

Defiling of Dinah (Genesis 34)
For the week of November 21, 2021

Curriculum Caution: This chapter contains issues that may be triggering to members of your group. Please handle this material sensitively. If you feel that this chapter may be too difficult for anyone in your group, please feel free to use another approved lesson.

Read Genesis 34:1-7

Observation

Where were Jacob and his family located?

A terrible act has been committed. What is Jacob's response? What is the reaction of the sons?

What is the commentary of the author at the end of verse 7?

Interpretation

Where should Jacob have been moving toward (see 31:13)?

Was Jacob's response right or wrong? Why? Was the response of his sons right or wrong? Why?

Application

When am I most tempted to make compromises in keeping God's commands?

Read Genesis 34:8-17

Observation

What are Hamor and Shechem wanting? Is it just marriage?

Who are the "negotiators"? Is there anyone not participating?

What does circumcision signify to the Hebrews (see Genesis 17:9-14)?

Interpretation

What is the motivation of Hamor and Shechem?

Why is Jacob silent?

What is the family theme found in verse 13?

Application

When wronged, is deceit justified? Why or why not?

Read Genesis 34:18-24

Observation

Who are Hamor and Shechem talking with? Why? Where?

Interpretation

What is the significance of "gate of their city"?

What is the motivation to follow through with the request of circumcision (see verse 23)?

Application

Are there times that the desires of my heart become more of a priority than God's desires? When? Why?

Read Genesis 34:25-31

Observation/Interpretation

Who carried out the act of vengeance? Who carried out the act of plundering?

Were all of Dinah's full brothers involved in avenging? Why or why not?

What is Jacob's biggest misgiving? How do you interpret his reaction?

Why was God not mentioned in this chapter?

Application

When have I allowed my sense of justice control me without seeking God's direction or wisdom?

Note: This has been a very disturbing narrative to read and study. In an attempt to find some redeeming quality, this passage from a commentary is being added:

In the context of the Joseph narrative (chaps. 37–50), chap. 34 provides for the author's goal of demonstrating the surpassing grace of the Lord, whose redemptive purposes survive the moral failures of the nation's fathers. The purpose to bless the patriarchal family was not cancelled by the villainous behavior of Jacob's sons¹.

¹ Mathews, K. A. (2005). [Genesis 11:27–50:26](#) (Vol. 1B, p. 577). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.