

Dinah The Daughter Of Jacob And Leah

'Leah conceived again and bore a sixth son to Jacob ... Afterwards she bore a daughter and named her Dinah' (Genesis 30:19 & 21). The six sons born to Leah were Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar and Zebulun (Genesis 29:32 to 35; 30:18 to 20).

Dinah (meaning 'Judged') was the youngest of Leah's seven children born to Jacob and was known to have been very beautiful. It seems she was a favourite with her six older brothers because when Dinah was abducted, raped and held captive by wicked pagans for the sake of their economy, Jacob's sons murdered the rapist, his family, every male in the city then plundered the city for livestock and goods. Their love for their younger sister caused them to go out of their way to help her, rescue her and bring her safely home, against an entire society because her own father Jacob did nothing to help his only daughter. He left her to suffer her fate and when Dinah's brothers rescued her, Jacob berated them! Dinah was violated physically and afflicted emotionally. Her brothers paid a high price to protect their beloved younger sister. Dinah had innocently gone out to visit the local girls in the neighbourhood. This innocent day out resulted in a terrible, horrendous incident that would have left her emotionally scarred for life. She was a young, outgoing woman, aged between seventeen and twenty. She could not have been any younger than seventeen because very young girls would never have been allowed out alone. She would have been an adult but was not yet married, and young women were married off while youthful. Like Rebecca, Rachel and Leah she would have been able to choose her husband. The Bible tells us Jacob went away to Paddan Aram (Genesis 28:2), married Leah and Rachel, took two mistresses named Bilhah and Zilpah, had several children to all four women and left to return to Canaan via Bethlehem. When Jacob was returning to the land that would be called Israel and felt threatened by Esau, it is written in the Jewish Book of Jasher, Jacob was so fearful for Dinah because of her beauty he hid her in a large wooden chest and asked his servants to take care of her.

This is Dinah's tragic story in Genesis 34:1 to 31:

Verse 1. Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land.
Verse 2. Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, the prince of the land saw her. He took her, lay with her and humbled her. (In reality, abducted her by force, raped her and humiliated her.)

Verse 3. His soul joined to Dinah the daughter of Jacob. He loved the young lady and spoke kindly to her.

Verse 4. Shechem said to his father Hamor, "Get me this young lady as a wife."

Verse 5. Jacob heard he had defiled Dinah his daughter. Jacob's sons were with his livestock in the field. Jacob held his peace until they came home.

Verse 6. Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to talk with him.

Verse 7. The sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard it. The six men were grieved and they were very angry because he had done foolishly in Israel in lying with Jacob's daughter. A thing that ought not to be done.

Verse 8. Hamor said to them, "The soul of my son Shechem longs for your daughter. Please give her to him as a wife. Make marriages with us. Give your daughters to us and take our daughters for yourselves. Dwell with us and the land will be before you. Live and trade in it. Get possessions in it."

Verse 11. Shechem said to Jacob and to her six brothers, "Let me find favour in your eyes and whatever you will tell me I will give. Ask me a great amount for a dowry and I will give whatever you ask of me but give me the young lady as a wife."

Verse 13. The sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor with deceit because he had defiled Dinah their sister, and said to them, "We cannot give our sister to one who is uncircumcised for that is a reproach to us. Only on this condition will we consent to you. If you will be as we are and every male of you be circumcised, then will we give our daughters to you, we will take your daughters to us, we will dwell with you and we will become one people. If you will not listen to us and be circumcised, then we will take our sister and we will be gone."

Verse 18. Their words pleased Hamor and Shechem. Shechem did not wait to do this thing because he had delight in Jacob's daughter and he was honoured above all the house of his father. Hamor and Shechem his son went to the gate of their city and talked with the men of their city saying, "These men are peaceful with us. Therefore let them live in the land and trade in it. For behold, the land is large enough for them. Let us take their daughters to us for wives and let us give them our daughters. Only on this condition will the men consent to us to live with us. To become one people, every male among us is to be circumcised as they are circumcised. Their livestock, their possessions and all their animals will be ours. Only let us give our consent to them and they will dwell with us."

Verse 24. All who went out of the gate of his city listened to Hamor and to Shechem his son. Every male was circumcised all who went out of the gate of his city. On the third day when they were sore, two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers each took his sword, came upon the unsuspecting city and killed all the males. They killed Hamor and Shechem with the edge of the sword and took Dinah out of Shechem's house and went away. Jacob's (other) sons came on the dead and plundered the city because they had defiled their sister. They took their flocks, their herds, their donkeys, everything in the city, everything in the

field and all their wealth. They took captive all their children and their wives and took as plunder everything in the house.

Verse 30. Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have troubled me, to make me odious to the inhabitants of the land among the Canaanites and the Perizzites. I am few in number. They will gather themselves together against me and strike me. I will be destroyed, I and my house."

Verse 31. The sons said, "Should he deal with our sister as with a prostitute?"

It was obvious Shechem was accustomed to getting his own way and believed he would again. He could not have 'loved' Dinah. He merely lusted after her and used the poor girl to increase his own wealth. The strategy the sons of Jacob used to save Dinah and destroy her captives would have been very quickly thought up because of the speed in which the sons of Jacob acted. Two sons killed the enemy and rescued Dinah while the other four plundered the city. All Jacob could do was whinge but he did not help rescue nor did he comfort his poor daughter who had been through the most horrendous of experiences. It appears she never recovered from this most terrible assault. No husband or children are mentioned in her regard.

Dinah's name was mentioned only once more in the Bible when Jacob's family were on their way to Egypt several years later. 'These are the sons of Leah whom she bore to Jacob in Paddan Aram with his daughter Dinah' (Genesis 46:15). After this verse, there is no further mention of Dinah in the Bible. The Scriptures do not state if Dinah ever married or if she remained single but this one verse infers she remained alone because no husband or children are mentioned. Dinah's trauma happened before Jacob's youngest son Benjamin was born (Genesis 35:18) and Benjamin was married with at least ten children when they travelled to Egypt (Genesis 46:21) so it was many years later, possibly forty years later when the family left Canaan and sadly it appears Dinah was still unmarried. Dinah suffered a lot throughout her life and probably died in Goshen, Egypt. 'Israel lived in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen and they increased their possessions and were fruitful, and multiplied exceedingly' (Genesis 47:27). Dinah's story is deeply tragic. We sincerely hope Dinah was content when she finally died.

Amen and God bless you.

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