

A-185

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1. Main episode Sidra one of most disturbing to sensitive Jew who believes in Torah + proud its high moral teachings. That is - the story of the deception practiced by Jacob, prompted by Rebecca, on Isaac in taking the blessing that rightfully belonged + was intended for his older brother, Esau.
2. story in broad outline
3. clearly a story of deception, hard to explain + harder to defend. Even more acutely embarrassing - silence of Torah in not offering us moral judgement, ethical criticism.
4. "Higher Bible Criticism", always eager to attack
5. well, what is answer?
6. Answer is: if read carefully, between lines, + w-o prejudice, you find Torah still most moral document available mankind
7. Torah tells the story straight, never makes any effort "whitewash", defend wrongdoings even $\pi\pi\pi\pi$ as Jacob, Rebecca.
8. certainly They were wrong - good ends, wrong means...
9. and Torah NOT silent - but its criticism is IMPLICIT, not EXPLICIT; OBJECTIVE, not SUBJ.
10. (Here, as in other cases: $\pi\pi\pi\pi$ $\pi\pi\pi\pi$ $\pi\pi\pi\pi$, punishment fits crime. [all following from Casato, $\pi\pi\pi\pi$ $\pi\pi\pi\pi$])
11. Invite you with me in adventure in Bible study.
12. First: Jacob. His sins:
 - a) exploited darkness - Isaac's blindness
 - b) fooled brother - who was older.
13. Punishment (in addition to exile, ~~he~~ pursued by Esau):
 - a) exploited by Laban (makes him work 7 yrs beloved, Rachel) who then fools him by in darkness of night (wedding night)
 - b) by substituting her sister - her older one.

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14- I imagine embarrassment Jacob, acute recollection own sin, when after complaint to 12. latter replies:

וְיֹאמֶר אֵלָיו וְיֹאמֶר אֵלָיו וְיֹאמֶר אֵלָיו וְיֹאמֶר אֵלָיו

- was that not Jacob's sin?

- & then Laban repeats - וְיֹאמֶר אֵלָיו - Jacob's punishment

15- Rebecca: when Jacob hesitated, she reassured him saying:

יְהִי כְּאִשְׁרֵי - and she got it!

she wanted 12. for her favorite son, got it by deception - and immediately afterwards he is banished into exile, pursued by 12. when he finally does return - 12. is dead. great enough punishment?

5- she prefaced her remarks to Jacob by וְיֹאמֶר אֵלָיו - & right afterwards forced to send him away & never see him again - w. words וְיֹאמֶר אֵלָיו - identical - i.e. וְיֹאמֶר אֵלָיו

16. There is, then, in this episode, enough to still forever the bigoted war-cries of the "critics" of the Bible.

There is here enough to make us Jews, esp. religious & believing Jews, eternally proud of our Torah; & unquestionably certain that this is the greatest repository of moral teaching known humanity

There is here the assertion that no one is too big for criticism

There is here, too, the comforting message that after man has sinned, he can atone for it; that after his sin of deception and his bitter exile, the same Jacob can see visions of ladders rising into Heaven, & wrestle with angels & win; that the same Jacob can hear the voice of Almighty G-d:

2 pr 1328 11'11k, "Fear Not, My servant Jacob - for I am, I shall ever be - with thee".

12/10/11-12/10/11-12/10/11-12/10/11