

Apply The Word

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Message Info

Title:

Defiled by Passion

Speaker:

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Date:

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Scriptures:

Genesis 34:1-31

Theme: Stay true to the Lord, or your passions will defile you.

Introduction: Genesis 34 is one of the darkest chapters in Scripture. The defilement of Dinah and her brothers' wicked response are both tragic events. The entire chapter reveals what happens when people give free rein to their passions, instead of listening to the Lord. Everyone sins in some regard, and by the end, everyone is defiled.

We can see the scandal unfold in 3 scenes:

1. The scandal perpetrated (1-7)

The scandal begins when Dinah foolishly leaves her home to see the women of the land. She went to see the immoral, pagan Canaanites.

Shechem, the leading young man, saw her, and used her to satisfy his selfish desires. But he also loved her and tried to secure her as his wife.

Jacob is passive at the news, but Dinah's brothers are outraged. The entire situation is a mess, passions are running high, and trouble is looming.

2. The scandal negotiated (8-24)

Hamor and Shechem try to strike a deal with Jacob and his sons. Give Dinah to Shechem and they can all intermarry and carry on business together.

There is no acknowledgement of wrongdoing, nor that they are holding Dinah in Shechem's home. This is blackmail and brute force.

The brothers respond deceitfully. They agree to the deal on the condition that all the men be circumcised. But they never intend to honor it. Instead, they are being sacrilegious, using a sacrament to weaken their foes and defeat them.

Hamor and Shechem are unaware of the deceit, so they convince all of the men of their city to be circumcised, so that they can all gain' Jacob's wealth together.

3. The scandal escalated (25-31)

On the 3rd day, Simeon and Levi (Dinah's full brothers) enter the city and kill all the males. Then all the brothers come and loot the entire city, carrying it off.

For the first time in the whole account, Jacob speaks. He rebukes his sons for their acts, which jeopardizes the survival of them all.

The brothers get the final word: "should he treat our sister like a prostitute?"

The entire story shows both that the Israelites do not deserve God's grace in any respect, and that the Lord's purposes for his people cannot falter (cf. Ps 138:7-8).

Questions:

1. How have your passions controlled you?
2. Are you stuck in past suffering? If so, how?
3. How are you pursuing growth in listening to the Lord and to the authority of his word in your life?