

Selfish Choices In Sexual Sin

Genesis 34 (Shechem Shook'em)

I. The Choice To Expose Ourselves To Moral Compromise (1)

- A. The Choice To Compromise Ourselves To Worldly Influences (Gen 31:3,13; 33:18)
- B. The Choice To Expose Ourselves To Tempting Circumstances (1)

II. The Choice To Sin Against Another (2-4)

- A. The Choice To Love Others Or Selfishly Abuse Power – “prince of the land”
- B. The Choice To Run From Or Respond To Temptation – “saw” (cf. James 1:14; Heb 4:15; 2 Tim 2:22; Gen 39:13)
- C. The Choice To Stop Pursuing Sin Or Taking What Does Not Belong To Us – “seized” (cf. James 1:15; 1 Th 4:6)
- D. The Choice To Honor A Brother/Sister Or To Hurt A Victim – “lay,” “humiliated”
- E. The Choice To Confess Or Convince Ourselves That We Deserve What We Have Taken Sinfully (3-4)

III. The Choices In Response To Sin (5-31)

- A. Choosing Passivity Or Indignation (5-7)
- B. Choosing To Respond With Cover Up Or Correction (8-14)
- C. Choosing Gratifying Revenge Or Difficult Forgiveness (15-29)
- D. Choosing To Protect Our Reputation And Pride Or Doing The Tough Thing For God's Glory (30-31)

Conclusion:

1. Stay out of compromising situations
2. Realize every sin is a personal choice
3. Take personal responsibility for our sin
4. Confess it to God and the one we sinned against
5. Reconcile our relationship with God and the injured

For The Victim:

1. Don't blame yourself
2. Don't define yourself through what someone did to you but who you are in Christ
3. Report it
4. Find emotional support through family, friends, church, counselors
5. Get a medical exam
6. Be willing to forgive – don't imprison yourself with anger and bitterness (Acts 7:60)
7. Be patient and hopeful – God will work even our tragedies into good (Rom 8:28)
8. Move forward in life (Gen 41:51; Phil 3:8-13)

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Genesis 34 (Shechem Shook'em)

Horrible Sexual Violence in the Scriptures:

- Dinah & Shechem (Gen 34)
- Concubine (Judges 19)
- Amnon & Tamar (2 Samuel 13)

This chapter – Genesis 34

- Difficult chapter
- Neglected by some commentators
- Does not mention the name of God

Statistics:

- 1 in 5 girls and 1 in 20 boys is a victim of child sexual abuse
- During a one-year period in the U.S., 16% of youth ages 14 to 17 had been sexually victimized;
- Over the course of their lifetime, 28% of U.S. youth ages 14 to 17 had been sexually victimized;
- Children are most vulnerable to CSA between the ages of 7 and 13.
(<http://victimsofcrime.org/media/reporting-on-child-sexual-abuse/child-sexual-abuse-statistics>)
- Every 98 seconds an American is sexually assaulted
- 69% of sexual assault victims are between 12-34
- 1 out of every 6 women has been a victim of an attempted or completed rape
- 1 in 33 men have been victims of rape – most vulnerable are college age
(<https://www.rainn.org/statistics/victims-sexual-violence>)

I. The Choice To Expose Ourselves To Moral Compromise (1)

¹ Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to see the women of the land.

A. The Choice To Compromise Ourselves To Worldly Influences (Gen 31:3,13; 33:18)

- Jacob wasn't a very good spiritual leader and would deceive and defy when he found it advantageous to his situation
- The fact that he would defy God's command to go back to Bethel because he loved living in Shechem would put his family in danger

Genesis 31:3 Then the Lord said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your kindred, and I will be with you."

Genesis 31:13 I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and made a vow to me. Now arise, go out from this land and return to the land of your kindred.' "

BUT:

Genesis 33:18 And Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, on his way from Paddan-aram, and he camped before the city

- Jacob didn't fully obey the Lord in taking his family to Bethel where he would raise his family with other people
- "The tragedies that take place in this chapter are the result of Jacob's failure to be obedient to God's command to return to Bethel (28:21; 31:3, 13). That single act of compromise cost his daughter dearly and put the rest of the covenant family of God at risk. What a chilling reminder that half-hearted obedience can be just as deadly as disobedience." (Keith Krell, <https://bible.org/seriespage/42-chips-old-block-genesis-341-31>)
- Jacob's failure to obey the Lord led to the dangerous situation for his family

B. The Choice To Expose Ourselves To Tempting Circumstances (1)

- Dinah was the daughter of Leah – who was the first, but not favorited, wife of Jacob
- She is about **15 years old** at this time
- Dinah was hoping to have a night out with the girls
- "went out" (*yatsa*) "bears a sense of impropriety" (Gordon Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, WBC, p. 310)
- She went out on her own in a dangerous neighborhood
 - Not Bethel, where she would be in the company of believers
 - But Shechem, where she was in the company of pagan Canaanites
- "Girls of a marriageable age would **not** normally leave a rural encampment to go unchaperoned into an alien city." (Sarna, quoted by Waltke, *Genesis, A Commentary*, p. 461)
- ie/ There was an attempted abduction of a female student at one of the local high schools and we got a notification from the school district about it. We talked with our kids about watching out for their surroundings, how to be safe
- Jacob left his daughter unchaperoned in a dangerous area he chose to live in
- Application:
 - Parents – chaperone your kids. Make sure they're safe and in groups.
 - Singles and youth – be careful where you go to have a good time
 - Ungodly cultures
 - People are getting drunk and high

- Immorality, people hooking up
 - Raves
 - Festivals where E is being passed out like Skittles
- Dinah went out unwisely, gets lured by a prince and gets raped

II. The Choice To Sin Against Another (2-4)

²And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, the prince of the land, saw her, he seized her and lay with her and humiliated her. ³And his soul was drawn to Dinah the daughter of Jacob. He loved the young woman and spoke tenderly to her. ⁴So Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, "Get me this girl for my wife."

A. The Choice To Love Others Or Selfishly Abuse Power – "prince of the land"

- Shechem was a prince of the land
- The descendants of Hamor were wealthy during the time of Judges (Josh 24:32; Jdg 9:8)
- As Spiderman was told: "With much power comes great responsibility"
- But instead of using his power for the benefit of others, he used it for his own selfish gain

B. The Choice To Run From Or Respond To Temptation – "saw" (cf. James 1:14; Heb 4:15; 2 Tim 2:22; Gen 39:13)

James 1:14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.

- "drawn away" = imagery of animals being lured to traps
 - "desire" = lust (*epithumia* = over desire, beyond a normal desire)
- Temptation is not a sin
 - Jesus was tempted in all ways but did not sin

Hebrews 4:15 ¹⁵For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

- Shechem had the choice to run and flee

2 Tim 2:22 Flee youthful passions

- Joseph fled the seductive wife of Potiphar

Genesis 39:13 And as soon as she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and had fled out of the house,

- Erwin Lutzer: "Temptation is not a sin; it is a call to battle."

- John Churton Collins : “We are no more responsible for the evil thoughts that pass through our minds than a scarecrow for the birds which fly over the seedplot he has to guard. The sole responsibility in each case is to prevent them from settling.”
- Charles Spurgeon: “Learn to ‘NO’; it will be of more use to you than to be able to read Latin.”

C. The Choice To Stop Pursuing Sin Or Taking What Does Not Belong To Us – “seized” (cf. James 1:15; 1 Th 4:6)

James 1:15 Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

- “full grown” = *apotelesthesia* = finish, bring to completion, run it’s course
- Oscar Wilde, the brilliant playwright, once said “I can resist anything except temptation,” also sadly declared: “I forgot that every little action of the common day makes or unmakes character, and that therefore what one has done in the secret chamber one has some day to cry aloud from the housetop. I allowed pleasure to dominate me. I ended in horrible disgrace.”
- “seized” – took with force
- He took for himself sinfully
- He acted on lust and impulse
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall and Temptation*: “In our members there is a slumbering inclination towards desire which is both sudden and fierce. With irresistible power, desire seizes mastery over the flesh. All at once a secret, smoldering fire is kindled. The flesh burns and is in flames....At this moment God is quite unreal to us, he loses all reality, and only desire for the creature is real....Satan does not here fill us with hatred of God, but with forgetfulness of God. The lust thus aroused envelops the mind and will of man in deepest darkness. [And] the powers of clear discrimination and of decision are taken from us.” (pp. 116-117)

1 Thessalonians 4:6 “That no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter”

- **Each act of sin requires one to ignore the Word of God**
 - Ie/ When King David sinned, he sinned directly against his knowledge of God’s Word
 - David knew the Ten Commandments – “Thou shalt not commit adultery” (Ex 20:14)
 - David knew Leviticus 20:10 – adultery is punishable by death
- **Each act of sexual sin requires one to ignore the individual, spiritual and familial significance of the one sinned against.**

- Every woman you lust upon is some man's daughters. Would you want that for your daughter?
- Ie/ King David is given clear confirmation from his servant that the woman he is lusting after is the wife of Uriah the Hittite
 - normal reference of individuals relates them to their father, grandfather, etc. in the lineage ("daughter of Eliam")
 - Eliam is one of his close friends
 - Bathsheba is also the granddaughter of Ahithophel – another of David's friends and counselor
 - but here, the servant adds "the wife of Uriah"
 - David is about to betray two of his close friends (her father and grandfather) as well as one of his faithful soldiers (Uriah)

D. The Choice To Honor A Brother/Sister Or To Hurt A Victim – "lay," "humiliated"

- "lay" = slept with her, sexual relationship
- "humiliated" = "To do violence ... to rape a woman" (Waltke, p. 462)
- this was not consensual – this was rape

E. The Choice To Confess Or Convince Ourselves That We Deserve What We Have Taken Sinfully (3-4)

³And his soul was drawn to Dinah the daughter of Jacob. He loved the young woman and spoke tenderly to her... ⁴get me this girl for my wife"

- "soul was drawn," "he loved," "spoke tenderly" ... marriage
- Shechem was different than Amnon who hated Tamar after he raped her (2 Sam 13:15)
- But such is the extreme behavior after a horrific sin
- But note – he was not sorry, he didn't admit he was wrong, he didn't let her go
- She was kept at his father's home

- Ie/ It's like being taken hostage and you try to make it up to some Beauty by offering her your library or expecting her to "Be Our Guest" at an elegant dinner with singing plates and cutlery

- Without confession of sin, how long will cover up go until it happens again or to someone else?

- On the surface, you think that he is trying to do the right thing
- But there is no apology
- There was no confession
- She's still held hostage
- He was a privileged and entitled son making a demand on his father like Samson

- James M. Boice: "it is not the mere fact of seduction that shows the world of the Shechemites to be so wicked, but rather their **utter neglect of the fact** that Shechem or **anybody else had done wrong.**" (*Genesis: An Expository Commentary, Vol. 2*, p. 833)

- Our world has been given over to a debased mind (Rom 1:28,32)

Romans 1:28b God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.

Romans 1:32 Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

III. The Choices In Response To Sin (5-31)

A. Choosing Passivity Or Indignation (5-7)

⁵ Now Jacob heard that he had defiled his daughter Dinah. But his sons were with his livestock in the field, so Jacob held his peace until they came. ⁶ And Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him. ⁷ The sons of Jacob had come in from the field as soon as they heard of it, and the men were indignant and very angry, because he had done an outrageous thing in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, for such a thing must not be done.

- Jacob represented passivity
 - Jacob is seen as quite emotional at other times
 - He cried when he met Rachel in Gen 29:11,18
 - He was "greatly afraid" in anticipation of meeting Esau in Gen 32:7
 - He wept when he reunited with Esau in Gen 33:4
 - He was inconsolable when his favorite son Joseph was thought to have been dead (37:34-35)
- Genesis 37:34-35** 34 Then Jacob tore his garments and put sackcloth on his loins and mourned for his son many days. 35 All his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted and said, "No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning." Thus his father wept for him.
- But we don't see emotion or outrage after his daughter was raped!
 - Jacob didn't send an urgent message to his sons – he "held his peace until they came" (5)
 - Fathers – are we jealous over the purity of our daughters and sons?
 - Do we teach them abstinence from sex or safe sex?
 - Do we give them technology without accountability?
 - Do we protect our sons from pornography?
 - How do you respond if your daughters are having sex before marriage?
 - Do we have a double standard when it comes to our sons and daughters about sex?
- Jacobs sons represented indignation and anger (7)
 - They were morally outraged! – "outrageous"
 - **"for such a thing must not be done!"**
 - David was morally outraged when Amnon raped Tamar (2 Sam 13:21), but did

- nothing about it (2 Sam 13:20-21)
- Absalom was rightly angry about his sister Tamar being raped, but his hatred led to sinful violence (2 Sam 13:22)

B. Choosing To Respond With Cover Up Or Correction (8-14)

⁸ But Hamor spoke with them, saying, "The soul of my son Shechem longs for your daughter. Please give her to him to be his wife. ⁹ Make marriages with us. Give your daughters to us, and take our daughters for yourselves. ¹⁰ You shall dwell with us, and the land shall be open to you. Dwell and trade in it, and get property in it." ¹¹ Shechem also said to her father and to her brothers, "Let me find favor in your eyes, and whatever you say to me I will give. ¹² Ask me for as great a bride-price and gift as you will, and I will give whatever you say to me. Only give me the young woman to be my wife." ¹³ The sons of Jacob answered Shechem and his father Hamor deceitfully, because he had defiled their sister Dinah. ¹⁴ They said to them, "We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one who is uncircumcised, for that would be a disgrace to us.

- Hamor may have been a pagan, but he's trying to do the right thing in his mind and under the plea of his spoiled son
- He tries to arrange a marriage between Shechem and Dinah
- But there is no apology, no mention of the rape
- He is also holding Dinah in captivity – which adds kidnapping to the charge

- But look who's doing the negotiating with Hamor – not Dinah's father (Jacob), but her brothers
- They rightly acknowledge that this is an immoral thing to do (14)
- There is to be no marriage with pagans
- Marriage doesn't correct the wrong done here

Deuteronomy 7:3 You shall not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons,

C. Choosing Gratifying Revenge Or Difficult Forgiveness (15-29)

¹⁵ Only on this condition will we agree with you—that you will become as we are by every male among you being circumcised. ¹⁶ Then we will give our daughters to you, and we will take your daughters to ourselves, and we will dwell with you and become one people. ¹⁷ But if you will not listen to us and be circumcised, then we will take our daughter, and we will be gone."

¹⁸ Their words pleased Hamor and Hamor's son Shechem. ¹⁹ And the young man did not delay to do the thing, because he delighted in Jacob's daughter. Now he was the most honored of all his father's house. ²⁰ So Hamor and his son Shechem came to the gate of their city and spoke to the men of their city, saying, ²¹ "These men are at peace with us; let them dwell in the land and trade in it, for behold, the land is large enough for them. Let us take their daughters as wives, and let us give them our daughters. ²² Only on this condition will the men agree to dwell with us to become one people—when every male among us is circumcised as they are circumcised. ²³ Will not their livestock, their property and all their beasts be ours? Only let us agree with them, and they will dwell with us." ²⁴ And all who went out of the gate of his city listened to Hamor and his son Shechem, and every male was circumcised, all who

went out of the gate of his city.

²⁵ On the third day, when they were sore, two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, took their swords and came against the city while it felt secure and killed all the males. ²⁶ They killed Hamor and his son Shechem with the sword and took Dinah out of Shechem's house and went away. ²⁷ The sons of Jacob came upon the slain and plundered the city, because they had defiled their sister. ²⁸ They took their flocks and their herds, their donkeys, and whatever was in the city and in the field. ²⁹ All their wealth, all their little ones and their wives, all that was in the houses, they captured and plundered.

- **Revenge Outside Authorities** - Wanting justice doesn't justify revenge outside of our authorities
 - Vigilantism does not replace our justice system
 - They didn't police system and judges didn't come until after settling in Canaan after Joshua's time
 - But the brothers led a **Holy War** that was not sanctioned by God in killing all the men

Romans 12:19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.

1 Peter 3:9 Not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.

- **Excessive Reaction** - Warranted justice on one person doesn't mean we take it out on their family or people
- **Deceptive Passive Aggression** - Deception does not replace dealing with the truth

Jeremiah 6:13-14 ¹³Because from the least of them even to the greatest of them, Everyone is given to covetousness; And from the prophet even to the priest, Everyone deals falsely. ¹⁴They have also healed the hurt of My people slightly, Saying, 'Peace, peace!' When there is no peace.

- **Dragging God's Holiness Into Our Ungodly Response** - Using a godly symbol (circumcision is a sign of God's covenant with Abraham) in a deceptive trick doesn't make our lie any more acceptable, but also dishonors God as well

D. Choosing To Protect Our Reputation And Pride Or Doing The Tough Thing For God's Glory (30-31)

³⁰ Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have brought trouble on me by making me stink to the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites and the Perizzites. My numbers are few, and if they gather themselves against me and attack me, I shall be destroyed, both I and my household." ³¹ But they said, "Should he treat our sister like a prostitute?"

Conclusion:

1. Stay out of compromising situations

2. Realize every sin is a personal choice
3. Take personal responsibility for our sin
4. Confess it to God and the one we sinned against
5. Reconcile our relationship with God and the injured

For The Victim:

1. Don't blame yourself
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4. Find emotional support through family, friends, church, counselors
5. Get a medical exam
6. Be willing to forgive – don't imprison yourself with anger and bitterness

Acts 7:60 Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

7. Be patient and hopeful – God will work even our tragedies into good (Rom 8:28)
8. Move forward in life (Gen 41:51; Phil 3:8-13)

Genesis 41:51 Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: "For God has made me forget all my toil and all my father's house."

Philippians 3:8-9 ⁸Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

Philippians 3:12-13 ¹²Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. ¹³Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,