

Discussion Notes- "Israel and His Children"

October 14, 2009

35:29 – "Isaac breathed his last", but we thought it appeared much earlier

39: all – Joseph's life of slavery

38:10 – Not sleeping with his brother's wife

37:26 – Judah saying Joseph should be sold into slavery, and not kill him

38: all – Explanation of significance of the Judah and Tamar story

33:10 – Irony in saying that seeing his brother was like seeing the face of God, when earlier he did see the face of God.

33: all/ 34:all – Joseph playing the games with his brothers

45:all – Joseph reveals himself to his brothers

33:10

-There is irony involved because he really did see the face of God, but he compares seeing his brothers face as seeing the face of God

-It might be an attempt at flattery to take away from the wrath he would bring upon himself

-why is Esau not acting against Jacob while he is angry

-Could be a good example of a family feud- it doesn't make sense to cause a fight when they haven't seen each other for 15 years

-Jacob did steal the birthright of Esau, it was irreversible because it was a will that had already transpired.

- Esau may be willing to give up the feud because he is well off.

-gives good concept of the power of a blessing in the story of the Bible.

35:29

-Why did he give the blessing of the birthright 15 years before his death, but the perception of the life of Isaac was that he died after he issued his blessing.

-This small excerpt is a blurb in the passage of chapter 35.

37:26

-Why was selling him into slavery a better option than killing him?

-How do you lose love for your brother when he holds dreams and actually does nothing?

-The brothers held contempt for Joseph because he was favored by his father.

-Joseph was born by Jacob's favorite wife, so Jacob favored Joseph.

-The value of life is different in the time period and he has been portraying prophecy of how he will lord over his brothers.

-They saw a reward in slavery because they got money for selling him, but they would receive nothing for killing him.

-A discussion on Reuben

-Is he a good man, or is he trying to cover his own back?

38:all

- Questions as to why the story of Judah and Tamar is included in the passage.
- The story is defaming to Judah within the community because he did take on a perceived prostitute, or it could be that he was trying to protect her from death.
- Judah does act out of the goodness of his heart, taking in an outcast and protecting her from harm.
- Onan did not fulfill the law as a brother-in-law. He refused to bear children with his brother's wife after Er's death.
- Onan is struck down because he breaks the law of God, having sex with Er's wife, but spilling his semen on the ground, not intending to impregnate the woman.
- Why was it placed in the passage we read?
 - It offers a historical perspective
 - Offers a contrast between Joseph pleasing the lord and the brothers in the passage not fulfilling their obligation to God.
 - This could complete the purpose of flashing back just as literature does, to drive the story along.

39:all

- The guard's wife does seduce Joseph, but the man makes a brash decision. Joseph runs the man's life, so why is he so quick to condemn him.
- A man wants to believe his wife, so he has to kick Joseph out.
- The women were not known for their faithfulness, so it could be an attempt to save the perception of his wife.

43:all/44:all

- The story seems to be a fictional story because the action works out perfectly.
- The plot line does work to Joseph's advantage and every action works out completely to fulfill the goals of Joseph's plan.
- The actions that move the plot are not completely out there, they are plausible.
 - The famine occurs and the brothers come to Egypt.
 - Joseph plants the cup and they return home, consume their grain, and return to Egypt.
- The fact that Benjamin is found with the cup is not very skeptical, maybe a few wrinkles were placed, but the fact that his plan worked out does not take away from the validity of it.
- The pharaoh did control the empire and when he made orders and let his will be known, it did get done because he did hold a lot of power over the people.

45:all

- Joseph reveals himself when he is in the position of power.
- He says it was fate for him to be in a position of power and hold the fate of his brothers in his hand.
- Joseph is nice because he has put them through a lot of trials and tests to make them work.
- He is acting honorably because he does forgive them, but he does get a little bit of his revenge without being too cruel in the same way the brothers treated him.

-It could be a test to see their dedication to their youngest brother Benjamin, because they did not hold a large amount of respect for Joseph when he was the youngest brother.

-Benjamin was the new favorite of the family, so Joseph wants to make sure the brothers have learned their lesson in dealing with him.