

ISRAEL'S CLOSE CALL
IN SHECHEM
Genesis 34

INTRODUCTION

In following the life of Jacob, Genesis records certain scenes for our admonition (instruction). Genesis 34 chronicles a tragic time in Jacob's family, and we will draw practical lessons from this sad event. But more than this, we will consider a bigger picture. God chose Israel to bring salvation to a lost, hopeless and sinful world through the birth of Jesus Christ the Messiah. To ruin God's plan, Satan wants to destroy, absorb, and defile Israel any way he can. Satan almost succeeds as **Israel's Close Call In Shechem** shows. He didn't, but will keep trying.

DIGGING DEEPER

Read through Genesis 34 several times. Jacob has settled his family where they should not be, in the Canaanite city of Shechem. He has not fully followed the Lord's command, and there will be a great price to pay. This heartbreaking chapter reminds us that the best place to be is in FULL cooperation with the Lord, as we study **Israel's Close Call In Shechem**. Much to ponder, beloved. *Selah*

Pray for wisdom and understanding, and let's begin.

I. Genesis 34:1-2. Dinah is raped. Here is a very young, innocent, impressionable girl experiencing the "world" for the first time. Naïve, Dinah doesn't know what she's walking in to. Flattered by the Canaanite prince Shechem's interest, she is raped. Date rape. That is what Canaanites do. Let's protect and instruct our youth – Be on guard! Satan wants to abuse you.

II. Genesis 34:3-10. The proposal. Shechem felt no guilt in violating Dinah, having sex before marriage. But he does care for her, and offers to marry her. Jacob holds his peace – that's good. **Proverbs 29:20, James 1:19-20**. But where has he been? Israel is invited to intermarry with the Canaanites and join in their culture. This is a very precarious moment in Israel's history. Remember how small Jacob's family is at this time. The Canaanites want to absorb Israel.

III. Genesis 34:11-18. Jacob's sons answer. Shechem is willing to pay a large dowry and "do what is right". Jacob obviously does not know what to do. We could expect him to stand up here, but his sons take charge. Without any hint of godliness, they act deceitfully. They lie, and have vengeance on their mind. Jacob's lack of leadership results in a spiritual vacuum.

IV. Genesis 34:19-23. Hamor seals the deal. Hamor, the Canaanite king, wants his son to have Dinah. But a greater issue is at stake here. Convincing the men of the city to be circumcised, we get a glimpse into Satan's ultimate plan. By absorbing Jacob's family into their Canaanite culture, eventually, Israel will cease to exist.

V. Genesis 34:24-31. The escalation. Circumcised as their part in the agreement, the Canaanite men were in pain and defenseless. Simeon and Levi acted cruelly. With viciousness and anger they slaughtered all the men of the city. Instruments of cruelty, their anger will result in final harsh words from Jacob. **Genesis 49:5-7**. But Jacob does not rebuff their behavior here – he is only self-centered. Consequences for ungodliness are far reaching – sins of the past can come back to haunt you.

Genesis 34 surely has practical lessons to consider from a personal and family perspective. But there is more here than meets the eye. Satan is out to destroy God's plan for Israel. He wants to ultimately affect the birth of Jesus. See **Genesis 34:9-10, 23**. Now God wants Israel to be His chosen people – separated to Him, protected by Him, a special treasure. **Exodus 19:5-6**. Right from the garden, Satan's goal is to poison the line of Israel to Jesus. Scripture records many ways Satan has tried. History tells us that he hasn't stopped. Anti-Semitism is part of human history to this day, and is ever escalating. But do not be anxious. *Selah*

CONSIDER God has provided us a prophetic overview, so take comfort, beloved. *See Revelation 12:1-5....*

- God ordained Israel to bring His only Son Jesus into the world. **Genesis 28:13-14, Luke 3:23-38, Revelation 12:1-2**
- Satan is a real, powerful foe. But a defeated enemy nonetheless. **Revelation 12:3-5, Revelation 22:1-3 & 10**
- Jesus is the complete and perfect sacrifice for our sins. **2 Corinthians 5:21, Colossians 2:13-15, Revelation 5:9-10**

*And she bore a male child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron.
And her child was caught up to God and to His throne. Revelation 12:5*

PRAY

- For Fathers to stand strong as the spiritual leaders in their homes.
- For all of the teachers preparing for a new school year, that the Lord would give them a heart and vision for their ministries.
- Pastor Scott and all of the pastors – that the Lord would encourage their hearts.
- That the Lord would give each of us spiritual discernment to understand the tactics of the enemy and stand strong against them!