

Dinah's
Defilement
is your
Defile-
ment

A graphic of a red blood splatter, consisting of a large, irregular red shape with many small red dots trailing off to the right, positioned to the right of the word 'ment'.

Modupe Kumapayi

Dinah's Defilement is Your Defilement

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Block 5, A Close, 412 Road, Gowon Estate, Egbeda, Lagos.

+234-803-377-7797, +234-815-043-0753

icbnpublishing@gmail.com

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Author's Contact

Email: modupekumapayi@gmail.com

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I want to thank my mother Fadekemi for her strong support as I follow the path God has crafted for me, which is the best path. I'm not in her shoes but I know it can't be easy coping with a daughter like me who is following a non-traditional path. For your cooperation and patience, I am grateful.

Thanks to my Editor, John Oseh, for applying his wisdom, understanding and knowledge in making this book the best it can be. I will always be grateful for all your contributions to my books, sir.

Dedication

To the Christian youths of my generation, I
dedicate this book. By God's mercies, we will all be
able to present our bodies and hearts a living
sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, in Jesus' name
(Amen).

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

The Drama

There is indeed a striking drama in all this; for the author of *Dinah's Defilement is Your Defilement* came ready, script in hand, and left no one in doubt of the fascinating story she wants to unbundle. It is the story of a teenage girl called simply Dinah. Some who know her put her age at twelve, a mere preteen, or fifteen at the most; but we soon begin to learn that her naivety wasn't exactly a matter of her young age, but more the shrewd craftiness of her arch-adversary.

The author's masterful use of Dinah's background to weave a moral lesson has a tinge of self-protective armour that is personal to her. When was it that the author herself was Dinah's age? Not very long ago! If she had escaped Dinah's adversary, she seems to know it wasn't just luck, but her sure place of safety in the hand of the One that is greater than her adversary, an experience Dinah could have had if she hadn't given in to her own mundane, inordinate, unwarranted, and unwary desires.

Pity! Dinah got caught in the net of her adversary, an avoidable dilemma. But since this book isn't written for Dinah but for the youth of today, then the matter

isn't so much about Dinah's fall, but how the youth today should cease from excusing harmful indulgences that get one trapped in the same net Dinah fell into.

In the telling of the story of Dinah, the author employed skills that both bring the reality of the story home, with bullet points that expose the exterior actors behind the screen, even mirroring their hidden thoughts and intentions, including Dinah's foolhardiness and personal schemes that exposed her to danger. At the end, Dinah wasn't innocent after all. And her vengeful brothers who took revenge against those who defiled their sister didn't act in love for Dinah, but mainly expressed their innate temperamental rage, a flaw they put to devastating use, and thereby endangering their aged father and the well-being of the entire household.

The youth reading Dinah's story will be entertained, yes; isn't that what effective drama stories are meant to do? But you will not lose the moral lesson, which is: "Beware of your arch-adversary," whose devious schemes are never visible to the naked eye because he lives and works in the dark.

Why is this book in Parts, just three in all? That way the author is able to categorize the episodes of the dramatic story of Dinah, and able to pinpoint the

hidden actors behind the curtain, expose their shrouded interplay and evil intentions, and then, like a concerned narrator, the author stands aside to warn the reader: “Don’t make the mistake of Dinah your own mistake!”

A word of warning should be enough for the wise, don’t you think so?

John Oseh

Managing Editor

International Christian Book Network (ICBN)

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

My Sister and Brother's Keeper

As I sat there in front of my laptop on a gloomy Monday morning, alone in my house and in my stuffy bedroom, which also serves as my workstation, thinking about how best to introduce this book to you and convince you it's worth your time, I'm suddenly reminded of something that happened to me a season ago. It was in a church environment. Actually, I was working in that church environment and had people there who had worked the same job I was doing way longer than me. They knew the ropes and could identify the pitfalls and all. Only problem was not all of them were willing to show me the ropes so I could do my job more effectively, neither were they willing to help me identify and avoid pitfalls.

By their action and inaction, I had to accept the hard truth that they weren't their "sister's keeper"; by this I mean they didn't feel any sense of responsibility towards their colleague, better put, towards someone who was their junior and was naive. I remember

being so hurt one day after experiencing something I believed was avoidable, and confronting the person ahead of me who was a fellow Christian and could have guided me; and I remember seeing how indifferent she seemed. I'd never forget her words. She said, "If I had gone through it, it's best you too go through it!"

But I didn't keep quiet that day. I gave her a piece of my mind. I told her, "How is it that after going through something unpleasant, you would sit back and watch someone else go through the same? Shouldn't it be enough that you had gone through such a thing? What if you went through it so that others won't? Can't we see light with your light?" Well, she didn't respond; and from that day onward I decided on two things: first, not to expect help from her; and second, to do better than her with those who were my colleagues, especially the junior ones. And God helped me keep my vow way beyond my stay there and the workplace in general. And I'm not confused about why, it's because God wants us to have a sense of responsibility towards one another. And if I was determined to help others, He was willing to provide me with all the support I'd need.

And you know what's funny, when I eventually changed jobs, it was a place which wasn't a church environment. I was employed to take over the job of

someone who was leaving because she was getting married and relocating. But before she left, I had two weeks of her hand-over time with her. Two wonderful weeks! I look back at those weeks now with fond memories because this lady opened up about her experiences to me, the good, the bad and the ugly. And with that information, I felt more than ready to face the days ahead. Not only did I do my job more effectively, I was also able to avoid needless pain. By the time I was leaving that workplace, not only had I received a promotion, I had an award in the bag. And in case you're wondering if the lady I replaced was a Christian, the answer is yes; she was. Someone that clearly understood what it meant to be her sister's keeper!

Now I've said the word "sister's keeper" twice; but the first person that mentioned something similar was Cain. He actually said it first, and when he did, it was as a response to God, who had asked him a question about his brother Abel. The account is recorded in Genesis 4:9;

"And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?"

At first glance it would seem God was just asking for the location of Abel, and Cain was answering that he

wasn't aware of Abel's whereabouts, and wasn't his brother old enough to take care of himself? But didn't God know what had transpired between the brothers? He did. A closer look will reveal God's mind concerning our attitude towards one another.

God wants us to have a sense of responsibility towards others, especially those who are members of our family (biological and spiritual), to be concerned for their welfare and to act on that concern as led by the Holy Spirit. But if we continue to hurt others with our actions, especially our inaction, we will have to answer the question He will eventually ask us: "Where is thy brother, where is thy sister?" And, when we give the kind of answer Cain did, we know that won't sit well with God; and there won't be a reward for well-doing from God. It is my prayer that we be wise enough to sow good seeds so we can reap a good harvest, in Jesus' name (Amen).

God not only has this expectation of us – I mean having a sense of responsibility towards others, showing concern and acting on that concern – He provides us with a great example, as is nicely packaged in what we call the Scriptures today. Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 informs us that all Scripture is given by God's inspiration, and serves different purposes for us, among which are it being profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for

instruction in the ways of righteousness etc. God's idea was that through the Scriptures we will have knowledge of all the required and desirable qualities and be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. That seems a lot to digest; let me use Scripture to explain Scripture. In Romans 15:4, Apostle Paul says, *"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."*

Imagine that! It means the account of the lives of the people recorded in the Scripture – this includes their errors, sins, victories, inspirations etc – are all there to serve a good purpose if we are interested in learning from them. Aren't you just grateful that the Scripture is available and accessible to you? I know I am. These compilations of the true life experiences of people in Bible time that have been made available and accessible to me, is God's way of assuming responsibility for me; i.e., showing concern for my welfare and acting on that concern. It's God's way of assuming responsibility for you too. It's God's way of equipping us for the situations ahead. It's God's way of being vigilant and proving that He's taken notice of you and me and us all. I can go on and on, but I know you get the picture; so I'd stop there.

Now that all that has been made clear to us, would you now believe me when I say the reasons why this book came to be are one, because I'm still keeping my vow; two, because God is still providing me with the

support I need to do so; and three, because I truly believe your reading this book will do you a lot of good if you would take advantage of what light God has provided, first, in the Scripture itself, then, hopefully, in my interpretation and the applications I make of the Scriptures here.

God's guiding light comes in different ways; sometimes it's in the form of a warning. And before you begin to discover the warnings, amongst other things you'd glean while reading this book, you should know that I was warned first. With the two true life events I'd be dissecting and attempting to interpret in this book, God warned me. Thankfully I heeded the warnings and could watch from the sidelines instead of repeating someone else's painful history and adding to the wounds I would have suffered in this world and becoming salt that has lost its savour. It's my prayer that my results will be your results or even be way better than mine in Jesus' name (amen).

Before you proceed, think deeply on the words of Apostle Paul in Romans 15:1-3 and be prepared to do unto others what I now do to you.

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me."

INTRODUCTION

It's all about Purity

Who wrote Psalm 119? Some say Moses, others say King David; the majority of others just don't know. But while we might not all agree on who the author is, one thing we can all agree is that the Psalm contains some questions from the heart, the same kind that's on our hearts too, at least if your desire is to please God.

The question the author asks in verse 9a stands out, especially to me, seeing that purity is a theme and a responsibility that has weighed heavily on my mind lately in this foul, evil and morally depraved world. The Psalmist asks? "*Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?*" The Psalmist was concerned with thoughts on how the youth can rid his habits, conduct, personality, temperament, character, choices etc of everything seen as unpleasant and defiling before the Lord, or better put according to the Lord's standards. And what was his conclusion? Let's read verse 9b. "...*by taking heed thereto according to thy word.*" A wise counsel, if you ask me!

The wisdom in his words is that we ought to pay careful attention to God's word if we are to remain undefiled. And why? Because, it is possible to hear or read and not take heed. Therefore, it is important that we not only desire purity – I'm addressing those who are interested in being pure and remaining pure morally and spiritually – but that we pay careful attention to God's word, which reveals more than just His standard for purity but also a way to achieve and maintain it.

And still, the Psalmist's words pose a question to us; but to find this one, you have to read between the lines. He asks us, How teachable are you? As for him, he was very teachable. Let's read further in verses 10 to 11.

“With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

The Psalmist says with his whole heart he had a desire to obtain and achieve purity according to God's standards. I love that he used the word “whole” when talking about his heart in regards to how he sought God's standards for purity. This is important because it reveals to us what is equally required of us. If God was going to teach you something, you've got to be all in; your heart can't be divided. Coupled with the

effort the Psalmist was making, he added prayer. So, yes, we would do well to prayerfully pay careful attention, for it is not enough to pay careful attention, it is important that we pray for God's hand in guiding us continually on the path of purity.

Finally, in verse 11, the Psalmist writes the words many of us have crammed and can easily recite. But for the Psalmist, these words were no meaningless recitations; they reveal to us more about his heart and priorities. His heart was set on pleasing God, and so he not only prayerfully paid careful attention to God's word, he made himself very teachable by devoting his entire heart to learning from God, and making sure to not be a forgetful hearer/reader of His word; he intentionally engraved God's word on his heart, this way it would guide him in his choices, and sinning against God will not be a habitual thing anymore.

As you've already guessed, the theme of this book is purity according to God's standards. And if you keep reading, it means you've decided to pursue purity according to God's standards, that you will pay careful attention to what you'd read, that you've determined to humble yourself to be taught of God (like I did), that you'd be all in, that you'll be committed to prayer and not be a forgetful reader but will practice the truths you'll learn. If your answers are all yes, then please keep reading!

PART 1

Dinah and the Prince of Shechem

1

The Prey

Dinah was her mother Leah's last child born to Jacob. It was after her birth that her aunt Rachel who was also her step mother began to conceive and had the last two children that will be born to that household, both of whom were boys. Whether it was on her mother's side or her aunt's, or even from her father's concubines Bilhah and Zilpah, Dinah was the only daughter of that household.

Aside from being the only daughter, Dinah was also her mother's only child whom she didn't give meaning for her name. With all her brothers, her mother seemed to have something to say, including the sons born to her by her maid Zilpah! This now leaves us with assumptions about why Leah named her daughter Dinah. If you search for the meaning of the name Dinah, you'd discover that it means judged or vindicated. Who was being judged? Or rather who had been vindicated? Whatever Leah was really

feeling when she saw that she had birthed a baby girl that moved her to name her Dinah, we would never really know (not in Genesis 29 and 30 where the story occurred).

In the home front, there was Jacob who was the head of the family; there was Leah who was Jacob's first wife; there was Rachel, the second wife, then there were concubines Bilhah and Zilpah, and between all of them were twelve children – eleven boys and a girl – as Benjamin who would make the number of sons born to that family twelve would be born much later. As for Dinah she was surrounded by ten older brothers and one younger brother until later when she had two younger brothers. Although the Scripture doesn't reveal anything else about Dinah until Genesis 34, yet it reveals just enough to help us see what the home front was like.

Daddy's Girl?

Jacob, Dinah's father, had only one brother whose name was Esau; he was his twin. They had been born to their father Isaac. While he had no sisters, he had a mother Rebekah whose favourite he was and with whom he was exceptionally close. In fact, you could call them partners in crime, for they often plotted and executed their antics together. It would have been hard when Jacob had to leave home and even

more so when his mother passed. Jacob might have found solace in Rachel's love but it was Leah who began to bear him children first.

Well, I can imagine Jacob being happy about having so many sons from not only Leah but also his concubines; but I can imagine a different kind of smile on his face and joy in his heart at the sight of his first daughter who, it seems, was his only daughter. You can blame this vivid imagination of mine on how I see men; even those who grew up with sisters tend to light up with delight at the sight of their first daughters. There's this coy tenderness they have towards female children. I used to know someone who actually named his first daughter Princess. No, he wasn't a king, neither did he have a palace; but the little girl stole his heart the moment she was born, and instead of giving her the name as a nick name like most men do their little girls, he called her Princess. Was she daddy's little girl? You bet! She loved her father too and had him wrapped around her little finger; and he not only gave her the things she wanted and needed, he was also a fierce protector. Everyone could see it.

Back then in Bible time, sons seemed more valuable to fathers than daughters. Blame that on the patriarchal society it was back then. But, even that didn't stop fathers from loving their daughters,

neither did it stop them from having a good relationship with them or protecting them and even dreaming up a good future for them, a future that would have perhaps only consisted of them marrying into the right family and being provided for and well taken care of. It might have been a limited vision, for women can have a future that consists of more than a family; but still for the standards back then, it was still a good future Jacob must have had in mind for his first and only daughter.

Her Mother's Twin?

Leah, Dinah's mother, might have loved having sons because she was in a proving mode; but I bet she sighed a sigh of relief at the thought of having a 'mini-me,' someone who could be her friend, for most first daughters, at least in their childhoods, often take on the role of being their mother's friends. While I can't see Dinah being Leah's twin, by this I'm talking about their bond, I sure can imagine her being her mother's hope. Dinah might have dreams of her own but she would be her mother's hope for redemption.

You see, Leah, Dinah's mother, had grown up in a household where her mother's presence and voice wasn't felt or heard; and with a father called Laban who was an exception to the rule, for he didn't place much or any value on female children, especially

female children who didn't fit the society's beauty standards as Leah was, her ignominious fate is better imagined. Neither did Laban have plans, let alone good plans for either of his daughters. Little wonder when Jacob showed up showing interest in Rachel, the younger of the sisters, and wanting to work for her hand in marriage, their father snuck Leah in during her sister's supposed wedding night. He believed that was the only way to get her married, plus he also thought this was a good way to use his daughters to get himself a hired hand without pay for another seven years.

To her father, Leah had been a pawn. She didn't have the best experience with men. Her father didn't value her or think anything good really could come out of her other than the one time he used her to further his own interest; and then there was Jacob, the handsome stranger turned cousin in love with her sister; a man she knew couldn't love her, at least not like she would have wanted. What he offered was pity; and she had determined that through child bearing she would win his love, since that was the one thing she seemed to be able to do that her beautiful, loved and well favoured sister couldn't yet do.

So no, Leah couldn't have had time to form a bond with Dinah; she would have been too busy proving

her point, not only by birthing sons but raising them perfectly too! All in a bid to impress her husband, but that wouldn't have stopped her from hoping that she could be redeemed through her daughter. For I presume that when Leah birthed Dinah, she saw a girl that perhaps looked better than her, that not only could but would have a different experience in life than her; her father would love her, her brothers would dote on her and defend her honour and hopefully she would have a husband whose affections would come naturally and she would be spared the heartache she her mother had suffered. For Leah, Dinah was her chance to live again! For she would not only hope through Dinah, she would live through her. In short, all her desires would be met though her first and only daughter.

Would Dinah have known all this? For sure! Mothers can hardly hide things from their daughters, let alone their first daughters. As soon as Dinah could understand things, I'm sure her mother would have sat her down to tell her things; and as she neared her teenage years, her mother would have shared her hopes for her life with her. Even if she didn't do so directly, she would have dropped hints here and there; and if Dinah was a sharp girl, she would have understood the responsibility laid on her by her mother.

Doting Brothers?

Leah, Dinah's mother might not have had the best experience with the men in her life, be it her own father, brothers and her husband; but Dinah's case was different. Dinah, I believe, had a loving father and had brothers that would dote on her. Even if it wasn't all her brothers that were fond of her, I believe she was adored and cherished by her full brothers, Simeon and Levi.

Dinah had a good view and a good experience with men, unlike her mother. For Dinah, men meant security; as it were, she had eleven bodyguards – her father and ten older brothers. For even if her brothers weren't all fond of her, they all would have had the responsibility of looking out for her. Their father wouldn't have had to spell that out to all of them; it would have been an unspoken rule. I am able to write this boldly because I have also had the privilege of seeing the interactions of brothers who have just one sister or even those who have more than one sister; they are always very protective of them. Even if the sisters were older, there was still a protectiveness about them; they believe it is their duty to look out for their sisters. And so did the brothers of Dinah. Being the only girl amongst twelve males, this includes her father, but not Benjamin her younger brother that would be born later, Dinah was sheltered. She lived a very sheltered life.

Older Female Mentors?

Dinah was the only female child in that household; but she wasn't the only female around. She had other females around her like her mother, her aunt who also was her stepmother, their maids which were also her father's concubines. The only thing was that, these females that overtook the home front were all older than her, no age mates, no play mates around. Sure, her mother favoured her, and her mother's maid would have been compelled to like her or at least treat her with respect. I'm not sure how her aunt and stepmother Rachel, and her maid Bilhah reacted to her and treated her. I want so badly to believe that Rachel couldn't ignore Dinah, that she loved the idea of a female child so much that she embraced her and indulged her.

I can imagine this because I know of a polygamous family where though the wives are always at loggerheads, and one wife couldn't conceive while the other went on to have four children, the wife who couldn't conceive took a liking to one of her co wife's children, and both stepmother and stepchild became close, so close that the biological mother of the child became extremely jealous. So it's not unfounded for Rachel to take a liking to Dinah.

Yet regardless of the females in Dinah's life – those who loved her and those who didn't love her – one thing was certain, the only thing she could learn from all of them was how to compete and live for the love and acceptance of a man, one's husband.

A Religious Home Front?

Dinah was mostly loved at home and lived a sheltered life so you could call her naïve – i.e., showing a lack of experience, wisdom or judgment; for she didn't know life beyond what she was used to. But was she religious? Dinah grew up in a religious household; her father knew about God and didn't just learn about Him from his father, Isaac, who was Dinah's grandfather, but had personally encountered God for himself and had established a relationship with Him.

Leah, Dinah's mother, always mentioned God, at least when she was naming the sons born by her and born to her by her maid, Zilpah; so we can assume Leah too knew about God, most likely from Jacob her husband. The Almighty God was who Dinah had seen her parents, perhaps more specifically her father believed in and worshipped. She too would have been taught to believe in God and worship Him. She would have seen her father treat God with devotion and she must have learnt that was the way to go too.

What Was Dinah Like?

Other than all the things we've covered, we are only really left with Genesis 34:1 to reveal to us what kind of personality Dinah had. Let me share the verse: *"And Dinah the daughter of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land."*

I don't want to assume Dinah had an outgoing personality; meaning she was friendly and socially confident. Instead, what seems more befitting a word to describe her personality would be curious. A young lady with an aged father, competing females around her and mainly older brothers bursting with male energy who would have left her out on many of their escapades, with little activities other than chores to do around the house would have been a very curious young lady. I see her being interested in a world outside of her sheltered life and very eager to know all about it and perhaps be a part of it.

The second thing the verse I shared reveals, other than Dinah's curious personality, is what she lacked, which also is what she desired. So far we've established that Dinah had a lot of male attention and presence; we've also established what the females around were concerned with, and the fact that they were older than her. This would have created in Dinah another yearning. She already had a yearning

for life outside her sheltered life, add now to that a yearning for different company – female company – not females that were already wives and mothers and were much older than her, but those who were her peers! Someone might ask what could the females outside tell her or show her or even give her that the ones at home couldn't? Hmmm! Dinah, had she been the one to answer right before she stepped out, would have given you “many things” as answer.

Bible scholars reckon Dinah was between the ages 13 and 15 when she ventured out of her father's house. So bearing that in mind, would you still ask what it is she thought the females her age outside of her father's house could offer her? If you're still wondering, well, here's one answer for you: a sense of belonging.

Did it occur to you that despite being loved and having a family around, Dinah felt out of place, that she didn't fit in, and that being in the company of her peers, especially females, would have meant that she truly belonged somewhere, that she would have a voice, be better understood, and it must have also held a promise of fun – something other than routine house chores and talks about how to be a good wife and mother? Her reasons would have been endless and very valid to her.

Dinah was a classic example of being engulfed in youthful lust. And by this I don't mean burning with sexual desire – because this is the only thing that usually pops into our minds when we hear “youthful lust”. What I mean is she was consumed with a yearning for things that are usually appealing to young people, not only teenagers but youth in general. In her case, it was many things like freedom; she wanted to explore life outside her sheltered life, have fun, meet new company; she wanted to find people her age and fit in with them.

2

The Bait Of Satan

I initially titled this chapter “The Bait” but needed now to specify the source of that bait. It is Satan! Let me expose the identity of this vicious adversary, Satan, aka. the devil, who likes to act like a roaring lion on the prowl, walking about seeking whom he may devour. But just because Satan really isn’t the true Lion – we know who the true Lion is – doesn’t mean he can’t hurt you in many ways.

Satan’s real mission is to steal from you. For instance, he can steal your purity. His mission is also to kill you, either physically/spiritually. He is also out to destroy whatever is worth something to you, e.g., your future. Jesus called him a thief (John 10:10). You can’t evade him, outwit him or conquer him by being ignorant of his existence, or by acting indifferent to him. You’re better off sober, vigilant

and submitted to God. Peter, Jesus' disciple, and James, Jesus' half-brother, advise us so (1 Peter 5:8; James 4:7). That being said, let's go back to talking about Dinah.

Dinah had an adversary, Satan, whom she knew nothing about. But he knew everything about her, and believed she was the perfect next conquest. This wasn't his first time dealing with someone from her family; he had been there from the beginning and had beguiled Eve. He was there when Cain murdered Abel, and actually instigated that evil act. After Cain, he set his eyes on the descendants of Seth. That antediluvian generation was eventually wiped out in the great flood. As we say, all of that is now history. Thereafter, Satan was the one who whispered a suggestion to Sarai to have her husband, Abram, to bear a child with her handmaid, Hagar. Till today the consequences of that error are still with us, as the entire world continues to reel under the affliction of religious terrorism from the descendants of Hagar's son.

It was also Satan who encouraged Rebekah (Dinah's grandmother), whose behaviour he took charge of, leading her to induce Jacob, Dinah's father, to lead a life of crookery as supplanter. But by God's loving intervention, Satan eventually lost Jacob to God when the supplanter turned a new leaf, handed his life to God, and submitting to His will. Satan has not

given up though; he had plans for Jacob's family. Starting with Dinah; Jacob's only daughter, was exceptionally an appealing target for Satan. He would come after the only daughter in the family and see where it leads. But, first, he would wait for an opportune time to strike.

In the interim, Satan worked on the perfect bait. He was the predator and she didn't know it yet; but she would be the prey. He wouldn't reveal himself to her outright; instead, like a fisherman would reel in a fish with a bait, he would prepare a bait and a snare for her. His *modus operandi* was first a bait, then when she bites, she would be hooked for life! His conquest.

The Bait

A bait is anything that can be used to entice. Different animals require different baits, and humans are no exceptions; they too require different baits. Satan, the adversary, knew this from the beginning of his interactions with God's creatures; he is a master in the game, it was one he had played since the beginning and often won at.

He had the same game plan as he targeted Dinah. And, thankfully, Satan must have thought, Dinah might be her mother's hope, but she had her own dreams. Her dreams revealed her yearnings; and it

was with those yearnings he would prepare a bait for her. He had done his homework on her. He already knew she desired freedom; she was desperately yearning for life outside her sheltered life. She also wanted a different company. Those desires, let it be said, were not in themselves wrong things to desire; but when Satan was done with Dinah's yearnings – by this I mean the way Satan would encourage Dinah to go after them – she would regret even having dreams. He had already started working on her, actually on her mind.

Satan had already been whispering to Dinah the pleasures and advantages the outside world held in store for her; and she hadn't been able to stop thinking about those. She had even started dreaming about them. They were all she could think about. It would only be a matter of time before she went after those things in the way Satan dictated! He wasn't going to stop whispering these things to her, and she could go ahead and brood over them until she dreamt of them and think some more about them when she wakes up all she likes.

Were they the truth, the things Satan whispered to Dinah? Not completely, of course lies were mixed with a sprinkle of the truth here and there; but I mean who but Dinah would think she didn't have an enemy and that there were no dangers anywhere.

But, then again, her adversary reminded himself, that was why she was on his radar. Sure, she came from a religious family he was interested in, but her naivety was way too appealing to ignore. He loved it that he would be the one to teach her about life.

You could call Satan “Mr Experience,” for he would teach her about how painfully scary life can be. How dare she live without acknowledging him and being scared of him! He would introduce himself to her in a way she would never forget. He couldn’t wait to brand her with his initials! She would be his sooner rather than later.

And while Dinah’s adversary continued with his invisible but soon to be visible work, Dinah continued living her everyday life unknowingly having conversations with an invisible enemy, believing his words and imagining all he shared with her. She was acting out the script her adversary had written out for her. She didn’t know it yet; but it would soon dawn on her.

3

The Snare

The Land

Dinah was born in Padan-aram during the time her family still lived close to her grandfather Laban; but they had moved when her father decided it was time to move, and now her family had settled in Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan (Genesis 33:18). These people who were their neighbours where they settled were Shechemites/Canaanites and Dinah's family were Hebrews.

The major difference between them was that Dinah's family believed in and served one God, the Almighty God, while the Canaanites had many gods they believed in and served; and this didn't include the Almighty God. This major difference also set the tone for everything else. From the mode of worship, to their way of life and whatever else. Everything was different. And while the Canaanites might benefit

greatly from their interactions with the Hebrews, seeing that Dinah's family would influence them positively, this land and its people, the Canaanites, were most likely to be a snare for the Hebrews. This is my fancy way of saying they would influence them negatively, encouraging them to do things that would be detestable before God and that would definitely attract negative consequences from Him.

If the Hebrews were to survive living in that land, which was also home to their "different" neighbours, they were better off not making covenants/treaties/agreements with them, forming bonds with them e.g., friendship or marital bonds, or honouring invitations from them to share in their carnivals and ceremonies. Why? It is because, if they did, they were bound to teach them to do wrong and to join them in doing wrong at least according to God's standards; then soon there would be no difference between them, they would be the exact same thing; the very thing God didn't want at all!

It's People and their Way of Life

Earlier on I had mentioned that the people that dwelt in the land had different religions, beliefs and practices than the Hebrews; and I had also hinted that it meant that their religions influenced their way of life. I would like to elaborate on that. You see, the different gods the

Shechemites believed in, demanded different kinds of worship; and some of these modes of worship included making of idols, erecting altars, the use of sacred stones and poles, shedding of human blood, sacrificing humans, some very cruel practices against animals, fertility rites; and then there's sexual promiscuity (prostitution and orgies).

Now it is only normal that if the gods they believed in found nothing wrong with these kind of actions, and demanded them as mode of worship, then you can expect these people to go about with a twisted idea of what's right and what's wrong. Everything would seem permissible to them even when it truly isn't.

One word that would generally describe the way of life of the Shechemites would be immoral. They were considered immoral according to God's standards when He considered their customs and behaviours; and an Hebrew mixing with them like in the examples earlier cited would mean risking being immoral like them, not only in spiritual purity because of the idolatry, but also in bodily/moral purity. So you see how the place and the people were a snare for any Hebrew, especially for Dinah who was more than interested in what happened outside the four walls of her father's house. The place already held its temptations for her, the people were no different, especially their teenagers and youth who

would have learnt idolatry and would have been involved in abominable acts they've seen their elders and leaders do.

The land which her family now dwelt was a snare for Dinah, the people and their way of life were a snare unto Dinah as well; either one would be perfect for her adversary to use for a trap, but both would be used; yet Satan had one more in mind: a man who would be a major snare, and employed in the defilement of Dinah, a man who was completely under Satan's influence.

The Man-Shechem

Shechem, the man, didn't know it yet, but his services were about to be employed fully by Dinah's adversary, who, as we would soon discover, would be his; i.e., Shechem's adversary too, for after his work is done, he would pay fully with death.

Shechem was the son of a wealthy and influential man in the land where Dinah's family settled; his mother's name goes unmentioned but his father was named Hamor. They were Hivites. And you won't be wrong if you considered Shechem the prince of the country because of the status of his father. But Shechem had a reputation among the people too; for one, we can be sure that being a young man with

such a family background he would not lack for female attention, and with the kind of lifestyle both males and females were involved in that land, he must have had his way with the females who would have willingly given themselves to him.

But that was for the ladies; with the men, Shechem's word was law, most probably like his father; they were able to sway the men of their city to do their bidding, even if it meant using deceit, and their motives being to further their own interest. Shechem and his father were a dynamic duo.

Soon we will discover one more thing about Shechem: that the concept of self-control was completely foreign to him. He was ruled by his emotions and desires, like most youths nowadays are. Such flaw was obvious in the expression of his behaviour. What Shechem wanted, Shechem got. It didn't matter how he arrived at getting it, and who got hurt while he was obtaining it; any means will be employed, but Shechem will have everything that appealed to him. Someone who worshiped the Almighty God might silently struggle for self-control if their desire is to please God; but someone who lived in a land and with a people whose lifestyle includes pleasing self, and who was used to indulging, didn't stand a chance, to be frank, which must be why Shechem was Satan's perfect final instrument in the defilement of Dinah.

4

The Defilement Of Dinah

Dinah's adversary had been working hard behind the scenes. Then it was time for his work to come to full light. Like a director in a play, Satan made sure everything was set. All the actors knew their lines, and a day had even been marked for the evil occasion. Some members of the unseen world, specifically fallen angels under Satan's influence who had pled allegiance with him were all invited; they had all been delighted at the invitation and had all confirmed their attendance. There would even be guest appearances.

Satan had also employed the services of other actors; they just didn't know it yet. Well, actually none of the

actors knew they had been employed and had been learning their lines, even rehearsing them. Satan had been clever with the script, and waited with bated breath for everything to begin to happen.

Yet, everything depended on Dinah. Oh, how Satan hated free will! There were days when he loved free will, especially when people used it to unwittingly participate in doing his bidding. But this time around, he hated it. How could he, Satan, be waiting on a teenage girl to make the decision to step outside unchaperoned! Yet, when she made that decision to leave the confines of her father's house, she would be leaving behind his protection as well. Once she breaks her father's commands, she leaves herself exposed, and Satan could "legally" do to her as he pleased. She would be his; all he had to do was wait patiently, and thankfully, he had all the time in the world.

And so Dinah's adversary kept waiting. And one day, it was finally the day of the thief. It had looked like it would never happen, but it happened. The day of the thief came, and it was all thanks to Dinah! Her adversary jumped for joy! Soon every demon who had confirmed attendance was seated. Satan especially watched Dinah as she watched everybody in her family that day. He knew what she was looking out for: she wanted an opportune time to sneak out. She knew everybody's routine.

So, while her father and the mothers and concubines might not pose a problem because they would be engrossed in their routines and rivalry, the issue might be her older brothers who paid her more attention than they ought to, especially Simeon and Levi. They would swear it was out of love; but she wished they would mind their own business from time to time and let her have a say about what happened in her own life. Thankfully that day, all her older brothers went out, even little Joseph was out of sight. The window of opportunity opened up and she jumped through it.

Once out of the house, Dinah's adversary motioned for every other thing to begin to fall into place. Through his input Dinah got what she desired the most; freedom. He had encouraged her with his words, and the visuals required for her to pursue life outside her sheltered life; and soon she would get a different kind of company – female company. She could enjoy all he had presented to her but she better be ready to pay. He wasn't in the business of giving charities. Satan gives nothing for free; he would demand payment, and it would be in full, and she cannot decide not to pay after accepting Satan's offers.

The devil had worked exceptionally hard on the meeting between Dinah, the girls and Shechem. And

all the demons commented so. It all was perfect. First, Satan made sure it wasn't hard for Dinah to get information on where the girls her age would most likely be gathered that day, and of course, he had made sure their central attraction, Shechem, would be there too, for he knew that wherever Shechem chose to be, girls would be present. And if Dinah sought out the girls, she and Shechem would meet. She was bound to catch Shechem's eye! The girl would stand out! Her dressing would catch Shechem's eye, but even more her naivety would draw him to her! Shechem would do all of Satan's bidding. Everything was set, and Satan couldn't wait, things weren't happening fast enough, but he had to wait for the most appropriate time.

Dinah, no sooner had she left home learnt where the girls were, and headed there. If the prince of the country was in a location and wasn't trying to hide, people would easily catch wind of it. And if Dinah had stopped to ask people for information, they would have readily given it to her. Dinah didn't seek the prince out, but isn't that how life is? Often times we get more than we bargain for when we do things our way. And just because we don't seek out evil doesn't mean it won't find us out.

Finally, Dinah was in the same space as Shechem! Breathing the same air, and within minutes they

would no longer be strangers, but Dinah also would never remain the same again after she met him. Some girls were trying their best to catch Shechem's attention, but as soon as Dinah stepped in, as if right on cue, Shechem spots her. Sure her dressing made it obvious she wasn't one of the local girls he was accustomed to being with. But there was something else, something he couldn't place his finger on that attracted him to her. And soon he had decided whom to grace with his attention; she better be grateful!

He had chosen Dinah, and what Shechem wanted Shechem must have. He approached her and when she looked, spoke and acted uninterested, he decided he would resort to any means necessary to have her. And that moment, Dinah's adversary, unseen, waited for Shechem's lack of self-control to take over and do the rest; and it didn't fail.

Shechem was engulfed with youthful lust, and yes, you guessed right, this time it meant burning with sexual desire. Shechem burnt with excessive sexual desire for Dinah, and so, without her consent, he reached for her, grabbed her, took her to a place, laid with her and defiled her. She had been a virgin. She had been pure, but not any longer. All the demons jumped for joy! What an amazing performance it had been. But before they up and left the scene, Satan tells them to hold on. There was something called the aftermath. Dinah's

defilement was going to have a ripple effect. There had been a little bloodshed in that secluded room, but there was going to be more bloodshed; in fact, curses will be spoken and generations will be affected. It was only just the beginning.

Of course, all the demons were in awe of their master's comprehensive scheme! They stood in awe of their leader who was obviously their master for a reason. He sure could scheme and execute it like none of them could. What an elaborate plan this had all been! They had watched Dinah struggle under the weight of Shechem who clearly had lost his mind. And now they watched him release her from his grip. After the deed had been done, he had realized that she had been a virgin! He had never been lucky enough to come across one before!

He decided on that spot, despite her sobs over being violated, to keep her for himself. He would marry her. What was this thing he was feeling? Perhaps it was love. Is this love? He had been rough with her earlier but he quickly changed personalities and began to speak kindly to her. She had mentioned wanting to leave, but there was no way he would let her out of his house; she was his. She would be his. But she was already his. He owned her now, at least that's what he kept hearing over and over in his mind. But first things

first; he would speak to his father and do all that was needful for her to be his legal wife.

As Dinah sat in the corner unable to control her tears, she realized the weight of her action that fateful day, as we often do after we are faced with the harsh consequences of our actions and inaction. Being lured by her desires she had chosen to leave home unchaperoned; she had left her father's covering behind, ignoring all his warnings about the land and the people, including their lifestyle; she had unwittingly exposed herself to what could have been avoided had she just obeyed. Now this man, the first man that had hurt her now claiming to love her! Is this love? He even proposed marriage to her. Her purity (virginity) and innocence had been stolen; her future, the one her father had for her, the one her mother hoped for her, all gone! And she wasn't even allowed to leave this house where it had all happened.

It was that day Dinah realized the presence of evil in the world; and how it had been out for her and had now got her. If she could turn back the hands of time, she would have made better choices but it was too late now. What had been done had already been done.

Her adversary smiled.

Yes! She had acknowledged him.

Yes! She now feared him.

And all he had done was reveal himself through a local prince!

5

The Aftermath

It was finally time for the guest actors to emerge on the scene. The stage was set. Dinah's adversary said to his audience; they too longed to see who the guest actors were. Meanwhile, just as good news travel fast, bad news travel even faster. Jacob, Dinah's father, had somehow caught wind of what had happened to his "little girl". He was heartbroken! Sure he knew she was a curious little one; but how did she find herself so unfortunate? He wondered what the future held for her now that she had been defiled.

His one goal after raising her had been to get her married undefiled to the best suitor. What would happen now? Was she destined to remain single at home? Jacob couldn't stop thinking about what the future held for his daughter, especially about her marriage. That was what he was still thinking about

when he heard news that he had important guests: Hamor and Shechem. As if on cue, almost at the same time, the guest actors came in with the other brothers of Dinah; they too had heard the news about their sister's defilement. They had been out in the field looking after their father's cattle. Upon hearing the news, they knew they had to come home immediately.

Soon the roundtable meeting began; the first thing on the agenda was Dinah's future. Dinah's adversary wanted it destroyed completely! And that was exactly what Hamor was proposing by asking Jacob to let his daughter be wife to his son. But that was the tip of the iceberg. Dinah's adversary wanted the entire Jacob family's identity and future destroyed completely. He urged Hamor to keep speaking; and he proposed intermarriage between Jacob's sons and the daughters of the land.

Since Shechem and his father were a dynamic duo, it wasn't long before he chipped in and offered dowry and gifts in exchange for Dinah's hand in marriage. Talk about putting the cart before the horse. The room went silent as Jacob and his sons considered the offer. Dinah's adversary waited also with bated breath. All the devil could do was drop a suggestion here and there, and nudge people to follow his design; but he couldn't force anyone to agree. They had to do so willingly. Well, he thought to himself, if

he couldn't have things go his way through the intermarriage, he had a bloody ending in mind, that, and curses.

While Dinah's future was being discussed. Her brothers were grieved; but two especially, were boiling with rage! "How dare this man and his son!" they thought to themselves. "Who did they think they were?" They were yet to offer one apology, and the next thing they wanted is to cart off forever with Dinah, their beloved sister. "Did they think themselves above the law? Who didn't know that it was wrong to steal a woman's virginity? Well, no one was above the law, not even the supposed king and prince of the land. They must face the consequences of their actions, they would see to it!"

Simeon and Levi were the guest actors; and Dinah's adversary was their adversary too. As a matter of fact, Satan is every single human's adversary. He had in fact written a script just for the two brother, and their uncontrolled anger had been the assurance he needed that they would show up and play their role. He watched as a plan began to form in their minds. They stepped outside briefly and shared most of the plan with their other brothers.

"We just want to teach them a lesson; after all, they defiled our sister," the adversary heard them say to

their other brothers. Those ones agreed. Now that they were all in agreement, they went back in and spoke to Shechem and Hamor. Dinah's adversary listened carefully, his guest actors didn't disappoint! They had borrowed the tool of deception from him and he was more than happy to lend it to them. If he couldn't get Dinah to form a marriage bond with Shechem at least he could get some other things on his wish list, as he wasn't going to be a loser by the time all this was over! He would be declared the winner!

Shechem and his father, those two smooth talkers, got smooth-talked by the brothers of Dinah. Her adversary laughed as he watched Shechem and his father agree to the suggestion of the brothers – that every male of the city be circumcised. He also watched as the dynamic duo of father and son went out to smooth-talk the men of the city into getting circumcised – a little pain in exchange for profit at the expense of Jacob and his sons. Everything was just going great!

Dinah's adversary went to check on her. She was just in the state he liked. She was held prisoner in that house but the prison he liked was the one he held the keys! She was a prisoner of the past. She couldn't stop replaying the scenes over and over in her head. She was filled with shame; her eyes were dead and her head was bowed. She was crushed beneath a burden of guilt.

Satan liked her this way, and hoped she would remain like that forever. His prey. His prisoner.

Finally, the third day arrived. This production had stretched but Satan and his demons had all the time in the world at least before their time was up. Three days was nothing. Dinah's adversary could care less about the blood from the circumcision of the males in Shechem; he liked huge wins. Small wins were for his minions. He watched as his guest actors, still boiling in anger, leave the comfort of their homes with their swords; he knew what was coming next. He and all his minions in attendance watched intently; they watched as the men entered the city and began the massacre which would be followed by the looting. But first, the cold-blooded massacre!

Revenge, they say, was a dish best served cold! He loved that quote. All the males in that city were slain, the city was filled with blood, screams and cries could be heard all over; and the raging men, Simeon and Levi, didn't stop until they were done! Dinah's adversary and his minions all jumped for joy! They had loved every minute of the show. But almost immediately, silence fell upon the attendees as they saw Dinah leave the prison of Shechem's house with her brothers, the marriage they had hoped for wouldn't happen. Then Dinah's adversary quickly chipped in that all wasn't lost concerning Dinah; she

had become a shadow of herself, anyway, and would always be haunted by the ghosts of the past. And as for her brothers, especially Simeon and Levi, their father would hold a grudge and eventually issue a curse over them (Genesis 34; 49:5-7). It was a huge win for Satan!

PART 2

The Young Levite and Micah

6

The Prey

The Holy Scripture gives no information about the family life and background of this person whose real life experience we would be exploring next. But what it does reveal in Judges 17:7 is that he was *“a young man out of Bethlehemjudah of the family of Judah...”*

He Was Young

This should be understood in two ways. The first is that he hadn't lived very long yet. It's safe therefore to assume that he was between the ages of 25 and 39. I will explain why later. It also meant that he had attributes relating to his age, by this I mean he was inexperienced; unfortunately, that also meant he was gullible. While I can imagine someone saying, how can someone that age be gullible, let me simply say, keep reading and you'd see how.

He Was Male

This is stated not just to reveal his gender but, as we will soon discover, it also reveals his eligibility for his career path. It's given as reason why he is able to venture off on his own like he did, something a female might not have been able to do had she been young (and unmarried). It is also the reason he had a take-matters-into-your-own-hands approach to his unemployment, an orientation more males than females probably possessed and exhibited back then.

He Came Out of Bethlehem-Judah

Bible scholars say this is specified because there was also a Bethlehem in Zebulun. So this young man came out of the Bethlehem in Judah; this could be taken to mean that he was born, raised and resided there before the events we are about to explore happened. I could have been satisfied with that explanation but then this is how the Scripture puts it in Judges 17:7a, *“And there was a young man out of Bethlehemjudah of the family of Judah....”* Now this seems to mean he not only resided and ministered there, but that he was also a descendant of Judah, the fourth son of Leah, whom she had for Jacob.

It seems a simple, straightforward explanation; but Bible scholars are divided on the matter. Some

believe due to his career path that we will soon discover, he couldn't have been from the tribe of Judah. Others say, it was a possibility if the career path he chose back then had been open to all who had the heart to do the work. And then there are others who say this young man had probably been born, raised and had resided and chosen to minister in Judah, and as such had been counted as belonging to that tribe. And this is backed by the fact that since Jacob had cursed his son Levi, and by extension his descendants (Genesis 49:5-7), they had been scattered; and this young man's family being from that tribe had chosen to settle in Judah.

He Was a Levite

The conclusion that this young man was a Levite silences any speculation about his origin. This young man had to have been a Hebrew, because, according to God's original design, those who were Levites were descendants of Levi, Jacob's third son born to him by Leah. Their males had been chosen by God to be assistants and to provide assistance to the Levite priests (Aaron and his descendants) in the worship of God at the Temple (Numbers 3:5-13).

I have earlier mentioned that his age was probably between 25 and 39. I decided on 25 because that's the first age provided for Levites to begin their service

(Numbers 8:23-26). So at that age, he was either waiting to be called upon to minister or was already ministering at the Temple. Either ways it meant he knew what sort of spiritual responsibility fell upon those of his lineage and on himself, and had made peace with that. I can also assume that he knew God; for to be employed in God's service you can't be a stranger to Him and His laws; you had got to know the general laws and those specifically for Levites (Deuteronomy 18:1-13).

He Had Needs

The Levites were a peculiar people to God. Not only had God chosen them for a specific work, He had also made provisions on how their needs will be met. But that also meant that the law put in place for the welfare of the Levites would only stand as long as God was the only God who was worshipped, right?

Well, a time came in Israel when there was no king (Judges 17:6) and idolatry was predominant than the worship of the One True God. That state of affair, unfortunately for the Levites, meant unemployment, since the law put in place for their welfare which was linked with the worship of God was being disregarded. So this young man now lacked a job. He also needed a place to stay. But that's not all; he lacked other

essentials too, e.g., money, clothing, food and provisions, and godly company to belong in!

What Was This Unnamed Levite Like?

Not until much later in the event that we would explore are we presented with a chance to decide on what kind of personality this unnamed young man had. But I have decided not to base his personality on what he did afterwards while in a state of desperation, but to try to deduce what it could be from what we've covered so far. In my own opinion, this unnamed young Levite seems to me a zealot, seeing that he obeyed the Levitical call though he had little knowledge about what it really entailed to be in the service of God; and we know what they say about zeal without knowledge! Another thing I considered to be his personality is adventure; he most probably was adventurous, seeing he was willing to leave his comfort zone, go to a new environment in order to meet his needs, and was just generally open to trying new things! Perhaps these personality traits of his made him irresistible for someone who was on the prowl.

7

The Bait Of Satan

Like Dinah, this Levite also had an adversary, not a different one, but the same Satan, aka. the Devil, aka the Thief; and his mission hadn't changed: he is out to steal, and to kill, and to destroy! Unlike Dinah who through my own lens was unaware of the existence of her adversary, I believe this young Levite knew about Satan's existence. I came to this conclusion largely because of his career path. Only problem was, he couldn't be bothered about his adversary; he had what seemed to him a bigger fish to fry. He was in need and needed to meet his needs.

He had come up with a plan all by himself to meet those needs, and had set out of Bethlehem-Judah to find himself a place – a place to serve. A place to serve meant a place to dwell; and if he could find a place to serve, everything else would fall into place. His

adversary had been watching him; he had fallen on Satan's radar for many reasons, but the top reasons had to be because of the family the young man was from and the work he was doing. Satan knew what the Levites meant to God; but not just that, he also knew what a defiled Levite would mean, and the kind of havoc that could cause. He imagined the destruction, confusion, disorder, sin; it was all too appealing. Simply irresistible!

The Levite's adversary let his mind drift all the way back to Aaron, Moses' brother. Satan had been Aaron's adversary too! One time he had conquered the very first high priest Israel had, well before Aaron officially had the title; but still a huge conquest it had been at that time. Aaron's defilement was the people's defilement, and three thousand lives were lost, blood was shed! And then there were plagues too in the camp of Israel! It was a day to remember! The adversary let his mind go all the way back to the beginning of that event.

Aaron had been an easy prey! Just a little pressure from the restive people, and he had caved. He acted like he was starved of approval and recognition. Maybe he was, maybe his buried yearnings surfaced that day and made it easy for him to be a prey. True, the idea of making gods was his, the adversary and he had whispered it to the people. Yes, but Aaron hadn't put

up a fight once the people suggested it to him. One look at their faces and he couldn't bear to refuse them; he didn't want to offend them. He wanted their approval and all by himself came up with a plan; he even asked the people for their resources in carrying it out. The poor guy saw a chance to come out of his younger brother's shadow and make his first solo decision, and he jumped at it. If he wanted recognition, he sure got it. He might be Israel's first high priest but he would always be known as that one who made a molten calf, attributed God's hard work to it, built an altar for it where offerings were offered, and chose a day of worship for it! Aaron even led the people in worship too! (Exodus 32). A defiled/corrupt religious leader meant defiled corrupt people. For Satan, it was one stone that killed many birds.

Though this Levite wasn't a Levite priest like Aaron, yet he had the family background, the call and enough knowledge to take a stand for God and make a difference; he couldn't be ignored. Plus, he had a vendetta against the Levites. From that very event with Aaron, the family of Levi had taken sides with God and because of that God had chosen them for Himself in sacred work – the one's directly from Aaron's side ended up being priests, the others from the tribe of Levi were consecrated to assist the priests too.

Well, over the years, thanks to Satan's calculative mind, many had fallen and this youngling wasn't going to be exempt, not at this time when he had Israel in a state of apostasy. If he played his cards right, this Levite was going to be his prey, his next conquest, his own vessel. His defilement meant the defilement of others. He would not fail!

The Bait

The adversary thought long and hard about what could be enticing enough for the young Levite; he needed to keep it simple so the Levite wouldn't recognize his voice when he whispered his enticements to him. He was going to make sure it was an innocent enough suggestion; else, he might turn him down. He knew if he did it well, he would soon have the young Levite exactly where he wanted him. And so he used the prospect of supply as bait to get him to leave his comfort zone. Thankfully he wasn't reluctant to take the bait.

He had simply told him the supply was out there. He hadn't told him where exactly, though he had a place in mind; he had simply told him the supply was out there, and that had been all. Okay he could admit he had also painted an image in his mind. He had helped him dream about a rain of supply. The young Levite in this dream had seen himself having all of his

needs met all at once; and it had happened somewhere outside of where he was. Now the young Levite had come up with a plan. The adversary had heard him talk about setting out to find this place, 'this place' that will not only be a place to serve but a place to dwell; 'this place' that will magically cause everything else to fall into place.

Now his adversary waited with bated breath for the day the young Levite would set out; but he knew it wouldn't be long anymore. Plus, he had feared that the young Levite might seek counsel from other Levites or, worse still, pray. If he sought counsel, he planned to whisper lies to those ones who could repeat them to him; but if he prayed and sought God's mind on the matter, then it was all over! Well, not technically; there was free will, so he could get counsel from God and reject it, right? This was the part the adversary hated: waiting for mere humans to make a decision, a decision that will set the ball rolling. In the meantime, he thought about the snare he had been working on!

Yes, it was a place; yes, it was the people there and their way of life; and yes, there was a man as well. He repeated the patterns, but since humans, especially those who claim to be religious/spiritual/born again hardly paid attention to patterns, he could still work through them and go unnoticed and even

accomplish much. Why fix what isn't broken? Why change what works? It was a waste of resources. He was going to use the same methods and have himself a new catch!

8

The Snare

A Different Land

Israel in its entirety, or rather as a nation, had no king at that time and every man (meaning every one) according to how the Scripture puts it, “*did that which was right in his own eyes*” (Judges 17:6). Bible scholars are divided on the full meaning of that statement. Some say God had been replaced with idols who were now being worshipped in His stead. There are those that say the One True God was worshipped, only that people did it how they felt was right, which also meant they did so alongside other gods. In my opinion, both statements reveal the true state of the nation and especially one location, the location the young Levite will soon find himself not only wandering through but settling in. This location is mount Ephraim.

Like the other parts of Israel, mount Ephraim was also a land where everyone did that which was right

in their own eyes. It was a place where you would hear people mention God, “The Lord,” every now and then, yet this same land was home to people who made graven and molten images for a fee. It was also home to people who set up these gods as objects of worship. They built places of worship for these gods and had priests who conducted the worship of these gods. In this land, the people were prosperous, proving that prosperity isn’t always a sure fire way to prove that God is with one or that God is pleased with one’s action; sometimes, it can be the devil’s very way of keeping someone deceived and trapped in a sinful lifestyle.

Anyways, this land was home to prosperous people. Silver was not lacking and the people were fruitful; men went in with their wives and they bore them sons! People planted and had good harvest; so food was available and accessible as well. On the surface all was well with this land; only problem was, to a true child of God, this land was a snare because it had the capacity to defile/corrupt.

It’s People and their Way of Life

Drawing my conclusions from the events that happened in a family that lived in this land, I could share with you my thoughts on the people that dwelt in this land and their way of life.

It won't be strange when you walk through this idolatrous land and hear the people be called by names that are linked with the worship of God. But that's where it ends, on their lips! This people were far from God in their hearts. The One True God desired to be the only God His people acknowledged and served, but these people, even though they were God's chosen people, had deserted God and broken His direct commands. How? For one, His command is that His people do not steal; but in this land, the people stole. His direct command is His people must not covet things that belonged to others; but in this land, the people lusted after what belonged to others and went to different lengths to possess it.

God's direct command is that His people must not make graven images or bow themselves to them nor serve them; but the people did so. Only God knew what kind of morally disturbing acts they got involved in this so-called worship they offered those gods. His direct command is that His people must not take His name in vain; but the people would mention His name and yet go ahead and do the things He hated with His name on their lips.

One more thing I must add concerning the lifestyle of this people is that none was spared from the negative influence of that day, both the young and

old were involved. It wasn't strange to see children stealing from parents, and parents cursing their children; neither was it strange to see parents dedicating their children to idols and even encouraging their children to worship these gods. A Levite undefiled, led by the Spirit of God and with strong convictions might be able to lead a different life in this land, even though the majority of the people led abominable lifestyle. But it was no place for our soon-to-wander and needy young Levite. The adversary knew this; but did the young Levite know?

The Man- Micah

Micah was wrong company. Whether it was to the members of his family, e.g. his mother, son and even to sojourners as we would soon see. Micah was simply not the right company. In his company you are bound to lose something valuable to you, or you're bound to find yourself making a commitment you didn't set out to make, or you're bound to lose your spiritual inheritance forever. With Micah it was always one thing or another; he just never left you better than you met him, you'd always be worse off. Yet Micah wasn't completely irredeemable. Yes, I am one of those that believe that no human is completely irredeemable. Though Micah wasn't irredeemable, he was the kind of person you were better off relating with from a distance.

Micah lacked self-control; this translates into him being very impulsive. You could find him taking that which didn't belong to him just because it appealed to him. He never considered how the owner of the item might feel at their loss. Micah's stealing also revealed Micah's greed. He had a greed for wealth and power. And as is synonymous with people who are greedy, Micah was no respecter of persons! He didn't care who got hurt while he was on his quest, old or young, females or males. Micah would take advantage of anyone just to achieve his goals.

Did Micah know God? You could find the mention of the name of God in Micah's home, but that's where it ended, just on the lips! Micah had a passing knowledge of God, nothing deep at all. And perhaps the little he knew about God, which was very little indeed, he learnt from his mother who really didn't know much herself. I say this because of her actions. Micah's god was money. And his mother's true god was money too. She loved it so much she made graven and molten images out of it for a fee and encouraged her son to worship it too, a suggestion he didn't refuse. In fact, he set these gods up in his house.

Micah was an idolater with a house of gods, an ephod and teraphim, and had even consecrated one

of his sons as priest! Micah was also an opportunist who never missed. He would exploit any situation in order to gain advantage. If you lose your guard around him then you are in for a surprise. But before you realize what has happened to you, Micah is already steps ahead. He is pretty calculative. Though he acted stealthily, at times was open just enough to rob you in broad day light, he was a great negotiator! He could make you an offer you couldn't refuse. I say this because, like earlier mentioned, he was an opportunist, and would make you the offer based on your situation; and should it be timed when you're desperate, you might not be able to refuse him. Yet, if you bear in mind that Micah didn't care for anyone but himself, then perhaps you would see the looming danger in his offer and reject it.

Yet in all of this, like the rest of the people in the land, Micah was prosperous. His mother was alive and wealthy. He too was in good health and didn't lack for material things; he had a house, silver and enough supply that he could take on an extra mouth to feed and even share much more resources with. We learn nothing about his spouse, whether one or many; but we know he had sons, even one who obeyed him completely that he gave up whatever his dreams were in order to be the priest to his father's gods.

Micah wasn't hard to reach; he was pretty much easily accessible, if you ask me. He didn't make himself scarce; he was easy to bump into or set up an appointment with. There's probably a Micah in your life as you read this. One more thing about Micah is that no information is safe with him. He will use all to his advantage; so you're better off keeping silent about yourself or your needs around him. Because anything you say or receive from him is bound to be used against you, and become a snare to your soul.

The adversary had prepared all three snares for the young Levite who was completely unaware. In this land where he would eventually come into, since Satan was leading him, he would meet one of the people with the cultural lifestyle of the land, which was one Satan had heavily influenced, and sooner than later, this young Levite would be just like them! Blending in meant no more standing out, and no more standing out meant no more God, no more obeying His commands, no more helping others to do same and no more making a difference! There was one thing though that bothered the adversary, and it was that it was pretty unlikely for a young man to befriend an older man, only if the circumstances were right though. The adversary thought and began to imagine how it would unfold.

The Young Levite would have to leave home first and wander into this land. And when he did, he had to meet someone; not just anyone but specifically Micah. Though older, he was perfect. He had the personality and lifestyle that made him the perfect snare; plus, he had the resources, sure the young Levite revealed that his only desire was to find a place, i.e., meet his needs. But what if there were buried desires too, the type of needs even Micah could not meet, the type synonymous with most people who call themselves children/people of God and claim they are called into the service of God, the type of buried desires Aaron had? What if this young Levite, deep down had a yearning for approval (acceptance) and for recognition, i.e., wanting to be known for something?

If there was an iota of ambition in this young Levite, then he would be ensnared faster than he could spell his name, whatever it was. The adversary trusted his instinct more than so-called believers trusted God for provision and guidance, and so knew better than to fret. He would stay calm because his plans would work out and the Levite would make it happen all by himself. It wouldn't be long now, the defilement of the Levite was about to take place and he would as always watch, hid from the eyes of all, but present all the same. This time, none of his minions were invited; it was something he wished to relish alone.

9

The Defilement Of the Levite

The adversary watched as the Levite packed what little belongings he had. The day had finally come when he had mustered enough courage to set out. The young man had spent the previous day convincing himself that he was doing the right thing. He told himself he had to do something, anything was better than being idle and in need here waiting on a miracle that might never take place. He had to step out in order to find whatever provisions he could. He had tossed and turned all night, but now it was day break and his mind was made up.

He would set out from one country to another; he reckoned that before he toured the whole of Israel, he

would have found this place that held a pleasant rain of supply for him. And when he was done packing his belonging, he walked out the door and out of the city from Bethlehem-Judah; only he didn't step out alone. He was accompanied by his adversary who was more than happy to take this trip with him.

As they continued their journey, the adversary thought about how well everything was going. No hitches whatsoever. There would have been some if the Levite had suddenly decided to open up to God; but thankfully he had neither remembered God, entrusted himself to His care nor asked for His leading. Instead, his soon-to-be-prey soul, if not already one, proved to be what he had thought he was: one of those who believed in God but didn't trust Him. A typical example of those who relied on themselves; their intellect, their plans etc. Well, too bad for him, since he hadn't acknowledged God but himself, he was left to the adversary to direct his paths! In fact, he was already on one of the paths Satan had carefully planned out for him. He would soon see why the people of God are advised not to be wise in their own eyes. All he had to do now was maintain that youthful exuberance of his, and Satan would do the rest.

The wandering Levite had wondered where to first; and quickly his adversary had whispered mount

Ephraim to him. No point roaming around; the earlier he met Micah, the better! He would stay right here with the Levite. Micah didn't need any help doing the work he had enlisted him for; he was a natural! But the Levite would need some convincing; and he would make sure not to miss the window of opportunity to get him to commit as soon as it opens.

The Levite was now headed towards mount Ephraim. He finally arrived the land where both land and people would be a snare to his soul. And just as Satan had led him to mount Ephraim, so he would now order his steps to Micah's house; and yes, Micah happened to be outside the door that fine day too! Apparently there are people who believe in coincidences. All good for the devil. Humans can be gullible, the adversary thought out loud! How you need to know that there's not one single coincidence out there; everything is carefully orchestrated, whether for good by God or for evil by the devil. All occasions must serve a purpose whether good or bad. And this one would be very bad, utterly evil, just like Satan likes it. Sure, there might be no bloodshed; but it will be evil nonetheless. And so it began. The Levite arrived at a house that was not hard to sight, and Micah conveniently was around and outside, the Levite didn't miss him. Soon it will begin, the offer and the compromise that would defile the Levite.

As expected Micah asks the first question. He was curious about the origins of the stranger by his house. And the Levite who was desperate for help quickly responds. The question had been “*Whence comest thou?*” And instead of keeping the answer brief, he had answered by giving Micah too much information. In his answer, he tells Micah he was a Levite from Bethlehem-Judah and was also on the lookout for a place, a place to serve, a place to dwell, a place where his basic needs, and then some, could be met.

The adversary watched as Micah’s mind processed the answers given to him by the stranger! As always at the forefront of Micah’s mind was Micah, what he might gain by this interaction. He wondered how this stranger could help further his own agenda! And immediately an idea floated across his mind; and he made the Levite an offer.

The offer? Both the Levite and the adversary had heard the offer, but only the Levite was left wide-eyed with his heart racing when Micah was done speaking. The adversary already knew how Micah’s mind worked; after all, the man was under his influence completely. Sure, he couldn’t read Micah’s mind, but presenting an offer was his forte; and it was usually even more elaborate than this. Micah was still learning, but an offer was an offer, and this one would do, seeing how desperate the Levite was. What was

next on Satan's agenda was convincing the Levite that Micah's offer was worth his spiritual inheritance.

The adversary watched as the Levite repeated Micah's offer under his breath. Micah had offered him a place to live, and had added that he would be a "father and a priest" to him. This was work, but what did he mean by "father and a priest"? Micah had also offered him ten shekels of silver annually for his work. It wasn't much, but wasn't a fixed salary better than waiting on tithes that were no longer forthcoming? Micah had even added that he would be given a new wardrobe, and other provisions like food! The Levite couldn't believe how blessed he was! The first house he had passed by and the first person he had met, and suddenly this rain of supply!

But what about this talk about being father and priest? Surely this man wasn't worshipping the One True God at all, seeing that he wanted the Levite to be a live-in priest even though he knew he was a Levite – the Levites were to minister to the whole twelve tribes by assisting the Priests. But who was anymore? The adversary quickly whispered to him: "Who was worshipping the One True God in the old way when there were several ways to do so? Those who did were in the minority; every man did that which was right in his own eyes now. And what was wrong with having a good house to live in? What was

wrong with having a fixed income? What was so wrong with having a change of clothes to wear and food to eat? If doing things God's way and the old way had yielded no immediate and sustainable result, what could be so wrong in trying something new, something new that will make a difference in one's life at the time of great need?" Satan's points sounded very appealing, eh?

When he was done speaking to his soon-to-be-prey, the adversary watched as the Levite thought things through. Just like he had earlier thought, ambition was what was left to drive in the last nail in the coffin. Every other card had been played. It was left for the Levite to either say yes or no. Satan waited with bated breath. And just as the adversary was getting ready to whisper another set of lines to the Levite, he watched him walk right into Micah's house. Quickly he looked up to the sky with a smirk on his face and whispered under his breath at God in heaven, "You chose him but he's rejected You. He's sold You out for cheap. Pathetic, isn't it? Aren't they all pathetic? Why do You bother with them again? Go to lengths to place value over them and give them things of value that they don't really or truly care about; else, they'd have guarded them even until their dying breath. Well, that's one loss for You and a gain for me." When the adversary was done speaking and

smirking at God in heaven, he went right in after the ex-Levite and Micah.

The defilement of the Levite had happened. Not when the Levite got into the land, not even when the Levite met Micah, but immediately he took the first step into Micah's house. This signified that he had accepted the offer Micah had made him, and by so doing had renounced God and his spiritual inheritance. That one singular action was like a stain on a white apparel which the Levite wore, let's assume spiritually. But the adversary wanted the white apparel gone completely, not just stained! And so he quickly urged Micah to try to make things official quickly before the Levite had a chance to change his mind.

So, just as quickly as the Levite had agreed to the offer and made a compromise, Micah begins work on forming a bond with him. He introduced him to his family, declaring to them that he was now one of his sons, and had a place in their family. He also declared him their priest; so he had work to do, and that he would live in their house, so he had a place in their home too!

When all was done and the ex-Levite finally had some alone time, though he wasn't really alone since his adversary was with him, he reiterated the words the adversary whispered into his ears. What did he

say? He said he was content; meaning he was in a state of peaceful happiness, that he was satisfied with the level of “good fortune” he had. But though he uttered them, they were not his words, for the ex-Levite wasn’t better off now that his needs were met; he was worse off actually, only he didn’t know it. Only one person could be content at his achievement: not him, but his adversary.

On the other hand, and in another part of the house, Micah was celebrating! He was pretty sure he was in for an avalanche of blessings from none other than the Lord Himself; after all, now in his worship of the Lord, he had a true Levite as a priest (Judges 17:1-end)! From where he sat with the ex-Levite, the adversary could hear all of Micah’s words, and he laughed. He laughed so loud and couldn’t seem to stop himself. The whole thing was hilarious! He loved his role as villain in the lives of people, like the Levite; but he equally liked men like Micah, not only because he could use them however he liked, but more because they were completely ignorant about God! Even he knew more about God than them! Was he expecting an avalanche of blessing? Well, he wouldn’t get that from God who hated idolatry and who wasn’t exactly pleased to have lost a Levite; but he had something in mind for Micah; it would be in the future though. He had a surprise for him, payment for his help; it would be a surprise, but definitely not a blessing!

10

The Aftermath

The Levite hadn't thought twice before he acted, and had made the wrong decision. But even if he had thought twice, I believe he would have still made the wrong decision. It's safe to say that thinking twice before you act is never enough. We could consider adding prayer to it. Making room for God's input and following through with His counsel makes all the difference in the quality of decisions we make and the quality of life we'll live.

The ex-Levite was now an idolatrous priest who was content to dwell with Micah and his idolatrous family tending to their idols in their house of gods. In Judges 18, we learn what happens afterwards to him and his host. In the subsequent paragraphs I'll attempt to give a breakdown, according to what the Scriptures reveal in Judges 18.

The opening verses of Judges 18, the first six verses, provide us with information that the ex-Levite was still living with Micah. And their contract still stood; he was priest to Micah's idols for a fee and other perks. This we discover when he has a run in with the Danites and was asked some questions about himself. The next thing that's revealed to us is that the sphere of influence of the ex-Levite had grown wide. How? He, the deceived, was now not only deceiving Micah's family, but also presented by the adversary with an opportunity to deceive more people. In this instance he gave false messages from God to a few Danites. But that was just a tip of the iceberg; for his influence was going to grow wider than that, wider than his imagination. When presented with the offer and opportunity, he would just have to let his ambition help him make the decisions; and the result will blow his mind. Yes, he had sunk low; but there were depths to sinking low he needed to explore. His adversary would make sure of that!

By verse 15 through 26, we learn that the ex-Levite had been presented with another offer, which was a huge opportunity! Though it meant more compromise, still, a huge opportunity nonetheless. This time, the offer was not presented by Micah, but by the Danites who he had met earlier when they were out spying out the land. Now they had returned

with a host and were interested in Micah's gods, both the carved and the molten images, his ephod, teraphim and of course his priest, if he was willing to come with them. The offer? They said to him, "*go with us, and be to us a father and a priest: is it better for thee to be a priest unto the house of one man, or that thou be a priest unto a tribe and a family in Israel?*"

Did you see it? A promise of a wider influence/platform, a big opportunity! Though this time there was no promise of a house to dwell in, a fixed income, change of clothes and other provisions like food, but he knew, he knew of a surety he would get all his needs met, and then some, if he had that much influence! It also meant compromise on a larger scale and the deception of a whole tribe and family in Israel. It was an easy compromise to make for our ex-Levite who had already grown accustomed to being a sinner.

Scriptures record that his heart was glad at the offer! Did you read that? His heart was glad, the previously clean heart that had become defiled was glad at the thought of more defilement/corruption! He really had become one of the people of that land, and proof of this wasn't only his idolatry, it was also in what he does next; he stole. He took Micah's ephod, and the teraphim, and the graven image (I suppose the molten image was taken as well), and he went in the midst of

his new “family”, off to become an instrument of deception in the tribe of Dan, a family in Israel.

Micah the opportunist had been finessed! The Levite had become an opportunist himself; and the adversary laughed out loud at the whole scene playing out before him with glee. The ex-Levite had seized the opportunity to further his own ambition, yes, at Micah’s expense. You can go ahead and imagine the look on Micah’s face when he discovered his idols were gone, and saw that his hired priest was content to leave in the company of new people!

The encounter, in the end, had left Micah with his life intact but without his idols, his ephod, teraphim and priest; but none of which were irreplaceable. He ought to be thankful to him, the adversary thought, while the ex-Levite went on to bigger things for his new employer, Satan! He had operated previously through Micah, and now he operated through the Levite; together they were going to do exploits, for he had plans not just for the ex-Levite but his descendants.

By verses 30 and 31, we learn about the plans of the adversary for the ex-Levite’s sons. The Scripture reveals that the children of Dan set up the graven image and made the Levite and his sons priests to their tribe; and so it was until the day of the captivity of that land. Micah’s graven image was set up and was given the title of their god. Anyway, one more

thing we learn is the identity of the ex-Levite. The Scripture reveals finally that his name was Jonathan. He is supposedly the son of Gershom, who is the son of Manasseh; but some Bible scholars argue that Manasseh had no son called Gershom, but Moses who was a descendant of Levi did; yes, the one and only Moses did. It is said that the name Manasseh was used to replace Moses' name in ancient copies because of the shame of the act of idolatry by his grandson. Seeing that Moses was a man who believed in the One True God, who worshipped and served Him and led others to do so the right way!

Well, I'm not surprised if he is indeed Moses' grandson, I already believed the adversary had interest in him because of his family background and call; learning this added information just gives more context to what is already true about those who get special attention from the adversary even without going out in search for him.

Is there anyone wondering if this ex-Levite ever repented? Some Bible scholars believe he did. They said he repented and went on to change his name to Shebuel (or Shubael), which means "he returned to God" (See 1 Chronicles 23:15-16; 24:20; 26:24). Good for him, right? Micah's defilement had been the ex-Levite's defilement, but what about all those whom he defiled as well? In their eternal doom we can see the catastrophe of following misguided people willy-nilly. Beware who you follow!

PART 3

Purity

11

Moral Purity

The title of this book reads, “Dinah's defilement is your defilement,” and I believe that, to an extent, the first part of this book has given answers for this title. In case you're still wondering how what happened to Dinah is connected to you in anyway, I'm more than willing to provide an answer, and it is pretty straight forward.

Dinah's defilement is your defilement because her story can be your story. It's as simple as that. I'm not saying that to scare you, but to help you realize that just as Dinah was human, you are human too; and just as she was tempted and overcome by evil, you too can be as well. And unless you intend to learn from her life, and are intentional about making better choices than she did and entrust yourself into God's care, you too might just end up reliving her nightmare even if not in the exact same manner.

Dinah was female, but by now we know both male and female are targeted and tempted of the devil. Dinah was supposedly a teenager, but while learning of the defining moments of her life, we discover that not only a teenager can be defiled. Shechem a young man was defiled too, and Simeon and Levi, Dinah's older brothers, were defiled too. So both young and old are not exempt from defilement. Dinah thought it was just another day when she woke up that day. She was completely unaware that that day the choices she would make will define her life. But she wasn't the only one. Days after, Shechem also learnt that choices carried consequences; so also did Simeon and Levi.

Dinah's defilement, though a tragic event, I believe is made available to us in Scripture so we can read and learn from it. And one of the topics that arises from this event of her life is that of moral purity. I'll try to tackle it with you by approaching it through the angles of the three main characters in her story: Dinah, Shechem, then Simeon and Levi.

Dinah

Although in Dinah's story she was a victim of rape, and to be very clear nothing that she did warranted that happening to her; still, we can't but wonder if what happened to her could have been avoided. I believe it could. You see, Dinah's body was defiled

when she was apprehended by Shechem. But I put it to you that her heart was defiled first, and that gave room for the bodily defilement to happen. For something to be defiled, it means it was once clean but had been made unclean, that something contaminating has been introduced.

In Dinah's case, her heart, not at once but slowly over time, had been receiving a defiling element, and the apex being the day she stepped out; then her heart which was once pure became defiled completely. It was pure when in her heart she regarded her father's word as law, prioritized it and obeyed it. I mean his commands which mirrored God's commands to His chosen ones about the principles of right and wrong behaviour, the code of interpersonal behaviour etc. But Dinah became defiled when in her heart she began to prioritize her desires, and her rebellion started, but only became visible when she disobeyed all she knew to be right and acceptable by stepping out unchaperoned.

Yes, she wasn't looking to be raped. But if she had successfully snuck out the first time without being assaulted, she would have done it the second time, and many more times after that. In fact, even if she might have been fortunate enough to avoid rape, she wouldn't be able to avoid the influences of the Canaanite youths. Sooner rather than later, more

than her heart was bound to be defiled. She would have perhaps offered her body willingly and even began to serve their gods.

If Dinah's heart was guarded, it would have remained undefiled, and her body would have escaped defilement. Moral purity, just like moral defilement, starts with the heart. The heart as we know it is more than just an organ that pumps blood; it is also, as the Scripture reveals in Proverbs 4:23b, the centre for the issues of life. This doesn't only mean that it is where we find our emotions, feelings and sentiments but also that it requires our utmost attention. And one of the ways to give the heart due attention is by deciding earlier on to make God's law the principle of right and wrong behaviour and the code of interpersonal behaviour.

The Scripture is full of what God considers right and what He considers wrong. It is also full of the acceptable code of conduct for God's people while they remain sojourners on earth. We will do well to read up and get ourselves acquainted with these things. That being said, after deciding to make God's law the principle/standard of our lives, we must follow through by setting up a gate for our hearts. And we do this how? By determining to prioritize God's laws. I mean actually obeying them! Dinah knew what was right and what was wrong; yet she

chose to do what was wrong. So, ignorance was not her excuse; she just refused to keep the gates locked!

Someone might ask, is that it? I emphatically say yes! To avoid being morally defiled, you just need to decide in your heart to make God's principles your standard, get acquainted with God's law and follow through by obeying it. Yes, that's it. Sometimes we Christians can complicate what's simple. But I won't join those who do that. What we've listed out might seem simple but it doesn't make it any less effective. For instance, did you know that in the world there's a clear difference between what God says is right and what the world says is right, and this involves major issues like identity, marriage, sex, abortion etc? Deciding early on God's principles being your standard for right and wrong will eliminate other principles that you will come across, keeping you on the right path!

Did you know that there are many laws in this world we live in? Deciding to not just make God's principle your standard but getting acquainted with it and obeying it will prevent you from forfeiting your peace and suffering needless pain, whether in this world or in the other side of eternity. And just because what's listed seems as simple as ABC doesn't even mean it actually is. For instance, Dinah struggled with obeying God's principles handed to

her by her father. What does that tell us? It tells us that God's way might be simple, but it doesn't mean it will always be easy. Sometimes you'll find yourself in a struggle to continue in what you believe; but thankfully, God's Spirit in us helps us in our weaknesses if we are willing to open up to Him about our struggles and accept the help He offers.

Shechem

Shechem was a villain in Dinah's story. And while I want to be angry with him for what he did to Dinah, I must confess that somehow I see him also as a victim, a victim of the adversary, because Dinah's adversary was also his. Anyway, that's talk for another time. A believer reading this might be wondering what we could possibly learn about moral purity from Shechem's angle. Well, if this is what you're thinking, know that I'm thinking the same too. I'm just going with the Holy Spirit's flow; perhaps at the end of the pages where we discuss his angle, we will see whether there was anything to learn or not.

Shechem truly wasn't one of God's people; he didn't know God, neither did he worship God; yet, Shechem was tempted with and overcome by what most youths, even Christian youths, struggle with today. So there's a need for us to take a closer look at him. Earlier on in Part 1 of this book, I had

mentioned that both Dinah and Shechem were tempted with youthful lust, only that they had different versions of it. While Dinah's wasn't sexual, Shechem's was. In fact, he burned with excessive and uncontrollable sexual desire; this is why he raped Dinah to satisfy his urge!

You see, it might have been Dinah's first time for disobeying her father and experiencing sexual intercourse; but for Shechem, it wasn't. it couldn't have been. I believe Shechem was a sexually active young man. And in Christendom we have formerly sexually active young men and women who are now celibate, yet still dealing with sexual urges. There are those who aren't celibate; but to those in that category I only have a question to ask, When do you intend to really surrender your life to Jesus?

Moving on, moral purity, just like moral defilement, might start with the heart; but it sure doesn't end there. It moves to other body parts. For instance, the eyes. In Dinah's case it was the heart, but in Shechem's, it was his eyes. When he saw Dinah, he didn't cast just a glance at her and look away, his eyes rested on her. The Scripture reveals that he saw her. This can't be just looking, but observing. He feasted his eyes on her and soon enough began to lust after her. The rest they say is history.

These talks about the eyes remind me of something Jesus said about the eyes in Matthew 6:22-23a. *“The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness....”* Let me share with you what I’ve deduced from Jesus’ words.

From these verses by Jesus, we see that the eye is designed to give illumination to the body; yet there is the issue of focus. What you choose to focus on can either bring illumination into your life or fill your life with darkness. Now, as children of God, we already know that sexual immorality is not a practice that should be found amongst us; but what about sexual urges that lead to sexual immorality? These desires don’t disappear because we are Christians, so what then do we do? The answer lies in Jesus’ words. These things you feel are desires, and something feeds them: it’s what you choose to focus on.

Shechem focused on Dinah, letting his gaze linger; and sooner than later, desires and impulses took over, plunging both himself and Dinah into darkness. What if he had simply cast a glance at her, appreciated her beauty or innocence, and focused his attention on what his male friends were discussing with him? I don’t know anything else other than what might stir up sexual desire and impulses within him. I know how that day would have ended, he

would not have been a villain in Dinah's story, and she wouldn't have been raped. Both of them would have escaped sexual defilement.

You can easily be another Shechem, whether you're male or female; but you don't have to be. So, yes, you're already sexually active, but now you're celibate with a vow to God to remain morally/bodily pure; yet you're struggling with sexual urges. Remember, it's a struggle not defeat yet. In fact, you don't have to suffer another defeat ever again if you take Jesus' advice and let the Holy Spirit of God who now dwells within you continue to empower you to focus your eyes and mind on the right things, which are pleasing to God.

Simeon and Levi

Simeon and Levi were villains in Shechem's story and that of many Shechemite families seeing that they successfully carried out a male themed massacre in Shechem the country. And while I do not support their actions, at the same time, if I'm to be honest, I feel sorry for them too. Yes, they too were victims. The incident that happened to Dinah had more than one victim. I know this isn't popular opinion, but that's how I see it; especially if I look at it from all angles and also knowing that Dinah's adversary was everyone else's as well. And two of his other victims

were her brothers who started their day, that day of the massacre, having never killed anyone, but ended it as murderers, with their hands stained with blood, even the blood of those who had nothing to do with their sister's defilement.

But, before they were murderers they had felt two emotions first. One was grief, and the other wrath. They had first been overcome with deep sorrow upon hearing what had befallen their beloved sister, and then they had been angry. So we see these two negative emotions that motivated their actions. While these are important things to note and emotions to be weary of, there's something I don't want us to overlook, and that is, one person didn't carry out the massacre, two people spearheaded it. Two brothers did. They had both, alongside their other brothers, been overcome with deep sorrow and had both been very angry. They had both come up with that devious plan to avenge their sister; and they had both led the attack! I suppose they had servants that assisted them.

This brings a very important thing to light: moral purity, just like moral defilement, starts in the heart; then it moves to other body parts, like the eyes. And it is also determined by the company we keep. Could Simeon or Levi have escaped moral defilement if they were not so united? Most likely! The company we

keep can either motivate us to move closer to God or pull us away completely from Him. I know, since you might be a Christian reading this, you think I'm preaching to the choir; but bear in mind that Simeon and Levi were children of Jacob who had a relationship with God. They both knew *which thing ought not to be done*. This means they had not only had a knowledge of God but also a knowledge of right and wrong. If they could be overcome by evil, what's to say that any child of God, if careless, can't be overcome by evil?

Simeon and Levi weren't good for one another; because, both encouraged each other to sin. And this is the case of many Christian youths today. We are spending time with company that is completely wrong for us. Let me share something Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:33.

"Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners."

The company you keep is a determinant in your relationship with God. And in defining your purity, you can't afford to be nonchalant about it. Here is something Jesus said in Matthew 5:29-30.

"And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy

members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.”

The message is clear. And I hope you know it has nothing to do with body mutilation. In its original context, Jesus is addressing adultery but also shedding light on a very serious matter. Here's one way to understand His words. In this world, there are temptations to sin, and there are things even people very close to us would encourage us to do that lead to a sinful lifestyle. We must be willing to separate ourselves from those things or people, no matter how close or how painful the loss of letting them go; that is if we want to remain fit to be a part of God's kingdom in this world and in the other side of eternity.

Someone might say, what if it's your brother, like in the case of Simeon and Levi, that you just can't evade. Well, in that case, I'll like you to know that there are more than one ways to separate yourself from someone. For instance, you could choose not to take their advice, maintain an upright position according to God's principles even if you're in the minority. And you can also avoid adopting their stance on matters, especially when God's stance is clear; and even when it isn't, take your time in prayer to seek it

out. The examples I can give you are many. I know how family can be challenging to sever ties with, especially when you're still dependent on them; but it doesn't mean you can't be separate from them. You can do so in the ways I've mentioned, and you can ask the Holy Spirit to reveal more of these ways to you. I know I did.

12

Spiritual Purity

In the second part of this book I introduced us to another individual, this time not a young girl but a young man, not a teenager but a youth nonetheless. He was not one who was yet to discover himself, but one who had an identity, a higher calling and a responsibility to God and the entire nation of Israel. He was not one who wanted to fit in, but one who was already content to stand out. He was not one who was yet to influence anyone, but one who was aware that he was equipped to influence others and to an extent had already begun the work.

In the same second part of this book, I also introduced you to a second person, not one who was yet to fully embrace God, but one who knew God but rejected Him. The events in the life of this

second individual brings to light a very weighty topic about spiritual defilement and spiritual purity.

Spiritual defilement and moral defilement go hand in hand, so one can't really talk about one without mentioning the other, same with spiritual purity and moral purity; this you must have already gathered through life experiences or while reading this book. Yet I have attempted, and still attempting, to address each one separately. While spiritual defilement and purity might sound weightier, I tell you both are just as important; none is more important than the other, and both require our utmost attention.

Like I earlier mentioned, Jonathan the Levite was a believer in the One True God. He knew who he was in God; he was also aware of his personal call, the responsibility attached to it, and God's expectations of him. Yet, during a lean period, he rejected and replaced God with Micah, money and other gods by way of compromise. So yes, one way to get spiritually defiled is compromise. And unlike the case of Jonathan, the young Levite, it is not only until you go into agreement with an individual or partner with them that you make a compromise; there are times that you can make a compromise and defile yourself spiritually all by yourself. How? This happens anytime you consider and accept as desirable anything below God's standards.

The kind of compromise Jonathan made was a breach of faith. Now, before I go any further, let me be clear and say that spiritual defilement doesn't only happen to those called into full-time ministry like in the case of Jonathan; it is a matter that affects every single Christian. Any Christian can be spiritually defiled. We have been made spiritually pure by the sacrifices of Jesus; but what we choose to do or not do can determine if we remain spiritually pure or not. Jonathan's era was before Christ's earthly ministry; yet, he was consecrated, separate, set apart just as we who are Christians are. He had an identity just as we do; he had a higher calling, just like every Christian in this world does. He had responsibilities, and God had expectations of him just like we do and God has of us Christians! Do you see how we are easily another Jonathan?

Now that that's cleared, let's dig into the how's of spiritual defilement. For a start, Jonathan's compromise wasn't premeditated; it was impulsive, a spur of the moment kind of decision, and was heavily fuelled by the situation he found himself. He had been desperate to meet his needs; but like I earlier mentioned in Part 2 of this book, Jonathan had also been zealous without adequate knowledge. Many Christians will end up spiritually defiled like Jonathan if they do not increase in knowledge. I

mean the knowledge of the ways of God. Jonathan had head knowledge about rules and regulations and the right order to worship and so on; but he didn't understand how God operates. If he did he would have known that:

God Always Provides! While Jonathan might not have had Jesus as an example or known the events in His earthly ministry like we do, he however was familiar with the story of how God provided Abraham with a ram to sacrifice instead of his son Isaac, and also the wanderings of his people in the wilderness when his supposed grandfather Moses was their leader. Back then there were moments of lack, but it was never perpetual; in the end God always made a way to get supply across to them from His limitless resources, perhaps not how they would have liked it, but He always solved their water, food and every other kind of worries. And God had not changed in His way. He was still Provider. What were Jonathan's needs compared to that of a nation?!

Here's an assurance Jesus gave His disciples that might come in handy for you, it's in Matthew 6:25-32.

"Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than

meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.”

Bear in mind always that God always provides, He knows what you need and is willing and able to meet those needs. You however have to give Him room to do it how and when He wants to.

The thing is, what would have happened if Jonathan kept it at the forefront of his mind that he wasn't the only one concerned about his needs, and that Someone who loved him and cared very much about him, and was also aware of his needs and was willing to meet those needs? Tell me, do you think Jonathan would have sat still and waited on God's provision?

Well, I think that's just one part; there were several other things Jonathan needed to know if he was to avoid the compromise he eventually made.

God Always Directs! If you're like me, you would have caught on early that Jonathan didn't trust God. One of the things that prove to me that you trust me is if you open up to me about things you're going through, if you feel comfortable being vulnerable with me, if you ask me for help in the things you know I can do for you, and you actually let me do it for you. Jonathan didn't open up about his needs; he carried his burden all by himself. Jonathan didn't care to appear weak before God; he chose to appear strong, and because he was pretending to be strong all by himself, he gave himself no room to ask God for help.

Where did Jonathan learn such an independent behaviour? Definitely not from his supposed grandfather Moses, because Moses was one of those men in the Scripture whose latter life proved he was highly dependent on God. In fact, he proved it was okay for us to be dependent on God for even basic needs regardless of one's age and gender! You would easily read about Moses telling God about his frustrations; he didn't care to be strong before God. He could easily have been called weak and would

have worn the badge with pride it if meant God would be his strength.

Moses had a habit of asking God for the needs of an entire nation, and allowing God provide it even if it meant Him giving him instructions on how to receive the supply. Moses let himself be human and let God be God. Too many Christians today, like Jonathan, refuse to let God be God in their lives; they are the god of their own life or they invite other humans to be god in their life. And as many as continue in such a practice, compromise will not be far from them, just like in the case of Jonathan. For if you play God and direct your own life, or allow someone else to be God in your life, soon you will find yourself on a road that seems right, but at the end you'll see destruction, not just defilement.

There's a reason Jesus says in Matthew 7:7-11, *"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"*

God wants to be God in our lives! He wants to be involved in our lives and direct the course of our lives. Read the words of Jesus again, see? He wants to be the One you come to for the questions in your heart! He has answers you can't find anywhere else! He doesn't want you wandering around. He wants you to involve Him before your search, so He can tell you where best to find what it is you're looking for! He doesn't want you being denied anything good in accordance to His will. He wants to help open good doors for you to walk through. Do you see it? We weren't created to go through life alone, especially in difficult times. We were created to navigate this thing called life with God. The earlier you know this the quicker you should be in accepting it as truth. Then the deeper your bond with God and the further you will be from defilement and destruction.

God Always Rewards Faithfulness! One more thing Jonathan failed to know about God was that God rewards faithfulness. Why do I say this? There's a system in which God operates; it's obedience and reward. Check the Scriptures! Even if the reward isn't immediate or on this side of eternity, you get a good reward regardless. Jonathan's famous grandfather once echoed God's word to the people in Deuteronomy 28:1-14. The summary is that if the people were obedient to God, they would be rewarded. Now, what it didn't state is that if the

people were obedient to God in only favourable conditions. To get a reward from God, obedience was expected from them in good times and in hard times. Whether or not they got the reward in this world or the next was completely their choice; it had everything to do with what they chose to do or not do.

One thing Jonathan didn't know, but I hope you know, is that if he had continued to choose God and walked with Him when Micah presented him with that offer, he would have gained the respect of God and would have been rewarded by Him. Now I'm not sure how God would have chosen to reward him but I know his basic needs wouldn't have been overlooked perpetually.

You see, one of the things Jesus clearly revealed to His disciples is that being associated with Him didn't exempt them from challenges. But it meant they could expect to deal with the situations they are up against from the place of victory, a victory He'd won. Another thing He told them that James reiterates was that those who stayed faithful to the end – of a season of testing or through persecution or throughout their lifetime on earth – would receive a reward! Don't believe me? Here, read the following portions of Scripture, from John 16:33 and James 1:12.

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”

“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.”

And if we know all this, then we will go through these hard times we face knowing full well that God is still mindful of us and has a reward awaiting us at the end of it all.

Jonathan believed more in the instant gratification that compromise provided rather than the provisions, blessings and eternal rewards that God had prepared for His faithful. Twice he was presented with an offer of instant gratification, and twice he chose it over God. And to doubt that God is a rewarder is same as saying that God doesn't exist. So do we call Jonathan a non-believer? Indeed, he proved to be, but thankfully he returns to God.

Bearing in mind that God always rewards faithfulness, and would have done Jonathan a world of good; we need to constantly bear in mind that faithfulness to God will still do us a whole lot of good.

Discerning Subtle Micah

So far we have looked at how Jonathan's lack of knowledge contributed to his spiritual defilement. But we can't conclude just like that, overlooking Micah who played the role of a physical tempter in Jonathan's defilement. Now I know we have already talked about Micah in Part 2 of this book; but we then never talked about spiritual discernment. You see, some Micahs are conspicuous – quick to spot, like the one who approached Jonathan and offered him money and perks if he could be his father and live-in priest to his gods. But there are others who, if God doesn't open your eyes to discern them, would defile you faster than you can spell the word defile. From my study and with God's light, I've been able to identify some ways by which you can discern even the subtle ones. Here are few signs to look out for:

The Older Mentor Kind: Micah was an older male who had a religious name and a religious attitude. He even had a house of worship, and would argue he was worshipping the Lord. But what he was, was an idolater. His house wasn't a house of God but of gods. If it were today, Micah would fit nicely into the role of a G.O/Founder, someone male/female older in the faith with not only a religious name, and a religious attitude but with a house, a place of worship in the name of God. He, for instance, will like young

people, and be open to mentoring them; he will even offer this mentorship. Only he won't be pointing you in the direction of the Lord; he would be grooming and encouraging you to worship his idols (e.g. money) with him.

Now, you might not see any graven or molten image; but it won't be God but idols whom he serves. What am I trying to say? It's exactly what you're thinking. Not everyone who is older in the faith is really in the faith. Some of these G.O's of "prosperous" churches are idolaters! They are already defiled! If you go under their mentorship and partner with them, you will be defiled! Some of these churches are buildings dedicated to idols, and God has long since left there! Don't be gullible. A healthy dose of doubt when you meet these kinds can save you from defilement.

Those with Ephods: Micah had graven and molten gods and also a house of gods. He also made an ephod for himself. Now, ephods were part of the priestly garments; it was one of the instructions God gave Moses concerning the garments of the priests, and it was to be made and worn by Aaron and his descendants when carrying out their priestly duties. One more thing to note is that ephods were also used as means of divination. Micah had one made too for his priest! Perhaps to validate in his own eyes his worship of the "Lord" and to ensure his priest's

utterance was given oracular significance by those who hear him.

Again you will find this kind of Micah in religious settings: a man/woman with an outward form of godliness even in their dressing, giving prophetic words here and there, some about the past, others about the present, but mainly about the future. But they will not be doing it with the Spirit of God, but by a contrary spirit whose real aim is to lure you from God. When they get your attention, these false prophets/teachers begin to feed you with their false doctrines, thereby defiling you. What am I trying to say? I'm saying you having discernment for testing spirits and to being acquainted with sound doctrine can save you from their defilement.

Those with Teraphims: Teraphim is a word that describes household idols or family gods; but it is also used to describe cult objects used as means of divination. Now, Micah made one of these for himself too! A Micah today with a teraphim is also a religious person with an aim to deceive and defile you. He/she might not go about with graven images, but will instead be seen with certain man-made objects and sometimes natural substances he believes have spiritual significance. For instance, they will claim some of these cult objects and substances have prophetic significance, others have healing

properties; and others with the ability to save and deliver. Do you get the picture?

These kinds of Micah might ask you to part with money for these items. But what's worse than losing your money to these people is that you will be defiled. They will encourage you to believe their claims and place your trust in these things that are neither God nor do they have the powers they claim they do. You will join them in their abominations, and soon you always feel the need to add something apart from what God allows to your "worship" of Him. And both you and your worship will not be pleasing and acceptable before God. Taking to heart what God has commanded – especially in how we worship Him – is a sure way to avoid the defilement of these Micahs.

The Revered Kind: Now, this kind of Micah will have a form of godliness as well as humility. Yes, they always appear humble. They usually have people around them who consider them as fathers – because they are founders/leaders and because somehow they've managed to make the people see them as religious authorities. The people around them always have deep respect and admiration for them, the kind that should be devoted to God alone. These Micahs often have their own standards which if you as their "child" meet would earn you a promotion; there's

always a ladder of succession in their circle, e.g., a title, an office, property etc. So it's not hard to see them appointing pastors/leaders/HOD's in their church, or even endorsing the ones who aren't directly following them but who are nonetheless affiliated with them – they are usually their clones.

All of these consecration and validation they do according to their own man-made standards, not God's. Defilement is not a hard thing in this circle; it's remaining pure that is hard. And so it is better not to join than to join. Keeping in mind God's code of conduct in our relationship with those in leadership positions and using His standards as well can save us from defilement in this manner.

These are just four signs; a Micah could have one or even all of these characteristics. But there are perhaps even many more signs that could be made available to you if you are willing to ask God. So go ahead and pray the prayers of inquisition, trust that God will shed light on the matter for you. Here's the Scripture I picked the signs from. Judges 17:5. *“And the man Micah had an house of gods, and made an ephod, and teraphim, and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest.”*

13

Separation

This final chapter of this book is definitely an afterthought. I had initially felt like I had written all I wanted to write on the subject matter of this book and had kept it aside to be sent to the Editor. I had finished writing this book on a Thursday, but soon Sunday came, and while studying my Bible privately, I believe the Lord showed me some things I needed to add. I told Him that throughout the book I had touched on the subject, but since I didn't feel any release despite giving God strong reasons why this chapter wouldn't be necessary, here I am adding it in obedience on a Monday morning.

That Sunday that I mentioned, I was reading Leviticus 8. And the theme for that passage is the anointing, consecration, or ordination of priests (Aaron and his sons). The verses that I got stuck on were the final verses of the chapter; they carried instructions for Aaron and his sons who God

Himself had chosen to be priests. Here they are, verses 33-36.

“And ye shall not go out of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation in seven days, until the days of your consecration be at an end: for seven days shall he consecrate you. As he hath done this day, so the Lord hath commanded to do, to make an atonement for you. Therefore shall ye abide at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation day and night seven days, and keep the charge of the Lord, that ye die not: for so I am commanded. So Aaron and his sons did all things which the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses.”

I read these verses over and over, then in my mind questions began to form. The first being why, why do the newly anointed/consecrated/ordained priests need to be separated from the people? Shouldn't they start serving already? I knew this was something God Himself had instructed. So even though Moses was announcing it, he was really reiterating God's command.

I asked why because the preceding events in that same chapter reveal to us that Moses had washed Aaron and his sons with water, had clothed them with their new priestly garments, anointed them with anointing oil, and sprinkled blood; not forgetting that Moses had also offered all the offerings in the prescribed way on their behalf. To

me, they were considered ceremonially clean, pure even. I couldn't see the need for separation and confinement. In the end, I saw many reasons why God gave the instruction, and the first is that He was trying to keep them away from defilement. Should the ceremonially clean priests step out almost immediately and come in contact with the unclean, just as quickly as they became clean, they'd be defiled and become unfit.

Separation was an essential part in the anointing, consecration, and ordination of the new priests. They were asked by God to stay in the tabernacle for 7 days and 7 nights, not alone, but with Him. And they weren't just going to be idle in God's presence; they were going to be performing the rituals that had been done on Day 1. By this I mean they would offer the priest's offerings according to the prescribed order. And then on Day 8, they would be let out. But even before being let out, in Leviticus 9, we see that Aaron still had to offer both the sin offering and burnt offering for himself, and the members of the congregation represented by the elders of Israel also had to offer sin offering, burnt offering, grain offering and a sacrifice for peace offering! These, Aaron and his sons handled on their behalf.

I know it's a lot to process, but imagine being one of the priests back then or one of the members of this

congregation having to know about all these offerings and doing them the prescribed way! Anytime I come across these offerings and the prescribed ways of offering them, I say a Thank You, Jesus, because Jesus has spared each and every one of us the burden of these offerings, the prescribed way of offering them and the burden of guilt that accompanies not being able to keep up with them.

I'm sure someone's getting impatient, wondering how all of the aforementioned concerning Aaron and his sons concern us today. Well, I'll get to it. You and I aren't Aaron and his sons, neither would we all operate in the capacity they were called to; yet, you and I, including other Christians all over the world, are God's chosen people! We are recipients of His mercy via the sacrifice of Jesus. His blood has washed us clean of our sins. Since atonement has been made for us, we have been made clean/pure and have been decorated with God's name and righteousness and by His indwelling Spirit; we've not only been anointed but equipped for service. By this I mean in every way God reveals to us.

And while judging by our human features and as long as we remain in this side of eternity, we might all look alike, but there's really more to us who are part of God's family than meets the eye. Spiritually we've stopped being like the people of the world. All

of us should know this and most of us like to know this. There are some of us that like this piece of information so much that we've twisted it to mean what it doesn't mean – that we can no longer be defiled again. This is a lie. For, for as long as we who are Christians remain in this human body and in this world, there's every chance that we can be defiled! Yes, you read that right; you can be defiled!

Even though we Christians are washed, decorated, anointed and equipped, our bodies, so used to sin and its pleasures, will continue to crave it; and the fact that we remain in this world that's full of temptation to sin doesn't even make it easy on us. Thankfully, there's a way of escape for us as revealed in the Scripture. Yes, you read that right, separation is a way to escape defilement. Aaron and his sons were commanded to be separate; we too can adopt that same measure. Not to be ceremonially clean for a period of time, but to avoid sin and its defilement for the long run.

The separation I speak about is beyond shutting yourself up indoors for a couple of days or being detached from reality. It's more of a mentality. Yes, separation mentality! That you understand so much what it means to be God's chosen people that you let that knowledge completely influence your way of thinking, your choices and eventually your way of

life, making you less and less interested in and susceptible, i.e., open to sin and defilement.

Let me ask you, do you really know what it means to be the chosen ones of a God who is holy, righteous, just, true, loving, peaceful, patient, gentle, good etc.? I hope you know that it's a call to transformation! Transformation into His likeness first before it is a call to service. A transformation that won't happen without your involvement and continuous cooperation.

And before you ask me a question of your own about if separation mentality and sheer willpower will be enough, let me quickly tell us that it won't, since separation mentality has to be serviced regularly. How? When Aaron and his sons were shut in, what were they doing? Idling away? No. They were alone with God, offering the priest's offering – a ritual. Who knows if with every single day spent alone with God, and with every single offering offered, they were slowly but finally coming to the full realization that they were not who they used to be anymore, that their lives were new, that they were now consecrated to God, to His service and had a responsibility to the people.

Perhaps they came out of the separation and confinement more knowledgeable and purposeful. One way to maintain a separation mentality is to, from time to time, take time off to be alone with

God, or in my own perspective, what's more effective is to daily, day and night, form a routine with God, just you and Him. A routine that includes prayer, praise and of course studying, not just reading God's word, but really seeking to know and understand what you're reading. Writing from personal experience, time spent with God is never time wasted. This spiritual maintenance will do you a world of good.

Someone might ask, but will all of this guarantee that we will not sin and be defiled? Well, you know what it means; it means you're doing your part, that you're being spiritually responsible, something Christians who refuse to acknowledge that they can fall into sin and be defiled know nothing about. Being spiritually responsible means being self-aware and making use of the resources God has made available to us, thereby positioning ourselves well for the help of God. Remember, it is easier to carry a child who is standing and whose arms are stretched out to you to lift him/her, than it is to carry the one who is very content to sit and roll in the mud. Which of these children would you rather be?

And of course I can't round this off without mentioning why purity is so important that we should be willing to adopt a separation mentality and practice separation in our day to day life in order to

maintain it. Well, it's pretty simple really. Purity is linked with our worship of God. Whether it's moral or spiritual, they determine whether we are fit for the worship of God.

BOOKS BY THE AUTHOR



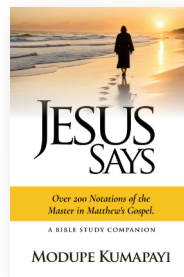
Letters In My Green Bag

A collection of ineffable, life-transforming ways to experience God.



God's Love Letter To You

A devotional guide.



Jesus Says

Over 200 notations of the Master in Matthew's gospel; a Bible study companion.



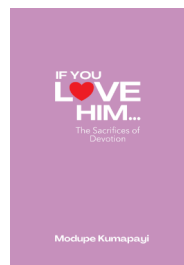
A Book For Dreamers

How dreamers transmute into achievers.



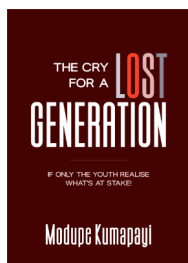
Take The Limits Off

A challenge to parents and guardians to release their wards to do what God wants and has ordained for each child.



If You Love Him...

A book that answers the question, What is God's love? And it presents the challenge, if you love God, then what?



The Cry for a Lost Generation

A book that offers immediate help for anyone seeking God now and seeking to do His will regardless of their past.



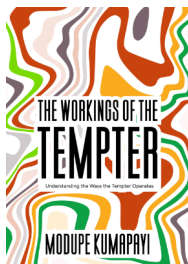
Dinah's Defilement Is Your Defilement

A dramatic retelling of Dinah's story. A book that offers you a claim: You can separate yourself unto God and live free of Satan's defilement.



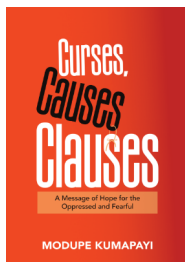
Prophet or Magician?

Prophet or Magician? Is a unique book, a mirror of sort, and reflects who God's true prophets are, and who impostors, charlatans, liars, false preachers are.



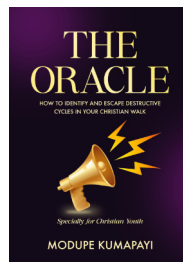
The Workings of the Tempter

The Workings of the Tempter is an unusual book; it retells Bible episodes of temptations and chronicles incidences of many who had fallen for the tempter's cunning ways of trapping those he lures into sin.



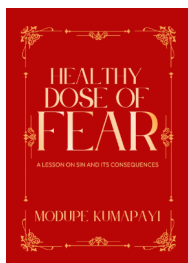
Curses, Causes and Clauses

Curses, Causes and Clauses is written to answer questions about curses, show you the way out of curses, and also teach you how to remain free from curses.



The Oracle

The Oracle reveals hidden truths about the Christian life. Opens the way to understanding why some Christians fell in the early church and how you can stand today and gain heaven at last.



Healthy Dose of Fear

Healthy Dose of Fear equips you to be a victorious, sin-overcoming, holy, upright, and heaven-assured child of God.

THE BOOK

Two words you would see conspicuously in *Dinah's Defilement Is Your Defilement* are 'defilement' and 'separation', the one brings damnation, and you would do well avoiding it; the other affords you a closer walk with God, and you're better off embracing it. Both words together offer contrasting themes in this book: one to shrink from, the other to incline towards.

The author has made her telling so dramatic, the personas in the ensuing drama have no place to hide; everything and every actor is exposed, including the inner thoughts of antagonists like our common adversary – Satan. He forms part of the interplay, however hidden and insidious his motives are. He is exposed, and his influence is no longer enforceable on you once you catch him in the act and reject him. This book offers you a claim: You can separate yourself unto God and live free of Satan's defilement.

THE AUTHOR

MODUPE KUMAPAYI believes strongly that God has impressed upon her heart to share through her writings the knowledge she has gained in her walk with God and the insight she has been given in her study of God's Word. Her deepest desire is to arm people with the truth; and her greatest fulfilment comes from watching people thrive spiritually.