GENESIS: BACK TO THE BEGINNING

Overcoming Revenge and Retaliation

Genesis 34:1-31

Dr. Paul Jorden, Associate Pastor
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Genesis 34:1-31 Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to see the women of the land. 2 And 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. 3 And his soul was drawn to Dinah the daughter of Jacob. He loved the young woman and spoke tenderly to her. 4 So Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, “Get me this girl for my wife.”
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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.
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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. -
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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. 15 Only on this condition will we agree with you—that you will become as we are by every male among you being circumcised. -
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. But if you will not listen to us and be circumcised, then we will take our daughter, and we will be gone.”

Their words pleased Hamor and Hamor's son Shechem. 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. So Hamor and his son Shechem came to the gate of their city and spoke to the men of their city, saying,
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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.” -
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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.
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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. -
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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?” (ESV)
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I. We are to **protect** those who are **vulnerable**, not being passive.

A. In a fallen world where bad things happen to good people, the **vulnerable** need to be **protected**.

1 Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to see the women of the land. 2 And 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.
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I. We are to protect those who are vulnerable, not being passive.

A. In a fallen world where bad things happen to good people, the vulnerable need to be protected.

• 1 Thessalonians 5:14 And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.
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I. We are to **protect** those who are **vulnerable**, not being passive.

B. In a fallen world, selfish **impulses** and **passions** lead to sinful acts and coverup.

3 And his soul was drawn to Dinah the daughter of Jacob. He loved the young woman and spoke tenderly to her. 4 So Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, “Get me this girl for my wife.”
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• 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8 For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, 5 not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God;
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• 6 that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. 7 For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. -
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   • *8 Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.*
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C. When terrible things happen **passivity** nor **anger** are the answer.

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.
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• 1 Thessalonians 5:15-18 See that **no one repays anyone evil for evil**, but always **seek to do good to one another and to everyone**. 16 **Rejoice always**, 17 **pray without ceasing**, 18 **give thanks in all circumstances**; for this is **the will of God in Christ Jesus** for you.
Overcoming Revenge and Retaliation

I. We are to **protect** those who are **vulnerable**, not being passive.

D. When terrible things happen **anger** can **consume** us.

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. 8 But Hamor spoke with them, saying, “The soul of my son Shechem longs for your daughter."
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D. When terrible things happen anger can consume us. 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.” -
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   - *Psalms 37:8* Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath! Fret not yourself; it tends only to evil.
   - *Ephesians 4:26-27* Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and give no opportunity to the devil.
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• *James 1:19-20* Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; 20 for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.
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II. We are to respond with **love** and **concern**, not resorting to deceitful retaliation.

A. Show love for others rather than **revenge**.

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.”
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II. We are to respond with love and concern, not resorting to deceitful retaliation.

A. Show love for others rather than revenge.

• Leviticus 19:18 You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.
Overcoming Revenge and Retaliation

II. We are to respond with love and concern, not resorting to deceitful retaliation.

B. Show respect rather than plot evil.

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.
Overcoming Revenge and Retaliation

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17 But if you will not listen to us and be circumcised, then we will take our daughter, and we will be gone.”

• Romans 12:17-21 Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, -
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• but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” 20 To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.
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III. We are to honor the Lord, not act out of greed or hatred.

A. Avoid acting out of self-indulgent and greedy motives.

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, -
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III. We are to **honor** the Lord, not act out of **greed** or hatred.

A. Avoid acting out of self-indulgent and **greedy** motives.
   - *Proverbs 15:27* Whoever is greedy for unjust gain *troubles* his own household, but he who hates bribes will live.
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III. We are to **honor** the Lord, not act out of **greed** or hatred.

B. Avoid acting out of hateful and **murderous** motives.

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.** -
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   • Matthew 5:21-22 “You have heard that it was said to those of old, You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ 22 But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire.
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III. We are to **honor** the Lord, not act out of **greed** or hatred.

C. Act in ways that **honor** and **please** the Lord.

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?”
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• Colossians 1:9-10 And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, *so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.*
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We are to seek justice and oppose evil in a manner that honors the Lord not acting out of vengeance.
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Jacob