

Preparation Guide for Quiz #2

Short Answer:

1. Describe the character of Laban as he emerges in Gen 24 and Gen 29ff.
2. How is Rebekka characterized in Gen 24?
3. Levenson writes (p. 90): "How we are to assess Sarai's attempt to circumvent her sterility is shrouded in ambiguity." What does he mean by that and how would you assess it?
4. Contrast the directions that Abraham gives his servant in Gen 24 with the way that the servant conveys them to his guest in Aramea.
5. Isaac is a child of the covenant while Ishmael is a child of the promise. Explain.
6. What is the role of Jacob's exile and slavery in the pattern of the beloved son according to Levenson?

Longer Essays

7. Lot would seem to be the candidate most fitting at the close of Genesis 11 for God to choose yet by the close of Gen 19 we can see that Abraham had far more merit. Why does Levenson think that Lot would be a fitting choice at the close of Gen 11 and how do we learn otherwise in the course of the narrative?
8. How and why does the story of the banishment of Ishmael in Gen 21 anticipate the aqedah in Gen 22?
9. Levenson writes (p. 40): "The status of Israel as the first-born son of God is both metaphorical and more than metaphorical." Explain.
10. Alter notes that the conventional type-scene of an annunciation follows a set pattern that appears to be violated in Gen 18-21. What constitutes the violation and how does Alter explain it?
11. Explain this sentence: "The trials [of the righteous] that appear to be their humiliation are, in fact, the means of their exaltation, proof positive that their special destiny is based on other than caprice." (Levenson, p. 139).
12. How does Gen 48 allude to Gen 27 and the old age of Abraham?
13. How does Fishbane describe the structure of the Jacob cycle? Provide one example of how each unit balances the other (i.e. A to A', B to B' and etc.).
14. Assemble the genealogies of Abraham's immediate family (end of Gen 11, and the data about Hagar and Ishmael), Nahor's family, Keturah's family, and especially the birth of the sons of Jacob to each of the wives and maidservants. You need not memorize the offspring of Nahor, Keturah, and Ishmael, but you should do so for the sons of Jacob – taking special care to know who the mother of each was. Be able to locate their rough locality on a map of Israel. Be careful to attend to the order of birth of all key figures!
15. Isaac, Jacob and Moses all meet their wives at a well. How does this "type-scene" work in each case?
16. Crucial to the Jacob cycle is the theme of reconciliation. Using the text of Genesis 32-33 describe how this comes about. And very briefly, how does it compare (or not compare!) to the Abraham traditions?
17. Leah and Rachel constitute something of a sub-plot in the larger narrative about Jacob and Esau. How is this the case?
18. How does Mays understand the phrase: "now I know that you are a fearer of God"?