

The City Gate, a Place of Power and Authority!

This weeks reading from Parashat Vayishlach (*Bereshit / Genesis 32:3-36:43*) the Lord gives Jacob a new name “Israel” and Jacob returns and settles in Eretz Canaan. While in the land, Jacob settles down near the city of shechem (*Bereshit / Genesis 33:18*). While dwelling near Shechem, according to the Scriptures, Shechem the son of Khamor sees Dina, the daughter of Jacob, and desires to take her as a wife.

א ותצא דינה בת-לאה אשר ילדה לייעקב לראות בכנות הארץ: ב וירא אתה שכם בן-חמור החוי נשיא הארץ ויקח אתה וישכב אתה ויענה: ג ותדבק נפשו בדינה בת-יעקב ויאהב את-הנער וידבר על-לב הנער: ד ויאמר שכם אל-חמור אביו לאמר קח-לי את-הילדה הזאת לאשה: ה ויעקב שמע כי טמא את-דינה בתו ובניו היו את-מקנהו בשדה והחרש יעקב עד-באם: ו ויצא חמור אבי-שכם אל-יעקב לדבר אתו: ז ובני יעקב באו מן-השדה כששמעם ויתעצבו האנשים ויחר להם מאד כי נבלה עשה בישראל לשכב את-בת-יעקב וכן לא יעשה: ח וידבר חמור אתם לאמר: 34:1 Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to visit the daughters of the land. 34:2 When Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, the prince of the land, saw her, he took her and lay with her by force. 34:3 He was deeply attracted to Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the girl and spoke tenderly to her. 34:4 So Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, ‘Get me this young girl for a wife.’ 34:5 Now Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter; but his sons were with his livestock in the field, so Jacob kept silent until they came in. 34:6 Then Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him. 34:7 Now the sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard it; and the men were grieved, and they were very angry because he had done a disgraceful thing in Israel by lying with Jacob’s daughter, for such a thing ought not to be done. 34:8 But Hamor spoke with them, saying, ‘The soul of my son Shechem longs for your daughter; please give her to him in marriage. (NASB) The sons of Jacob tell Shechem and Khamor that if they are circumcized, they will exchange their sons and daughters and they will be one people. (*Bereshit / Genesis 34:13-16*) Hearing this, Khamor and his son Shechem go to the gate of the city and tell the men of the city what they want to do, to be circumcised. It is then written that all of the city agreed (*Bereshit / Genesis 34:24-26*) desiring to acquire all of Israel’s wealth.

כתבי הקודש / The Holy Scriptures	
ספר בראשית פרק לד	Bereshit / Genesis 34:24-26
<p>כד וישמעו אל-חמור ואל-שכם בנו כל-יצאי שער עירו וימלו כל-זכר כל-יצאי שער עירו: כה ויהי ביום השלישי בהיותם פאבים ויקחו שני-בני-יעקב שמעון ולוי אחי דינה איש חרבו וקבאו על-העיר בטח ויהרגו כל-זכר: כו ואת-חמור ואת-שכם בנו הרגו לפי-חרב ויקחו את-דינה מבית שכם ויצאו:</p>	<p>34:24 All who went out of the gate of his city listened to Hamor and to his son Shechem, and every male was circumcised, all who went out of the gate of his city. 34:25 Now it came about on the third day, when they were in pain, that two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, each took his sword and came upon the city unawares, and killed every male. 34:26 They killed Hamor and his son Shechem with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah from Shechem's house, and went forth. (NASB)</p>

Sitting at the gate of the city, this was known biblically as a place of power. The one who controls the gate is the one who has the power to allow someone in or our of the city. Sitting at the gates enabled one to know everything that is going on in the city, especially that of a walled city. The Scripture verses this week reveal the importance of the city gates. In God’s Kingdom, the gate is absolutely the only way whereby we gain access to the Lord. Yeshua said in *John 10:1* “I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. (NIV) Yeshua then says in *John 10:9* I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. (NIV) and in *John 14:6* Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (NIV) In this week’s Parashah, all of the men who entered in and went out through the gate of the city must be circumcised according to the agreement. Similarly today, we must have circicumcised hearts in order to enter in through the gates to the Kingdom of Heaven. This may only be accomplished by faith in God’s gate keeper, Yeshua the Messiah! These Scriptures direct us this week to the true gate, the door, the way, the truth, and the life, the living word of God, the only way to the Lord our Father who is in heaven. Have you trusted in Yeshua today, God’s only way for salvation?