

# A Study in Genesis: Dinah's Rape and Jacob's Failure

---

**Scripture Focus:** Genesis 34:1-31

After the encounter with Esau, Jacob eventually makes his way to Shechem. This is the same place referred to in Genesis 12:6-7 where Abram built an altar to the LORD after the LORD promised to give him that very land. Now, Abraham's grandson Jacob is at Shechem. Jacob built an altar there as well. (Gen. 33:20).

Chapter 34 opens with Dinah (daughter of Leah) heading out to visit with the women in the area. Dinah encounters the son of Hamor the Hivite and prince of the region, whose name is also Shechem (like the town). He takes Dinah and rapes her. It seems he fell madly in love with her after forcing himself on her and insists that he must have her as his wife (vv. 3-4). Jacob hears what has happened to his daughter, that she in fact has been "defiled" and he does absolutely nothing in response, he "held his peace." (v. 5) What follows is a plan by her brothers born out of anger and revenge, happening while Jacob appears to fail miserably at providing any God-honoring leadership for his family.

- What is Hamor, the father, proposing in verses 8-10? And as Shechem talks with Jacob and his sons, Dinah's brothers, what is he promising? (vv. 11-12)
- Dinah's brothers answer Hamor and his son Shechem "deceitfully." (v. 13) They have a plan! What is the plan (proposal) and how do they justify their conditions? (vv. 14-17)
- Hamor and his sons like the plan! Are you surprised they agreed to be circumcised and that they convinced all "the men of their city" to do the same, in order to meet the terms of the agreement? (vv. 18-24)
- How does the plan work out and what happens to Dinah? (v.v. 25-29) What is Jacob's response regarding the outcome? (v. 30)
- To what extent are you surprised by and/or disappointed in Jacob's behavior throughout this tragic story, from the moment he hears of Dinah's defilement through the horrific outcome of the revenge plan? Might Jacob's response have been different had Dinah been the daughter of Rachel?
- What are the important lessons that can be gleaned from studying the story of Dinah's rape? What is the spiritual value in it?