

Yoseph Sold, Paroh's Dream

Genesis 37:2-41:40

Reading Questions

1. What about what Onan did displeased **ייהוה**?
2. How did Yehudah know what to command Onan to do in Genesis 38:8 if it had not yet been written down formally as a command?
3. How did Yoseph know adultery was a sin against Elohiym?

Reading Answers

1. The text in Genesis 38:9 seems to indicate that he did what he did because he did not want to give an offspring to his brother. We don't know if he had hated his brother or if he was simply wanting to avoid the responsibilities, or what the reasons, but what was displeasing is not raising up the offspring for his brother. The Torah states in Deuteronomy 25:5-6 that this is called the duty of a husband's brother. It seems that Onan was trying to avoid this duty but still obtain pleasure.
2. It is verses like this that prove beyond a doubt that it does not matter what was written down yet – laws existed even before they were written down formally. It doesn't have to have yet been written down for the law to exist. It is this, along with other laws, that Avraham had been said to have kept in Genesis 26:5. Many of the laws later written down were first passed down orally throughout the generations.
3. As in the previous question, once again, this is to point out that laws did exist prior to them being written down formally. Laws were passed down throughout the generations orally. This was easy because they lived longer back then. In fact, Adam lived until Enosh, and Enosh lived until Noach, and Noach lived until Ever and even Terach, Avraham's father; and Noach's great, great grandson, Ever, was still alive even through the first 19 years of the life of Ya'aqov (Yisra'el). So from Adam to Enosh to Noach to Ever to Ya'aqov, it is clear that it would not have been hard for the laws to get passed down orally even through just these 5 men.

Reading Notes

- We see Re'uven was trying to deliver Yoseph from the hand of his brothers to bring him back to his father. I guess this is the case because Re'uven was the oldest and knew that he would be held responsible if anything happened to Yoseph.
- A brother pointed out to me a few interesting things which may or may not be related: one being that the Midyanites were the ones that bought Yoseph, but also the ones Mosheh went to when he left Mitsrayim when he was 40; another being

how Yehudah's signet/seal, cord/bracelet, and staff were used against him, and Yoseph's garment was used against him.

Related Verses

Duty of A Husband's Brother: Deuteronomy 25:5-7, Ruth 4:1-13

Penalty of Daughter of Priest Whoring: Leviticus 21:9

Do Not Commit Adultery: Exodus 20:14, Leviticus 20:10, Deuteronomy 5:18

Yoseph: Psalms 105:16-22, Acts 7:9-11