

The Tragedy at Salem

Gn 33.17 And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, built himself a house, and made booths for his livestock. Therefore the name of the place is called Succoth. 18 Then Jacob came ... to [Salem, a] city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan Aram; and he pitched his tent before the city. 19 And he bought the parcel of land, where he had pitched his tent, from the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for one hundred pieces of money. 20 Then he erected an altar there and called it El Elohe Israel.

34.1 Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land. 2 And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her and lay with her, and violated her. 3 His soul was strongly attracted to Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the young woman and spoke kindly to the young woman. 4 So Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, "Get me this young woman as a wife."

5 And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter. Now his sons were with his livestock in the field; so Jacob held his peace until they came. 6 Then Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him. 7 And the sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard it; and the men were grieved and very angry, because he had done a disgraceful thing in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, a thing which ought not to be done. 8 But Hamor spoke with them, saying, "The soul of my son Shechem longs for your daughter. Please give her to him as a wife. 9 And make marriages with us; give your daughters to us, and take our daughters to yourselves. 10 So you shall dwell with us, and the land shall be before you. Dwell and trade in it, and acquire possessions for yourselves in it." 11 Then Shechem said to her father and her brothers, "Let me find favor in your eyes, and whatever you say to me I will give. 12 Ask me ever so much dowry and gift, and I will give according to what you say to me; but give me the young woman as a wife." 13 But the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father, and spoke deceitfully, because he had defiled Dinah their sister. 14 And they said to them, "We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one who is uncircumcised, for that would be a reproach to us. 15 But on this condition we will consent to you: If you will become as we are, if every male of you is circumcised, 16 then we will give our daughters to you, and we will take your daughters to us; and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people. 17 But if you will not heed us and be circumcised, then we will take our daughter and be gone." 18 And their words pleased Hamor and Shechem, Hamor's son. 19 So the young man did not delay to do the thing, because he delighted in Jacob's daughter. He was more honorable than all the household of his father. 20 And Hamor and Shechem his son came to the gate of their city, and spoke with the men of their city, saying: 21 "These men are at peace with us. Therefore let them dwell in the land and trade in it. For indeed the land is large enough for them. Let us take their daughters to us as wives, and let us give them our daughters. 22 Only on this condition will the men consent to dwell with us, to be one people: if every male among us is circumcised as they are circumcised. 23 Will not their livestock, their property, and every animal of theirs be ours? Only let us consent to them, and they will dwell with us." 24 And all who went out of the gate of his city heeded Hamor and Shechem his son; every male was circumcised, all who went out of the gate of his city.

25 Now it came to pass on the third day, when they were in pain, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, each took his sword and came boldly upon the city and killed all the males. 26 And they killed Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah from Shechem's house, and went out. 27 The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and plundered the city, because their sister had been defiled. 28 They took their sheep, their oxen, and their donkeys, what was in the city and what was in the field, 29 and all their wealth. All their little ones and their wives they

took captive; and they plundered even all that was in the houses.

30 Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have troubled me by making me obnoxious among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites; and since I am few in number, they will gather themselves together against me and kill me. I shall be destroyed, my household and I." 31 But they said, "Should he treat our sister like a harlot?"

35.1 Then God said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there; and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from the face of Esau your brother." 2 And Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Put away the foreign gods that are among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments. 3 Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me in the way which I have gone." 4 So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods which were in their hands, and the earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree which was by Shechem. 5 And they journeyed, and the terror of God was upon the cities that were all around them, and they did not pursue the sons of Jacob. 6 So Jacob came to Luz (that is, Bethel), which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him. 7 And he built an altar there and called the place El Bethel, because there God appeared to him when he fled from the face of his brother.

► This is one of the _____ texts in Scripture, and the interpretations of it are as _____ as the events.

The key is to interpret Scripture by _____,

which means we must know Scripture, or else texts like this become inkblots onto which we project our _____ sensibilities.

God here is giving us a _____ of Jacob's household, as the "gen's of Isaac" (25.19) are drawing to a close, and the "gen's of Jacob" (37.2) are about to begin. Their gen's are their stories told thru the lives of their _____

_____, and esp. the life of the Christ-type God raises up among them. Thru out, God is preaching the gospel by showing the _____ of and _____ for salvation by grace alone thru Christ alone. The gen's of Isaac end with the _____ at Salem, in which every _____ is killed, every _____ is rendered a widow, and every _____

fatherless, resulting in the _____ of Simeon & Levi so that they do not inherit the land (49.5-7). This shows the need for salvation, as does the pile of _____ the sons of Jacob must leave behind (35.2, 4). God by sheer grace protects them from extermination (5) and reaffirms the promises (9-12), showing the way of salvation. Then God will usher in the gen's of Jacob and a new Christ-type, _____ who will be sold into slavery by his _____, thus showing once again the need for salvation. These are our Scriptural corner stakes for understanding the tragedy at Salem. Now we are ready to look at the details.

Gn 49.5 “Simeon and Levi are brothers; Instruments of cruelty are in their dwelling place. 6 Let not my soul enter their council; Let not my honor be united to their assembly; For in their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they hamstrung an ox. 7 Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; And their wrath, for it is cruel! I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel.”

► Gn 33.18 in the Hb. says, “Jacob came to _____, the city of Shechem.” This is the city where Melchizedek reigned ~200 years before (Gn 14.18-20), and it is same area and same general family from whom Abram bought the burial site where he and Sarah were buried, and later Jacob (Acts 7.15-16; Gn 25.8-10; 50.7-8, 12-13). So it is not happenstance that Jacob comes here, buys land from Shechem’s father, and builds an altar to the LORD (33.18-20).

Heb 7.1 [T]his Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, 2 to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated “king of righteousness,” and then also king of Salem, meaning “king of peace” ... 4 Now consider how great this man was, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils ... 7 Now ... the lesser is blessed by the greater.

Acts 7.16 “[T]hey ... laid [Jacob] in the tomb that Abraham bought ... from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem.”

► The _____ state of Jacob’s family begins to show itself in 34.1, when in the Hb, Dinah “went out ... in/at/among the daughters of the land” (1). In the end, when Simeon & Levi “took Dinah from Shechem’s house, and went out” (26), they are purposely reversing, not only Shechem’s “taking” (2), but also Dinah’s “going _____ among” (1).

► Modern confusion over the relationship of Shechem & Dinah stems from the assumption that the Hb word *‘innâ*, translated “violated,” means that S _____ D, but the Hb does not bear that out. *‘innâ* means “lowered,” referring to a lowering from the social status accorded virgin daughters in Israel. There is only one time that *‘innâ* is used of a physical pushing or pinning down in a rape, and that is with the rape of Tamar by Amnon (2Sa 13), but the Hb word order is different from the normal pattern we see in Gn 34, even as the attitude and actions of Amnon are different from S’s.

S _____ D and wants to marry her, thus reversing her social lowering. The Hb in vs 3 says “his soul _____ to her,” using the same word God used in Gn 2.24: “A man shall ... cleave to his wife.” Simeon and Levi do not charge S with _____, but with treating D like a harlot (31), which involves sex that is sinful but _____ (see Ex 22.16-17; Dt 22.28-29).

2Sam 13.11 [Amon] took hold of [Tamar] and said to her, “Come, lie with me, my sister.” 12 But she answered him, “No, my brother, do not force me, for no such thing should be done in Israel. Do not do this disgraceful thing! 13 ... [P]lease speak to the king; for he will not withhold me from you.” 14 However, he would not heed her voice; and being stronger than she, he forced her and lay with her. 15 Then Amnon hated her exceedingly ... [a]nd ... said to her, “Arise, be gone!” 16 So she said to him, “No, indeed! This evil of sending me away is worse than the other that you did to me.” But he would not listen to her. 17 Then he called his servant ... and said, “Here! Put this woman out, away from me, and bolt the door behind her.”

► God’s _____ prohibition against covenanting and intermarrying was specific to the invasion under Joshua, when “the iniquity of the Amorite [was] complete.” So we see _____ forming alliances and covenants when warranted.

Deut 7.1 When the LORD your God brings you into the land ... 2 ... you shall ... utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them. 3 Nor shall you make marriages with them

Gen 15.13 Then [God] said to Abram: “[Y]our descendants ... 16 ... in the fourth generation ... shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.”

Gen 14.13 Abram ... dwelt by ... Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner; and they were allies with Abram

Gn 21.22 Abimelech ... spoke to Abraham, saying, “God is with you in all that you do” ... 32 [T]hey made a covenant

► Simeon & Levi are _____ and scattered among Israel, but God always provides a path of grace. Levi is redeemed at the Golden Calf incident (Ex 32.26-28), where they acted in _____ fashion to the slaughter at Salem.

Exo 32.26 Moses ... said, “Whoever is on the LORD’s side—come to me!” And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves ... to him. 27 And he said to them, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘[G]o ... throughout the camp, and let every man kill his brother’ ... 28 So the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses.