **murderous rampage** through the city of Shechem.

The **city was a peace**, the men were all recovering from being circumcised, and they went on a **murderous rampage** through the city and killed all the males!

It is possible that **Simeon and Levi** also took **servants** with them, but it is clear they were the **orchestrators of this horrific event**.

Everything that these brothers said to Hamor and Shechem was a ruse, it was a lie, here we see the real goal, judgment upon the entire city! Unwilling to seek a legal recourse or to leave it in the hands of God, they bring judgment upon the entire city.

It is interesting to note that neither Reuben (firstborn) or Judah (forth born) took part in this affair.

**Vs 26** - Next it is recorded that they arrived at the royal home or palace of Hamor and they killed with the sword Hamor and his son Shechem. At this point they took Dinah out of Shechem's house and went on their way.

Clearly, Dinah had been there for at least **4 days** if not longer. We have no idea what she has **gone through** as all of this has unfolded, we have no idea how she **felt about all this**, we have only the story of what happened.

**Vs 27-28** - Although **Simeon and Levi** seemed to be the ones who killed all the men of the city. It appears from the text that **all eleven sons of Jacob** were involved in **plundering the city**.

They took all their **animals**, all their **wealth**, they took their **little ones**, they **took the women**, they took everything that was living or had any reasonable value.

**OBSERVATION:** The rape of Dinah was a horrific crime, but the punishment meted out by Simeon and Levi far exceeds the crime and surely brings in many people who were innocent of any wrongdoing.

**OBSERVATION:** Circumcision was given by God as a mark to be placed on the male child to remind them that they are part of a covenant with Yahweh, here it is used by Simeon and Levi in a way that leads to death and seems to leave Yahweh completely out of the picture. This at a minimum is surely blasphemy.

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*30 Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have brought trouble on me by making me stink to the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites and the Perizzites. My numbers are few, and if they gather themselves against me and attack me, I shall be destroyed, both I and my household." 31 But they said, "Should he treat our sister like a prostitute?"*

**Vs 30** - Here Jacob rebukes his two sons for what they have done. This is a day late and a dollar short! Where has Jacob (Israel) been this entire time?

Jacob's concern now: In killing all of these Hivites, they take the chance of bringing "**trouble**" upon **Jacob and his family**, and Jacob says the inhabitants of the land, namely the Canaanites and the Perizzites, might come against Jacob and his **extended family and kill them**.

**OBSERVATION:** Israel's response to Simeon and Levi's actions does not focus on the right or wrong of it, on the morality of it, it seems the main concern is only around possible consequences to the extended family.

**APPLICATION:** Leaders are most needed when things go wrong. In the home, in the workplace, in the church. Men, we wonder where Israel was when he was most desperately needed.

May we be there, with godly wisdom and recommended steps when things go sideways. For that is when a leader is most desperately needed!

**Vs 31** - Their response to dad is of **course correct**, yet that does not **condone their behavior**.

**Their point**, this was a horrific event, but then when money was offered, that was treating our sister like a prostitute and we could not stand for that!

It is easy enough to judge what they should have done, but let's judge what we should do if the same type of thing were to happen to us today.

In spite of all the sin, in spite of all the failures, God does not cast off his people. Good news for us, and we will see next week, God will once again appear to Jacob and Yahweh will direct Jacob to move from Shechem to Bethel.

You should begin to wonder, as the word spreads of what this family has done to the Hivites, what in the world can possibly prevent their immediate destruction. We will see that next week as well.

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