



## Lesson 26

# DINAH'S TRAGEDY: FOLLY IN ISRAEL

### Story Elements

- **TEXT:** Gen. 34:1-31
- **Setting:** circa 1800 B.C. in Shechem
- **Main Characters:** God, Jacob, Dinah, Shechem, Simeon, and Levi
- **Plot:** Dinah's brothers murderously defend their sister's honor.
- **Key word(s):** "wrought \_\_\_\_\_ in Israel" (v 7)
- **Climax:** *Genesis 34:24 And unto Hamor and unto Shechem his son hearkened all that went out of the gate of his city; and every male was circumcised, all that went out of the gate of his city.*

### Foreword

- 1) After reading certain Bible stories, we are often left wondering, "Why was this included in the Bible?" Some stories detail such wickedness that we can feel hard-pressed to find any helpful lesson beyond a stark illustration of sinful depravity. Today's stories is such a one. Keep in mind a few notes to make sense of it all:
  - a) The Old Testament stories are indeed given to us as an \_\_\_\_\_ – often those examples are of how **not** to behave. (1 Cor. 10:6, 11)
  - b) Moses wrote the Pentateuch in order to prepare the Hebrews to dwell in the Promised Land. Consequently, some of the major themes of Genesis include:
    - i) Israel's \_\_\_\_\_ right to Canaan
    - ii) The dangers of intermarrying with the \_\_\_\_\_
    - iii) The need to watch against temptation to \_\_\_\_\_ Canaanite ways

### Defilement

- 2) (v 1) The trouble begins when Dinah, the daughter of Jacob, went out to "see the daughters of the land." Her curiosity of the \_\_\_\_\_ led her into a precarious position away from the protection of her brothers.<sup>1</sup>
- 3) (vv 2-3) Shechem, a Hivite prince, saw Dinah and "took her and lay with her." In spite of his sincere affection towards the girl and his desire to marry her (v 4), his actions were wicked, and the sons of Jacob were right in their anger and condemnation (vv 7, 13, 31). However, their anger was not righteous indignation – it was sinful \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) (v 5) News of the incident reached Jacob, who "held his peace until they were come," i.e., he refrained from doing anything until all the parties involved were present.

<sup>1</sup> "In the case of a family by different wives, it is not the father, but the full brothers, on whom the protection of the daughters devolves—they are the guardians of a sister's welfare and the avengers of her wrongs." - Jamieson, Robert, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown. *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*. Vol. 1. Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997. Print.

## Deception

- 5) (v 6) Hamor, Shechem's father, approached Jacob on behalf of his son and asked for Dinah to be given in marriage. (v 8)
  - a) (vv 8-10) Hamor asked Jacob to let the children of the Hivites marry the children of the Israelites in exchange for \_\_\_\_\_ in Hivite land.
  - b) (vv 11-12) Shechem showed his sincerity by promising to pay any \_\_\_\_\_ that Jacob would request.
- 6) (v 13) The sons of Jacob (probably Simeon and Levi) answered Hamor and Shechem \_\_\_\_\_, i.e., they had secret and malicious designs behind their words.
- 7) (vv 14-17) Dinah's brothers agreed to let her be married to Shechem and to allow intermarriage between the clans so long as all the Hivite men were \_\_\_\_\_.
- 8) (vv 18-19) Shechem readily agreed to these conditions.

## Destruction

- 9) (vv 20-24) Shechem sold the idea to the Hivite men by painting it with mercenary colors: if they would receive circumcision then "shall not their cattle and their \_\_\_\_\_ and every beast be ours?"
- 10) (vv 25-29) Three days later, while the Hivite men were recovering from the rite, Simeon and Levi entered the town, killed the invalid men, and retrieved Dinah from Shechem's house. Later, their half-brothers came and \_\_\_\_\_ the city.
- 11) (vv 30-31) Jacob condemned the actions of his sons and warned them that their sin may have jeopardized the \_\_\_\_\_ and safety of the whole clan.

## Application

- 12) Anger over sin is not always a righteous thing. "Many are concerned at the shamefulness of sin that never lay to heart the \_\_\_\_\_ of it."<sup>2</sup> The sons of Jacob were more concerned with family honor than holy living.
- 13) Ephesians 4:26 reads, "Be \_\_\_\_\_ and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath." At the end of the day, lift your heart in prayer and take the anger to God's throne and leave it there. And remember:

*Romans 12:19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*

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## Answer Key

Key word(s): folly | 1) a) example; b) i) divine; ii) Canaanites; iii) emulate | 2) world | 3) rage | 5) a) free trade; b) dowry | 6) deceitfully | 7) circumcised | 9) substance | 10) plundered | 11) peace | 12) sinfulness | 13) angry

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<sup>2</sup> Henry, Matthew. *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994. Print.