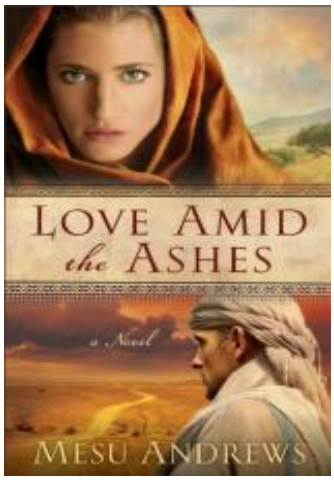
ReadingGroupGuides
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Love Amid the Ashes

by Mesu Andrews



About the Book

An epic story of love and forgiveness, suffering and restoration?

When scandal and murder rock the life of Dinah, the daughter of the great patriarch Jacob, she is sent away to Job?s household. After Job?s own world comes crashing down, Dinah finds herself drawn to this great man brought low. What will she risk to fight for his survival?

Mesu Andrews weaves an emotional and stirring account of Job and Dinah. **Love Amid the Ashes** breathes life, romance, and passion into the classic biblical story of suffering and steadfast faith.

Discussion Guide

1. Was Isaac kind or cruel when he issued the command that Dinah marry a man in Esau?s clan?

2. When did Sitis? rebellion against El Shaddai begin? As a child, when her parents died? When Bildad forced her to marry a disciple of the House of Shem? When she experienced multiple miscarriages? Or when Job destroyed the Chaldean temple?

3. After encountering Zophar at Elath, Job challenged Dinah to treasure God?s forgiveness like a gift, protecting it when others try to steal it away or replace it with shame. In what ways have you seen this truth lived out in real life?

4. What character traits and spiritual qualities enabled Job to respond to the tragedies with sincere sorrow and yet purposeful praise?

5. What character traits and spiritual qualities enabled Dinah to respond to the circumstances that faced her and Nogahla

in Uz?

6. Why was it so difficult for Sitis to believe/realize Sayyid?s true character and evil intentions?

7. Nogahla shares two theories on forgiveness: 1) an olive tree ? once it begins growing it?s hard to kill just as a person who has forgiven once has learned the practice and can more readily repeat it, and 2) just as a person needs a bath repeatedly, so we also need to forgive repeatedly. Which of her examples have you found to be more accurate?

8. When Sitis came to Dinah, revealing Sayyid?s plan to withhold bread from both her and Job, Dinah uses several forms of effective ministry: 1) listening and letting Sitis cry uninterrupted; 2) praying silently rather than giving advice; and 3) asking well-conceived questions at the proper moment. Which of these strategies is most difficult for you when a hurting friend needs your help?

9. What kind of lies did Sitis believe in order to succumb to Sayyid?s control? What truths set her free to receive God?s forgiveness?

10. How could Job?s friends/relatives have been so easily deceived by Sayyid?

11. Eliphaz?s speeches were bent toward spiritualizing every situation. Bildad believed tradition was the answer to every woe. Zophar valued the power of the intellect. However, all three seemed equally uncomfortable when Job spoke directly to God with unrestrained honesty. Whose spiritual personality do you resemble, and what is positive and negative about each?

12. Shouting at his relatives, Job vows that he is innocent of wrong-doing and God has wronged him. Was that true? Who was the only sinless man on earth? Is it possible for God to act unjustly?

13. Job taught Dinah that if God forgave her, she never needed to be ashamed before men; however, in his anger and resentment, Job used this golden truth like a rusty sword against his friends. Can you think of instances in which God?s truth (Scripture) might have been misinterpreted? How can we safeguard against that?

14. Has it ever occurred to you that God may have allowed your pain in order to build a deeper, more intimate relationship with you? How does that make you feel? Does that change your concept of suffering? Of God?

15. When we realize the totality of God?s immeasurable power, is it hard to believe there is NO evil in such absolute power?

16. Job?s deliverance came when his focus changed from his own righteousness to what?

17. Do you think Job struggled with the decision to pray for his friends?

18. In the story, both Job and Dinah imagine their self-perceived failings as un-lovable, and they build a wall of self-protection around their hearts. Job later identifies his fear of rejection as pride. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

19. Has God ever used a recurring theme in your life ? like the hoopoe bird ? to remind you of His faithfulness?

20. Looking back at some of the painful periods in your life, can you see some good things that God might have brought to bear through it? As He did through Joseph?s slavery, Dinah?s broken heart and Job?s tragedies?

Author Bio

Mesu Andrews? deep understanding of and love for God's Word brings the biblical world alive for her readers. Her first novel, LOVE AMID THE ASHES, won the 2012 ECPA Book of the Year for a Debut Author. Her three subsequent novels --- LOVE'S SACRED SONG, LOVE IN A BROKEN VESSEL and IN THE SHADOW OF JEZEBEL --- all released to great reader enthusiasm. Mesu lives in the Pacific Northwest with her husband Roy.

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