Their flocks, their cattle, their donkeys, whatever was in the town and whatever was in the field, they took. (34:28)

The behavior of *Bnei* Yaakov begs explanation. Why did they take the cattle and sheep? Let us conjecture that they were justified in killing Shechem and Chamor for their immoral treatment of Dinah. Perhaps they were compelled to kill the men of Shechem for fear that they would seek vengeance. What, however, would justify pillaging their livestock? This act would cause people to think that their motivation for killing was really not sincere.

Horav Elchanan Sorotzkin, zl, feels that *Bnei* Yaakov's actions regarding the livestock communicates a significant message regarding the underlying reason for Shechem and Chamor's original offer to Yaakov and his sons. When Shechem and Chamor were convincing their community to defer to the Jewish request for their circumcision, they said, "Their livestock, their possessions, and all their animals--will they not be ours? Let us acquiesce to them, and they will settle with us." This suggests that the entire conversation about becoming one nation, settling together, was just a ploy. What they really wanted was to absorb the Jewish possessions for themselves. They had no intention of sharing a thing with the Jews. They only sought to do to us what had become a tradition among the gentile nations--use us for what we are worth, and then subject us to servitude. They never intended to consider us as equals. They sought to benefit from the Jewish material assets and no more. *Bnei* Yaakov sensed the truth behind their "open-hearted" gesture to accept us. Thus, they took away all of the livestock to demonstrate to the world that we knew their plan. They conceived a method to draw us in only to take away our hard-earned possessions. We will take theirs--not because we want or need it--but to display visibly the deceit and treachery of those who claim they want to "befriend" us. How regretful is it that we do not remember this lesson which repeats itself throughout our history.