



BEGINNINGS

A Study of the Book of Genesis

Sanctuary Bible Studies – Woodbury Lutheran Church

Session 27, “Dinah and the Shechemites” (Genesis, Chapter 34)

In Genesis 33, we saw Jacob and Esau reunited. Esau humbled himself and took the initiative in reconciling their relationship, but it took some time for Jacob to trust Esau. In fact, Jacob did not follow Esau back into the Promised Land and remained east of the Jordan for a while. Then he ventured west into Canaan near Shechem, but he never got back to Bethel where he belongs. Lingered at Shechem would bring tragedy to Jacob's family (Ch. 34).

Intro

- God continues to fulfill the covenant and overcomes whatever obstacles arise
- Two centuries have passed since Gen 12 and the family of Abraham is still growing and living in the Promised Land
- We have seen that God continues to be faithful to His promises despite the character flaws of Jacob and Esau, which sets the stage for the full-fledged violence that come from Jacob's sons. How can anything be salvaged from their behavior.

1. Dinah and Shechem (34:1-4)

- Vss. 1-3 – Dinah was “violated” by Shechem
 - “violated” – Hebrew= *anah* – humble, mishandle, or afflict
 - *anah* does not necessarily means rape. Deut 22:24 *anah* is used when the girl is considered equally culpable because she does not cry out. But, *anah* is also often used in rape context like in 2 Sam 13:12-14. Dinah's brothers describe the event with the terms defile and prostitute.
 - Where did this take place? V. 7 “Israel” – not a territory, but a people group.
 - This was “disgraceful” even before Sinai, which means indicates that the ancient Near East cultures had laws and they considered it important to protect the honor and integrity of the family.
- Vs 4. - Because parent-arranged marriage is the norm in this culture, when girls lose their virginity (by rape or their own consent) outside of marriage the price of the bride usually increases dramatically.

2. Faulty Motivations

- Shechem – Infatuation
- Jacob's Sons – Motivated by restoring the honor of their family
- Hamor and the other men of Shechem – economic gain
- Faulty motivations lead to deceit. You either try to deceive the other party to get what you want or you deceive yourself in order to justify your actions.

3. Born to Deceive

- The covenant was at stake once again v. 9-10. Intermarrying and sharing land would mean that the family of Abraham would lose its distinct identity.

- The covenant was at stake again v. 30. So do they get wiped out? What happens to Jacob's family now that the Caanites are mad, tune in next week as Pastor Dean discusses Jacob's Return to Bethel.
- What is the point of this chapter? Covertant faithfullenss of God and warning to Jacob that if he treats God as someone whose favors are for sale beware.
- Not trying to override the free, but dovetailing terrible events into events that bring glory to God. (intentional vs. circumstantial vs. ultimate will)
- Jacob's behavior early on in his life now repeats itself in how his son's behave, and his sons have also learned from the Grandpa, Laban.
- Archaeological evidence proves that the city in Shechem was about 6 acres, which means that the population was from 500 to 1000 people, therefore, Levi and Simeon did not kill them all by themselves. We can say that the clan of Levi and the clan of Simeon killed all the men of Shechem.

4. Major Themes

- God uses evil to his glory
- God overcomes obstacles for his glory
- The covenant was at stake again v. 30. So do they get wiped out? What happens to Jacob's family now that the Caanites are mad, tune in next week as Pastor Dean discusses Jacob's Return to Bethel.

Circumcision – badge of covenant identity, since circumcision linked future generations to the promises Yahweh had made to the patriarchs (Gen 17: 10-14)

Using a flint rock