

BIBLE STUDY

9/24/15

Reuben's Heinous Act Explained

GEN. 35:16-21

(After Jacob returns to Canaan, Reuben, his firstborn son, commits a heinous act).

¹⁶Then they journeyed from Bethel. When they were still some distance from Ephrath, Rachel went into labor, and she had hard labor. ¹⁷And when her labor was at its hardest, the midwife said to her, "Do not fear, for you have another son." ¹⁸And as her soul was departing (for she was dying), she called his name Ben-oni; but his father called him Benjamin. ¹⁹So Rachel died, and she was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem), ²⁰and Jacob set up a pillar over her tomb. It is the pillar of Rachel's tomb, which is there to this day. ²¹Israel journeyed on and pitched his tent beyond the tower of Eder.

It came about while Israel (Jacob) was dwelling in that land, **THAT REUBEN WENT AND LAY WITH BILHAH HIS FATHER'S CONCUBINE, AND ISRAEL HEARD.**

GEN. 49:2-4 [At the end of Jacob's life, he gathers his 12 sons together to give them his blessing (prophecy)] "Reuben, you are my firstborn; my might and the beginning of my strength, preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power. Uncontrolled as water, you shall not have preeminence, because you went up to your father's bed; then you defiled it--he went up to my couch."

1 Chronicles 5:1-3 [A genealogy of Reuben] now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel (for he was the firstborn, but because he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph the son of Israel; so that he is not enrolled in the genealogy according to the birthright. Though Judah prevailed over his brothers, and from him comes the leader, yet the birthright belonged to Joseph)...

2 Samuel 16:20-22 (After David flees from Jerusalem, his son Absalom sets himself up as king by committing a heinous act). Then Absalom said to his counselor, "Give your advice. What shall we do [to show that I am now king and not my father]? His counselor said, "Go in to our father's concubines, whom he has left to keep the house; then all ISRAEL WILL HEAR that you have made yourself odious to your father...so they pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof, and **ABSALOM WENT IN TO HIS FATHER'S CONCUBINES** in the sight of all Israel.

1 Kings 2:13-25

¹³ Then Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon. And she said, "Do you come peacefully?" He said, "Peacefully." ¹⁴ Then he said, "I have something to say to you." She said, "Speak." ¹⁵ He said, "You know that the kingdom was mine, and that all Israel fully expected me to reign. However, the kingdom has turned about and become my brother's, for it was his from the LORD." ¹⁶ And now I have one request to make of you; do not refuse me." She said to him, "Speak." ¹⁷ And he said, "Please ask King Solomon—he will not refuse you—to give me Abishag (his father David's concubine) the Shunammite as my wife."¹⁸ Bathsheba said, "Very well; I will speak for you to the king."

¹⁹ So Bathsheba went to King Solomon to speak to him on behalf of Adonijah. And the king rose to meet her and bowed down to her. Then he sat on his throne and had a seat brought for the king's mother, and she sat on his right. ²⁰ Then she said, "I have one small request to make of you; do not refuse me." And the king said to her, "Make your request, my mother, for I will not refuse you." ²¹ She said, "Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah your brother as his wife." ²² King Solomon answered his mother, "And why do you ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? Ask for him the kingdom also, for he is my older brother, and on his side are Abiathar^l the priest and Joab the son of Zeruiah."²³ Then King Solomon swore by the LORD, saying, "God do so to me and more also if this word does not cost Adonijah his life!" ²⁴ Now therefore as the LORD lives, who has established me and placed me on the throne of David my father, and who has made me a house, as he promised, Adonijah shall be put to death today." ²⁵ So King Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and he struck him down, and he died.

WE LEARN 4 THINGS

1. REUBEN WAS FIRSTBORN, BUT HIS FIRSTBORN RIGHTS WERE TAKEN AWAY DUE TO HIS SLEEPING WITH HIS FATHER'S CONCUBINE.
2. THE FIRSTBORN RIGHTS WERE GIVEN TO JOSEPH
3. YET IT WAS JUDAH'S TRIBE THAT WOULD PREVAIL OVER THE OTHER TRIBES, AND FROM HIS TRIBE WOULD COME A LEADER (DAVID AND MESSIAH).
4. SLEEPING WITH A FATHER'S CONCUBINES WAS CONSIDERED A DECISIVE MOVE TO SOLIDIFY A PERSON'S POSITION OF POWER.

Mary's Magnificat (Luke 1)

A. ⁵²He has brought down the **mighty** from their thrones

B. and exalted those of **humble estate**;

B. ⁵³He has filled the **hungry** with good things,

A. and the **rich** He has sent away empty.

REVERSAL of circumstances **AND** characters in the psalm.

The form coincides with the theology the psalm teaches

Luke 16:19-20

A. There was a **rich man** who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day.

B. And at his gate was laid a **poor man** named Lazarus, covered with sores, who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores.

B. The **poor man** died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side.

A. The **rich man** also died and was buried, and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side.

REVERSAL of circumstances **AND** characters in the story.

The form coincides with the theology the story teaches.

Mary's Magnificat (Luke 1)

A. He has brought down the mighty from their thrones

B. and exalted those of humble estate;

B. ⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things,

A. and the rich He has sent away empty.

Luke 16:19-24

Lazarus Play

NARRATOR:

^aThere was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate was laid

^ba poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores.

^bThe poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side.

^aThe rich man also died and was buried, and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side.

RICH MAN: Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.

ABRAHAM: Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.

RICH MAN: Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house—for I have five brothers—so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

ABRAHAM: They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.

RICH MAN: ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.

ABRAHAM: If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.