



FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Biblical Design of Gender, Part 20”

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Informed. Insightful. Intelligent.



The Biblical Design of Gender, Part 20

Genesis 34:1-4

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,

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.

2 [Then], he took her and lay with her, and violated her.

4 So Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, “Get me this young woman as a wife.”

We attend Church to obtain the mind of Christ, meaning, to have the Bible illuminated in our minds so that we can clearly understand the principles that Jesus taught and base our daily personal decisions on those principles.

We come to Church because we want to be obedient to the Bible, which is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, in an informed, insightful and intelligent manner.

Our takeaway point in this series on the Biblical Design of Gender is that God has designed man as the cooperative coalition of husband and wife so that man can successfully achieve the objective that God has given us to exercise dominion over the earth, developing wisdom and knowledge in preparation for further responsibility in our eternal life.

In our lesson before Easter, Jacob left Laban. When Jacob showed up at Laban’s territory and asked for the hand of Laban’s daughter Rachel, Jacob only his ability to work and his skill at keeping cattle to recommend him. But Laban gave Jacob both for his daughters as wives, and Laban also gave Jacob the opportunity to use Laban’s herd to develop his own herd. At the end of twenty years, Jacob, who came to Laban with virtually nothing, left Laban with the vast majority of Laban’s herd, both of Laban’s daughters, and twelve of Laban’s grandchildren.

So after leaving Laban, Jacob proceeded to go back to his father’s house, but, on the way he sent his brother a message and received a message in return.

Genesis 32:3-6 records:

3 Then Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother in the land of Seir, the country of Edom.

4 And he commanded them, saying, “Speak thus to my lord Esau, ‘Thus your servant Jacob says: “I have dwelt with Laban and stayed there until now.

5 I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, and male and female servants; and I have



sent to tell my lord, that I may find favor in your sight.” ’ ”

6 Then the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, “We came to your brother Esau, and he also is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him.”

Jacob found himself in a state of panic. Four hundred men is an army, and Esau is known to be a violent person. But Jacob calmed down and considered the situation. Why would Esau be angry at him? Well, because Jacob bargained sharply with Esau to acquire his birthright, and then Jacob stole his father’s blessing from Esau. The birthright and the blessing, however, only amount to possessions, and Jacob has plenty. Well, though Jacob, I don’t have an army; I only have my children and I don’t want to sacrifice them. But, since I can’t beat Esau, maybe I can buy him off. **Genesis 32:13-20** records:

13 So [Jacob] lodged there that same night, and took what came to his hand as a present for Esau his brother:

14 two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams,

15 thirty milk camels with their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten foals.

16 Then he delivered them to the hand of his servants, every drove by itself, and said to his servants, “Pass over before me, and put some distance between successive droves.”

17 And he commanded the first one, saying, “When Esau my brother meets you and asks you, saying, ‘To whom do you belong, and where are you going? Whose are these in front of you?’

18 then you shall say, ‘They are your servant Jacob’s. It is a present sent to my lord Esau; and behold, he also is behind us.’ ”

19 So he commanded the second, the third, and all who followed the droves, saying, “In this manner you shall speak to Esau when you find him; **20** and also say, ‘Behold, your servant Jacob is behind us.’ ” For he said, “I will appease him with the present that goes before me, and afterward I will see his face; perhaps he will accept me.”

So Jacob tried to bribe Esau. But that was not the only thing that Jacob tried. **Genesis 32:9-12** says:

9 Then Jacob said, “O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the LORD who said to me, ‘Return to your country and to your family, and I will deal well with you’:

10 I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant; for I crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now I have become two companies.

11 Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and attack me and the mother with the children.

12 For You said, ‘I will surely treat you well, and make your descendants as



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the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.’ ”

Along with a bribe, Jacob employed prayer. And he was successful.

Genesis 33:1, 4 tells us:

1 Now Jacob lifted his eyes and looked, and there, Esau was coming, and with him were four hundred men. So he divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and the two maidservants.

4 But Esau ran to meet [Jacob], and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept.

Esau received Jacob in peace and brotherhood, but Jacob was still afraid to stay too close to Esau. **Genesis 33:16, 18** records:

16 So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir.

18 Then Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan Aram; and he pitched his tent before the city.

So Esau went back home to the land of the Edomites and Jacob moved into the part of Canaan in which Shechem was the king, and built a place to worship the God that allowed him to amass a fortune from the flock of Laban and find favor during his reunion with his brother Esau. Jacob had a great adventure in the Land of Laban, but Jacob was successful because he followed the admonitions that God gave him. So Jacob worshiped God. **Genesis 33:20** records:

20 Then [Jacob] erected an altar there and called it El Elohe Israel.

El Elohe Israel means “God is the God of Israel”. Israel is the name that God gave Jacob when he returned from the land of Laban. **Genesis 32:28** tells us:

28 And [God] said, “Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed.”

Jacob, with his large family, his flocks and his herds, decided to make an investment in Shechem and become residents of the town, as **Genesis 33:19** records:

19 And [Jacob] 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.

Now as Jacob was negotiating the deal with Hamor’s children, one of them, Shechem, took a particular interest in Jacob’s family. Shechem’s interest was much like Jacob’s, in **Genesis 29:9-12, 15, 18**, which reads:

9 Now while he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father’s sheep, for she was a shepherdess.

10 And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother’s brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother’s brother, that Jacob went near and rolled the stone from the well’s mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother’s brother.



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11 Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept.

12 And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's relative and that he was Rebekah's son. So she ran and told her father.

15 Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my relative, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what should your wages be?"

18 Now Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, "I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter."

Jacob was a mature, God fearing man. He saw a woman to whom he was attracted, and Jacob treated her respectfully, asking the woman's father for permission to interact with her, and ultimately to marry her. The kiss at the well was not romantic, but was a normal greeting of the time for a relative. But Jacob worked for Laban for seven years to get access to Rachel, because he didn't have the available cash required to pay the bride price.

God's regulations about interactions between unmarried men and women are clear. **Hebrews 13:4** tells us:

4 Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

A fornicator is defined as an unmarried person that indulges in sexual relations. Now, I was involved in a debate about fornication this week. The focus of the debate was an article, "Sex and the single black woman: How the mass incarceration of black men hurts black women" that was published in the Economist. The article began:

Imagine that the world consists of 20 men and 20 women, all of them heterosexual and in search of a mate. Since the numbers are even, everyone can find a partner. But what happens if you take away one man? You might not think this would make much difference. You would be wrong, argues Tim Harford, a British economist, in a book called "The Logic of Life".

With 20 women pursuing 19 men, one woman faces the prospect of spinsterhood. So she ups her game. Perhaps she dresses more seductively. Perhaps she makes an extra effort to be obliging. Somehow or other, she "steals" a man from one of her fellow women. That newly single woman then ups her game, too, to steal a man from someone else. A chain reaction ensues. Before long, every woman has to try harder, and every man can relax a little.

Real life is more complicated, of course, but this simple model illustrates an important truth. In the marriage market, numbers matter. And among African-Americans, the disparity is much worse than in Mr. Harford's imaginary example. Between the ages of 20 and 29, one black man in nine is behind bars. For black women of the same age, the figure is about one in 150. For obvious reasons, convicts are excluded from the dating pool. And many women also steer clear of ex-cons, which makes a big difference when one young black man in three can expect to be locked up at some point.



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Removing so many men from the marriage market has profound consequences. As incarceration rates exploded between 1970 and 2007, the proportion of US-born black women aged 30-44 who were married plunged from 62% to 33%. Why this happened is complex and furiously debated. The era of mass imprisonment began as traditional mores were already crumbling, following the sexual revolution of the 1960s and the invention of the contraceptive pill. It also coincided with greater opportunities for women in the workplace. These factors must surely have had something to do with the decline of marriage.

The debate that this article caused initially focused on whether or not Black women should date men of other races, but I took the debate in a different direction. My response was:

The marriage problem in the Black community did not start because of the incarceration of Black men. To understand the problem, we must go back to the source of it.

The problem starts with out-of-wedlock sex, which leads to out-of-wedlock pregnancies and births, which lead to female headed households and young males being raised in a home without the discipline of an alpha male, a father. 70% of children born in the Black community fit into this demographic, which produces 80% of the incarcerated young Black men.

The more out-of-wedlock sex, the more out-of-wedlock pregnancies and births, the more female headed households, the more incarcerated young men, the fewer men available for marriage, and thus the more out-of-wedlock sex. And so the cycle goes.

The simple solution to the problem:

Black women should stop having sex, getting pregnant and having babies out-of-wedlock. Thus the cycle will be interrupted and the problem will eventually solve itself.

My simple, comprehensive solution met with disapproval. I was told that my solution was unrealistic and unworkable and that a better solution would be to educating people on safe and safer sex. But I responded that there was no lack of knowledge in the Black community about safe and safer sex, meaning sex with barriers between the partners, such as condoms, and sex using contraceptives. Not only that, but having safe and safer sex would not solve the problem. Safe and safer sex can, and often does, result in pregnancy. The techniques involved reduce the frequency of conception, but they do not eradicate conception, because every contraceptive has a failure rate. Statistically, if a female effectively uses oral contraceptives, which have a 99% success rate, she will get pregnant once for each one hundred times she has sexual intercourse during her fertile period. If she consistently has sex once per week, she will be pregnant within



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four years. If she is not married to the man with whom she has sexual relations, there is a good possibility that her male child will grow up in a female headed household without a dominant father figure, which is the formula for incarceration.

So, in our very own society, we can see the reason for God's Biblical design of gender in the admonition of **Hebrews 13:4**. Biblical morality, particularly as it pertains to sexuality, is not just an arbitrary admonition from God; it is the very real solution to our social problems.

The way that Jacob dealt with Laban and Rachel showed that Jacob was a moral man. However, Shechem, the son of the King of the country into which Jacob moved, was not. **Genesis 34:1-4**, tells us:

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,

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.

2 [Then], he took her and lay with her, and violated her.

4 So Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, "Get me this young woman as a wife."

I rearranged the second verse of the thirty-fourth chapter of Genesis because it is unlikely that Dinah was raped. Shechem probably had the same opinion of Dinah that Jacob had of Rachel. But Shechem was the prince of the land, and, unlike Jacob, whom the Bible says was a mild man living in tents, Shechem was used to having his way with women. So Shechem talked Dinah into having sex with him. Shechem enjoyed the sex and, to his credit, and unlike many of the men who father illegitimate children in the Black community, still wanted Dinah for a wife afterwards. However, that was not God's design. It would have been better had Shechem spoke to Jacob about his intentions for Dinah first, received Jacob's approval to marry her, and then waited to have sex with Dinah until after the wedding, as Jacob did with Rachel. Dinah had six full brothers by Leah and four half brothers by Bilhah and Zilpah that were not pleased with that that Shechem had done to their sister. **Genesis 34:7** tells us:

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.

Along with the potential problem of sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy, a fellow that commits fornication has the added problem of protective brothers, uncles and fathers. From a Biblical perspective, every female is supposed to be "covered" by the protection of a man to avoid exactly that which



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Shechem did to Dinah. The man that is supposed to protect the woman is her father. Listen to the law of sexual morality in **Deuteronomy 22:13-19**:

**13 “If any man takes a wife, and goes in to her, and detests her,
14 and charges her with shameful conduct, and brings a bad name on her, and says, ‘I took this woman, and when I came to her I found she was not a virgin,’**

15 then the father and mother of the young woman shall take and bring out the evidence of the young woman’s virginity to the elders of the city at the gate.

16 And the young woman’s father shall say to the elders, ‘I gave my daughter to this man as wife, and he detests her.

17 Now he has charged her with shameful conduct, saying, “I found your daughter was not a virgin,” and yet these are the evidences of my daughter’s virginity.’ And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city.

18 Then the elders of that city shall take that man and punish him;

19 and they shall fine him one hundred shekels of silver and give them to the father of the young woman, because he has brought a bad name on a virgin of Israel. And she shall be his wife; he cannot divorce her all his days.

In the Jewish economy, marriage is a transaction between a young man that wants a wife and a young woman’s father. The young man is responsible for paying the bride price and providing a dowry, and the young woman’s father is responsible for his daughter’s virginity. Should the young woman’s new husband untruthfully accuse her of being impure and his accusation is proven false, the young man has to make financial restitution to the young woman’s father.

Furthermore, **Deuteronomy 25:5-6** says:

5 “If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not be married to a stranger outside the family; her husband’s brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband’s brother to her.

6 And it shall be that the firstborn son which she bears will succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel.

In the Jewish economy, should a woman be widowed, she does not lose her status in the family, but is married to her husband’s brother to keep the continuity of the family intact. Every woman in the Jewish family is under the protection of a man, and a woman without the protection of a father, a husband or a brother is considered to be a harlot. A harlot is not necessarily a prostitute, but is simply an unprotected woman with whom men can have sex indiscriminately. If we go back to the marital dispute describes in **Deuteronomy 22:13-19**, **Deuteronomy 22:20-21** tells us:



**20 “But if the thing is true, and evidences of virginity are not found for the young woman,
21 then they shall bring out the young woman to the door of her father’s house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death with stones, because she has done a disgraceful thing in Israel, to play the harlot in her father’s house. So you shall put away the evil from among you.**

The Bible describes four categories for women. There are virgins, who have not had sex and are waiting to be married, wives, or concubines, who are married and have sex with their husbands, widows, whose husbands have died, and whores, or harlots, who have sex with men indiscriminately.

Dinah, who was a virgin when she left home that morning, went to see the women of the land without the protection of a man. She ran into Shechem, and found out why going through the land unchaperoned was not a good idea. Shechem was good looking, was affectionate and kind, and talked the inexperienced Dinah into becoming experienced sexually. At the conclusion of the conversation, Shechem was pleased enough with Dinah to request that her father give him to her as a wife, and Shechem and his father went to Jacob to ask him for Dinah’s hand. Hamor and Shechem spoke to Jacob and his sons, and offered them the run of the land if they would only give Dinah to Shechem. But **Genesis 34:13-17** records:

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.”

So Hamor and Shechem agreed, thinking that with Jacob and his sons as in-laws, they would be able to use their skills in animal husbandry to increase their flocks and herds, and Shechem would have the wife that he wanted. But it didn’t work out as they expected. **Genesis 34:24-31** records:

24 And all [the men of the city] 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.



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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?”

So, as I said earlier, here is another reason to avoid having sex with women outside of marriage. You never know who is going to show up at your door outraged at your sexual immorality. **1Thessalonians 4:3-8** warns us:

3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality;

4 that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor,

5 not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God;

6 that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified.

7 For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness.

8 Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit.

So, participation in sexual immorality is a rejection of God. Sexual morality is a key building block of the church, and Jesus, even in His own ministry among us, elevated women to a key place of standing in the Church. The woman at the well in John chapter 4, the woman who wiped Jesus’ feet with her hair in the Pharisee’s house in Luke chapter 7, the woman taken in adultery in John chapter 8 are all example of Jesus elevating women, even those that were not elevating themselves by their actions, and restoring them to their God ordained status. And we should emulate Jesus’ example and elevate women, not use them as sex objects. **John 13:34-35** tells us:

34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Our ability to control ourselves sexually is a key indicator of our love for God and for one another. The love of God, that is shed abroad in our hearts by



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the Holy Spirit, does not take for itself that which it wants, but rather gives that which we need, as **John 3:16-17** tells us:

16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

So, as God's Son has given Himself for us that we not be condemned, let us give ourselves for one another honorably and abstain from sexual immorality, since each of us are called to possess ourselves in sanctification and honor. Let us not defile one another, but let us rather love one another, as Christ has loved us.

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