

SALT Church

Genesis 34

“One Decision”

September 16, 2026

“In the Beginning”

Recap:

- ***Genesis 33***

- Jacob who has been renamed by God is now Israel (God fights...)
- He has been commanded by God to return home to Bethel and in his return, he has to do the difficult thing, he must reconcile with his twin brother Esau.
- Genesis 33 is filled with good decisions and bad decisions.
 - Good in that Israel leads his family into what he believes is a very uncertain future.
 - Bad in that Jacob divides his family into sections with the least important in front and the most important in the rear.
 - They all see it and feel it.
 - This shapes the future for this family which will become the nation of Israel.

We closed this chapter with a few observations:

- ***Jacob the deceiver*** is still alive and well within the heart of Israel.

- He deceives his brother and tells him that he will meet him at his home in Seir, but Jacob will never travel to Seir.

- **More on this in a moment**

- Esau fades from the history of God's people but his family does not.
 - Later we will see Esau's people rise as a nation known as the Edomites and they will become enemies of God's people.
 - They will refuse passage to God's people after their exodus from Egypt.
 - Both King David and King Solomon will war against the Edomites.
 - Sadly, Herod the Great (the King of Jerusalem at Jesus' birth) who was an Edomite will try to murder Jesus when He was just two years old.
 - This is why Jesus and His family travel back to Egypt for a period of time.
 - To think that this kind of hatred began in a tent over a bowl of beans is incredible.

With this in mind I offer you tonight's title:

"One Decision"

One Decision can change everything!

- For Esau it was the decision to sale his birth-right for a bowl of beans.
 - This would mark the beginning of a family feud that eventually led to wars and even an attempt to kill Jesus.

- For Jacob it was the decision to not go where God had told him to go. (Bethel)
 - Jacob will stop 20 miles shy of Bethel in a place called Shechem.
 - That **“One Decision”** will lead to:
 - The rape of Jacob’s only daughter
 - The murder of all the men of Shechem
 - The thievery of possessions by God’s people that included not only livestock and plunder but also women and children. (Imagine the life-long trauma that those women and children lived through)
 - Imagine them being told about the one true God **by the ones that had murdered** their husbands and fathers.
 - The use of a holy and sacred symbol as a weapon of murder. (More on this soon)
 - All of it happens because of “One Decision”

Genesis 34

34 Now Dinah, the daughter Leah had borne to Jacob, went out to visit the women of the land.

- Leah gave Jacob six son’s and one daughter
 - **Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, & Zebulun**
- **“Went out to visit the women of the land”** must not be processed through our western cultured eyes.
 - Young ladies who were of marrying age were not allowed to travel without an escort. (Especially in foreign lands)

- But she makes **“One Decision”** to go alone and it changes her life and the lives of all of the people of Shechem and her brothers.
 - Keep in mind they know nothing about these people!

² When Shechem son of Hamor the Hivite, the ruler of that area, saw her, he took her and raped her.

- Shechem made **“One Decision”** that changed everything!
 - He saw her (she had made “One Decision” to go where she should not be)
 - He took her and raped her

³ His heart was drawn to Dinah daughter of Jacob; he loved the young woman and spoke tenderly to her.

- This sentence bothered me “he loved her?”
 - Love does not rape!
- The Hebrew word that is translated as love is “aheb”
 - Most of the time it is translated love (over 200 times in the OT)
 - But it also can be translated as lust or lusted
 - Shechem lusted after this woman
 - The fact that he spoke tenderly to her means nothing to me.

(Side note)

- I have been in ministry long enough to know that at least half of the women in this congregation have been sexually assaulted.

- Some of you may think that I am exaggerating but I am not.
- Ladies, I am so sorry for what has been do to you.
 - Godly men do not act in that way.
 - God the Father will get justice for you.
 - Nothing justifies sexual assault and there is no excuse!

There are so many factors that contribute to this mess

- Porn floods our homes through our computers, TV's, and phones.
- It's in commercials, shows, songs, and magazines
- It effects clothing, speech, and the psychology of every person.
 - Why?
 - Because our government made “One Decision” to protect it as art.

Pastor what's your point?

- 1st Satan has been using lust to tempt people since the beginning
- 2nd “One Decision” changes everything

Back to Genesis

4 And Shechem said to his father Hamor, “Get me this girl as my wife.”

- This guy is a spoiled brat!
- He takes what he wants, when he wants, and demands more
- HE HAS A CITY NAMED AFTER HIM

Now, How did he get this way?

- His parents made **“One Decision”** to spoil him to death
 - So many parents make this very same mistake
 - They never tell the child “NO!”
 - The child becomes an adult who is used to never hearing the word “no”
 - When the world says, “no!” that child unravels.
- Be very careful with how you parent
 - We must remember that God our Father says no often.
 - He does so because He always has His children’s best interest at heart

Back to Genesis:

5 When Jacob heard that his daughter Dinah had been defiled, his sons were in the fields with his livestock; so he did nothing about it until they came home.

- “He did nothing...” What in the world Jacob?
 - Keep in mind that she is being held against her will in Shechem’s home.
 - She has been kidnapped, raped, and held against her will and her daddy does nothing!
 - This is why I struggle with Jacob
 - Keep in mind that all of this could have been avoided if he had gone to Bethel like God told him.

▪ **“One Decision!”**

6 Then Shechem's father Hamor went out to talk with Jacob.

- Again, I point out to you that Hamor is a horrible father
 - He doesn't scold his son; he goes to work out a deal with Jacob who is also a horrible father but for a different reason.

7 Meanwhile, Jacob's sons had come in from the fields as soon as they heard what had happened.

- **Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, & Zebulun** return from the fields and they are ticked off!
 - Their reaction is the reaction that Jacob should have had.
 - But he didn't because Leah's children were not that important to him.
 - Why?
 - Because Laban had made **"One Decision"** to trick his son-in-law into marrying Leah instead of Rachel.

They were shocked and furious, because Shechem had done an outrageous thing in Israel by sleeping with Jacob's daughter—a thing that should not be done.

- This is a kind translation
- In the Hebrew they are exceedingly grieved and burning with outrage over what has happened to their baby sister.
 - But notice who is not outraged
 - Jacob and Hamor
 - What in the world?

⁸ But Hamor said to them, “My son Shechem has his heart set on your daughter.

- Who cares!

Please give her to him as his wife.

- Give her to the one that:
 - Kidnapped her
 - Raped her
 - And holds her hostage at that very moment!

(Side note)

- This is one of the reasons that we know that the Bible is not written by man.
 - Man would have never included the dark and sad response by one of it's central figures.
 - Especially the one in which the name of God's people comes from.

⁹ Intermarry with us; give us your daughters and take our daughters for yourselves. ¹⁰ You can settle among us; the land is open to you. Live in it, trade in it, and acquire property in it.”

- “Give us your daughters!” You have taken the only one we have!
 - No one seems to be concerned for Dinah
 - No one seems to be concerned for The Lord

¹¹ Then Shechem said to Dinah's father and brothers,

- Wait a minute!

○ Shechem has been there the whole time?

- I wonder what Moses thought when the Holy Spirit revealed all of this to him.

Listen to what Shechem says:

“Let me find favor in your eyes, and I will give you whatever you ask. ¹² Make the price for the bride and the gift I am to bring as great as you like, and I’ll pay whatever you ask me. Only give me the young woman as my wife.”

- How could he boast about such a thing?
 - Shechem (the place) apparently has some wealth
 - Shechem (the person) has the ability to spend it as he desires.
 - This is no small place and Shechem (the person) is truly a prince.

Listen to Dinah’s brothers response:

¹³ Because their sister Dinah had been defiled, Jacob’s sons replied **deceitfully** as they spoke to Shechem and his father Hamor.

- They replied “deceitfully”
 - This is the first clue that they have a plan to administer payback.

¹⁴ They said to them,

- Not Jacob! (This bothers me!)
- It is as if Jacob and Hamor are so spineless that they just step away from this situation and allow things to get worse.

- That **“One Decision”** will result in murder, theft, and God’s great name to be shamed.

The boys continue:

“We can’t do such a thing; we can’t give our sister to a man who is not circumcised. That would be a disgrace to us.

- God had given the sign of circumcision to his people as a sign that the men and their families belonged to Him.
 - **Symbolically** it set the men apart from the pagan nations
 - **Practically** it helped with infections
 - **Theologically** it teaches that without the tearing away of the flesh and the shedding of blood there can be no forgiveness.
 - In other words it is a holy act required for God’s people in the Old Testament
 - Only now it will become a weapon of destruction.
 - A weapon used for murder

¹⁵ We will enter into an agreement with you on one condition only: that you become like us by circumcising all your males.

- Don’t miss that detail, they had a plan of revenge that would supersede the “eye for an eye” command.

¹⁶ Then we will give you our daughters and take your daughters for ourselves.

- They will take daughters, mothers, and wives.

We'll settle among you and become one people with you.

- Not true!
 - The sons of Jacob “look and sound” just like their father.
 - “The sins of a father can be passed down to the third and fourth generations”

¹⁷ But if you will not agree to be circumcised, we'll take our sister and go.”

- This is going to happen either way.

¹⁸ Their proposal seemed good to Hamor and his son Shechem. ¹⁹ The young man, who was the most honored of all his father's family, lost no time in doing what they said, because he was delighted with Jacob's daughter. ²⁰ So Hamor and his son Shechem went to the gate of their city to speak to the men of their city.

- Let's remember what has taken place
 - Shechem has:
 - Kidnapped, raped, and held hostage Jacobs only daughter.
 - Everyone seems to know this
 - He still holds Dinah hostage!
 - He calls for a city council meeting and the men show up.

Pay attention to the words:

²¹ “These men are friendly toward us,” they said.

- Both Hamor and Shechem are talking

“Let them live in our land and trade in it; the land has plenty of room for them. We can marry their daughters and they can marry ours.

- There is only one daughter and we know who has her

²² But the men will agree to live with us as one people only on the condition that our males be circumcised, as they themselves are.

- This would be a very difficult sale!

²³ Won’t their livestock, their property and all their other animals become ours?

- For Shechem it was lust
- For the rest of the men it will be greed

So let us agree to their terms, and they will settle among us.”

²⁴ All the men who went out of the city gate agreed with Hamor and his son Shechem, and every male in the city was circumcised.

- ***“One Decision!!!!!!!!!!”***

²⁵ Three days later,

- This is another indication that this was a planned event.
 - They knew the third day was the worse day.

while all of them were still in pain, two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, took their swords and attacked the unsuspecting city, killing every male.

- Process that for a moment
 - Two sons kill all of the men in the city of Shechem
 - They were cold and calculated in what they had planned and how they executed it.

Jewish historians record that Simeon and Levi were teenagers when they murdered.

- According to Jewish legend, Simeon was a very strong man who was not afraid of a fight.
 - He apparently was the driving force behind this unholy raid.
 - Later he will throw Joseph in a pit and voice his desire to murder him.
 - He will lie to his father Jacob about what happened to Joseph.
 - But Joseph will have the last word as he has Simeon held in prison until Jacob comes to meet with him as Prince of Egypt.

Back to Genesis

²⁶ They put Hamor and his son Shechem to the sword and took Dinah from Shechem's house and left. ²⁷ The sons of Jacob came upon the dead bodies and looted the city where their sister had been defiled. ²⁸ They seized their flocks and herds and donkeys and everything else of theirs in the city and out in the

fields. ²⁹ They carried off all their wealth and all their women and children, taking as plunder everything in the houses.

- I remember one night when I was teaching in the book of Revelation.
 - I expressed the truth about how the covenant promises of God had not yet been fulfilled as they related to God's people the Jews.
 - Afterward a man came up to me and said that he and his family would never attend this church ever again.
 - When I asked what had stirred him up, he said "We are not Zionist!"
 - I didn't know what to say.
 - I wasn't sure what he meant by "Zionist"
 - Later there was another discussion with a female member who was married to a Palestinian.
 - She too was angry with me and had decided to leave the church over my teaching.
 - I had a response for her and it was simply this, "Sin is sin whether it is committed by a Jew or Gentile."
 - Grace is grace whether it is given to the Jew or the Gentile.
 - God has a holy plan for His people the Jews and although I do not like their sin nor agree with their sin God has chosen

to pour out His grace upon those chosen people.

- It is not my job to sit in judgement of the Lord.
- It is my job to teach the truth and God will keep His covenant with His people the Jews.

(side note)

- Simeon's family becomes so small that they are given a small portion of land within Judah's land.
- Levi's family becomes the family of priest.
 - Both are listed throughout the Bible as tribes of Israel
 - Both are listed within the book of Revelation.
 - Both enjoy the grace of God in spite of their very sinful past.

30 Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have brought trouble on me by making me obnoxious to the Canaanites and Perizzites, the people living in this land."

- Jacob is alive and well!
 - He is only concerned about himself!
 - He is not concerned with what this will do to the name of the Lord.
 - He does not mention the Holy act of circumcision
 - He is not remorseful about not being in Bethel
 - He does not even mention Dinah

- He does not mention Leah, (can you imagine what she is going through)
- He cares nothing for the women and children of Shechem that are now under his care.
 - It's all about Jacob!!!!!!

He continues with his sad lament!

We are few in number, and if they join forces against me and attack me, I and my household will be destroyed.”

³¹ But they replied, “Should he have treated our sister like a prostitute?”

- What they really want to know is why didn't Jacob care?
 - Because, even though he was God's chosen
 - Even though he had wrestled with God
 - Even though he had a new name
 - He was still messed up
 - Still sinful and in need of grace and mercy.

What if:

- Jacob had gone to Bethel
- Dinah had stayed at home
- They had sought the Lord and the Lord would have handled this?
 - Would not that have been a greater testimony?
 - What if they had only dealt with Shechem (the person)?

In the end Jacob had allowed the god of self to rule over his life.

- He thought he knew better than God the Father

- Instead of worshiping the Father through obedience he chose to worship that idol called self.
- This will prompt God to write these words on stone tablets for everyone to see:

Exodus 20

3 “You shall have no other gods before me.

- Jesus said that this is the most important verse in scripture.
 - The entire Bible and all of creation rest upon this fact.

4 “You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.

- This includes the one you see in the mirror every morning!

5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, 6 but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

We close tonight with this reminder:

- **“One Decision”** can change everything not only for you but for generations of people.