

Bible Movies #4

We're up to class #4, and there is still so much to analyze and enjoy.

This week we'll take a close look at John Huston's depiction of Noah's ark (The Bible 1966). Did things really go that smooth? The scene of the new world after the flood ends, is both majestic and thought provoking. When G-d destroys the world and you live through it, what's next? A timely question. Maybe we can find an answer in Huston's face as the dove returns to the ark window.

How did Huston do with that Tower of Babel? Great effects, but was he able to give over the changes which would mold the future of the planet? Stephen Boyd does a good job, albeit blasphemous, of shooting an arrow at Heaven. His frustration as G-d levels his tower and changes his servants' talk into multi-lingual is palpable.

How about the Bible movie's depiction of Abraham, Sarah and the 3 angels (starring a young Peter O' Toole as lead angel)? Was it a good match to the real epic? They definitely forgot a few things there, like the recuperating Abraham/ George C. Scott (from his late in life bris) running to greet Peter O' Toole. Ava Gardner does a good job as the laughing matriarch Sarah, as she hears she'll have a child in her nineties. We'll check on that part too. Sarah may have been more of a silent laughter (at least towards G-d).

Samson and Delilah will come to take a bow. We still have some words of admiration and adjustment for that 1949 interpretation. The Philistine actors depict the cruelty of their nation towards the Hebrews, quite accurately. Delilah's despicable slyness and Samson's taciturn feelings about her, were expressed well by Hedy and Victor.

The Ten Commandments movies of 1923 and 1956, are wellsprings of amazing directing by DeMille. They grant us an opportunity of imagery and analysis of our Torah understanding. Truthfully, even though no Bible movie will ever be a perfect depiction, viewing and evaluating

them can renew feelings of spirit and heritage. In class #4, we will touch on numerous points, such as-the plagues, Moses' name, his ability to feel for the people he was not raised with (but knew he was of them), Miriam's role, the Golden Calf (too many women in either depiction) and then the Commandments themselves.

Of course, we must remember to touch on Edward G. Robinson's performance of Dathan, defying Charlton Heston at every turn.

Please enjoy the picture which we have posted on our site for class #4. That is how Moses and Pharaoh looked in 1923. I would dare say, that although in reality, Moses was way taller than Ramses, nevertheless the two actors are impressive.

They are: Moses- Theodore Roberts
Pharaoh Ramses II - Charles De Roche

Should you ever have the chance to review De Mille's 1923 version, take the time to observe the actors' body language (extra important in those days of the Silent Era). Roberts' eyes shine and speak his role well. De Roche artfully exudes Pharaoh's disdain of the Hebrews and his thirst for revenge from their G-d.

So come and stay with us for Bible Movies #4 this Tuesday at 1. I can't split the sea for you, but I can zoom it!