

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR DIVIDING SWORD BY KATRINA D. HAMEL

Warning: Major Spoilers!

1. Have you read other novels based on the Bible? What are the advantages or disadvantages of fictional books based on true events?
2. Who was your favorite character in the book? Why?
3. Who was a character that you did not like, or who drove you crazy?
4. Did you learn anything new from reading Dividing Sword?
5. How did witnessing a crucified man as a child affect both Reuben and Beth's worldviews?
6. The image of a raven appears several times throughout the book. What does it symbolize to Beth?
7. Beth often feels like she has nothing to contribute. In what ways did Beth share the good news of Jesus? Did she need to change her personality before Jesus could use her?
8. Reuben felt called to be a Pharisee, and he sacrificed multiple relationships to fulfill his calling. Do you feel he was justified in choosing his faith over his friends and family?
9. Beth and Reuben's lives were changed by the men they followed. How were their fates similar to their rabbi's? What in your life has been affected because of your belief in Jesus or by the spiritual leadership of those around you?
10. Do you find that you lead with your mind, like Reuben, or with your heart, like Beth? What are the advantages or disadvantages of each? Do we need both when it comes to our faith?
11. At first, both Beth and Reuben feel resistance to Jesus. How do you think you would feel if you heard about a spiritually revolutionary teacher who was challenging your long-held beliefs?
12. How did you feel about the women traveling with Jesus and the disciples? Do you think some of the women could have been present at key events, such as when Jesus walks on water?
13. Do you believe Jesus valued women in his ministry? What supports your belief?

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14. Dividing Sword sticks to the narrative of the Gospel of Matthew. Did you notice favorite portions from other gospels that were left out or different than you remembered? Did you go back and check your Bible to find out the truth?
15. We often see the Pharisees as the bad guys, but there are Pharisees in the Bible who accept Jesus as their Savior. Do you remember who they were? What are some good things about the Pharisees? Are modern Christians ever like the Pharisees, in good ways or bad?
16. Reuben witnessed many miracles but still did not accept Jesus as the Messiah. Do you think the miracles should have convinced him? How did he rationalize his unbelief even though his own family benefited from Jesus' power?
17. Do you think Reuben and Michal would have been a good match, or was Reuben right to wait for a wife who could help his life goals?
18. Many of Reuben's choices hinge on Simeon's opinions. How did Simeon use Reuben's loyalty? What are the benefits and pitfalls of a relationship like Reuben and Simeon's?
19. Do you think Michal was justified in her anger towards Reuben for refusing to bring Jesus to her brother, or was it unfair for her to ask Reuben to compromise his beliefs?
20. When Beth finally asks Jesus to heal her so she can conceive a child, Jesus says no. How did that make you feel? Do you feel like God should answer every good request that we have?
21. Did you know before reading Dividing Sword that church tradition says that Peter was crucified upside down and that his wife died with him? Did Beth's death come as a shock to you?
22. How did faith in Jesus help Beth face her greatest fear?
23. Reuben loses everything when Jerusalem falls. Do you feel he deserved to suffer because of what he did in his life?
24. What did you think of Reuben's conversion at the end of the book?
25. Would you recommend Dividing Sword to a friend?

Thanks for Reading Dividing Sword!

Comments and questions are always welcome at katrinadhamel.com