

# A WORD ON WORSHIP

## Review of Message from April 2, 2017

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*Hear Sunday Sermons at [www.SunriseTC.org](http://www.SunriseTC.org)*

### **Genesis 34:8-11**

*“But Hamor spoke with them, saying, “The soul of my son Shechem longs for your daughter; please give her to him in marriage. Intermarry with us; give your daughters to us and take our daughters for yourselves. Thus you shall live with us, and the land shall be open before you; live and trade in it and acquire property in it.”*



The greatest dangers in life are always subtle, not frontal. With a frontal danger, you're on guard; you're not as vulnerable. But with a subtle danger, like the proverbial frog in the kettle, you're not aware of it until it's too late. When Jacob returned to Canaan, Satan didn't use an army or a band of robbers to try to get him. Instead, he used Jacob's fear of Esau to get him to settle in the north, near Shechem. It was inside the borders of Canaan, so Jacob could rationalize that he had obeyed God by returning to the land. But it wasn't Bethel, where Jacob needed to fulfill his vow to the Lord. It wasn't Hebron, where his father Isaac was still living. Jacob's settling on the outskirts of Shechem reminds us of Lot pitching his tent near Sodom. Although Jacob built an altar there, he wasn't where God wanted him to be.

The Shechemites were friendly toward Jacob. Although the young man for whom the town was named violated Jacob's daughter, he wanted to make things right. He said he loved her and wanted to marry her. He was willing to pay a handsome dowry. He and his father offered to form a friendly alliance, intermarrying with Jacob's people and letting them trade and own property. The appeal was for Jacob to "become one people" with them. It sounded beneficial.

Jacob thought he was in great danger in facing Esau; actually, he was quite safe then, surrounded by a regiment of angels. Here, Jacob thought he was quite safe with these friendly people, but he was in great danger. If he had accepted the Shechemites' offer, God's people would have been absorbed into the Canaanite culture and would have ceased to exist. We pray for the church in countries where there is persecution, and rightly so. But the greatest danger to God's people is not persecution; it's assimilation. Persecution has a way of weeding out the lukewarm. We who are prone to blend in with our hedonistic culture are in greater spiritual danger than those who are persecuted.

In my estimation, most Christians in America prefer to dwell in comfort and complacency rather than to live on the cutting edge of Christianity. Most of us, like Jacob, prefer peace to purity, prosperity to piety, and safety to spirituality. The commands and principles of the New Testament, like the laws of the Old, are designed to cause us to live on the cutting edge of life. That, I believe, is why our Lord told the rich young ruler to sell his possessions and give the money to the poor. That man could not trust in God AND gold - it was one or the other. While money is not evil, trusting in it for security is (I Timothy 6:17). God desires to remove from our lives anything which stands in the way of our total trust in Him. May each of us be willing to look only to Him for security and safety, for that is the way God has ordered this universe.

**Sunrise Community Church**  
*Come acknowledge the Lord in our midst*  
**EVERY SUNDAY BEGINNING AT 8:45 A.M.**

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