

GENESIS

36:1-43

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Taught by Simeon Forder on Sunday morning, 5th May 2024 @ Deal Christian Fellowship

Reading: 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Introduction

Last week as we studied chapter 35 we saw the death of Isaac, who of course was Esau and Jacob's father. And as we continue into chapter 36, which we'll study all of this morning, we'll see the descendants of Esau recorded, before the rest of the Old Testament focusses on the descendants of Jacob. In a way, this is the chapter where Esau steps off the stage and page of Scripture. Indeed, this is the last time that we'll see Esau himself alive, although he is mentioned as an individual in several other books of the Bible, from Deuteronomy, to Joshua, 1 Chronicles, Romans and Hebrews.

However, the effect of Esau's decisions would be far longer lasting, which is why I believe Moses devotes this whole chapter to his descendants, for we'll see them pop up time and time again throughout the Old Testament, in ways we might not first expect. Even Mark's gospel makes mention of the region of Idumea, which it seems is where some of Esau's descendants settled much later on than this.

Now, if you've *read* ahead, then you know we have a lot of names in this chapter — there's a genealogy, two lists of people given responsibility for ruling, and one list of kings. And when first reading it, it's possible wonder what on earth this chapter will do to help us. But yet again, when we connect the dots, and read it in the context of the whole Bible, we find there are some important notes we should make about what this chapter records.

And, so, as we get started today, I want to read to you some very well written thoughts from Jon Courson's Bible commentary on this passage, referring to 2 Timothy 3:16-17 that was our Bible reading this morning. He says:

The word "inspired" literally means "God-breathed." All Scripture is given by inspiration. That means God breathed life into each word He spoke. We live in a time when people are saying, "Oh, yes, the Bible is inspired." But they're using the word "inspired" the same way they say Shakespeare was inspired—and that's not what Paul was saying to Timothy. According to Paul, God personally breathed life into and uttered each word specifically. Therefore, the modern theologian who says the Bible contains the Word of God is in grave and, I believe, damnable error. The Bible does not contain the Word of God, gang. The Bible is the Word of God.

Am I splitting hairs? No. The implication of those who say the Bible contains the Word of God is that the Bible also contains the words of men. The problem with that is, even if I say most of the Bible is the Word of God, as I decide which part is inspired and which isn't, I become the judge of the Bible rather than allowing the Bible to judge me. And guess how I'll judge it. Concerning the things I agree with, I'll say, "That's God speaking." Concerning the things that convict me, however, I'll say, "That's man speaking."

Every book in the Bible, every chapter of every book, every verse of every chapter, every word of every verse, every letter of every word is inspired. It's all God-breathed. It's all important. Even the passage before us...

Jon Courson

So then, let's get studying this chapter, first breaking it down into a few sections:

Overview of chapter thirty six

Overview of chapter one

- **v1-5** — Esau's wives & sons
- **v6-8** — Esau moves away from Canaan
- **v9-14** — Esau's descendants
- **v15-19** — Chiefs of Edom (by family)
- **v20-29** — The sons of Seir (whom they intermarried with)
- **v31-39** — Kings of Edom
- **v40-43** — The Chiefs of Esau (by geography)

First then, we read of Esau's three wives (who we've met before) and now his five sons. Then in verses 6-8, we see that (like with Abraham and Lot), the land can't support him *and* Jacob, so he moves away with all he has from the Land of Canaan. From verses 9-14 we then read some key verses about his descendants, before in verses 15-19 we see the positions they took by family.

Verses 20–29 then record another family line that Esau’s family intermarried with, before we then learn that Esau’s descendants were soon ruled by kings — much earlier than Jacob’s descendants would be. Finally, in verses 40–43, we read more of positions of responsibility that Esau’s descendants took — but this time by geography.

For one chapter, that’s quite a bit it covers. So let’s jump into verse 1.

Chapter thirty six

Genesis 36:1

Now this is the genealogy of Esau, who is Edom.

So then, we’re told that Esau and Edom are almost interchangeable terms — in that his descendants were called the Edomites. Something that v9 and v43 also make clear. And the area they lived was called Edom.



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As for where it was located, you can see here that it was the mountainous area below the Dead Sea, in the southern half of Jordan as we know it today, though extending further west than the border of with Israel, toward Egypt. And it included the city of Petra as we call it today — famous for at least one movie setting, but also significant in yet to be fulfilled prophecy regarding Israel in the end times.

With our bearings sorted, Moses continues this chapter, writing:

Genesis 36:2-3

Esau took his wives from the daughters of Canaan: Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite; Aholibamah the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite; and Basemath, Ishmael’s daughter, sister of Nebajoth.

Esau then, had three wives. Something that is recorded, but never permitted or encouraged by scripture — in fact, we read clearly that a man should only have one wife. But Esau, chose to marry two women initially from the land of Canaan, as we read back in chapter 26:

Genesis 26:34-35

When Esau was forty years old, he took as wives Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. And they were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah.

Why were they a grief of mind? Because these women were from the nations of giants that lived in Canaan; nations that worshipped other gods, and were full of wicked practices. And so contrary were their beliefs and attitudes that in the following chapter we read:

Genesis 27:46

And Rebekah said to Isaac, "I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth; if Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth, like these who are the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?"

As I've said before, the issue wasn't *personal* — it wasn't that Isaac and Rebekah simply didn't like these girls — but rather the issue was *spiritual*, for their spiritual state affected their whole lives. In fact, we learn in the Jewish Targums — which are an Aramaic paraphrase or explanation of the Hebrew scriptures — that these women quarreled with Isaac and Rebekah and rebelled against their religious instructions. A clear warning, as we've seen before, that believers are simply not to enter into marriage with unbelievers. Indeed, this chapter will give us even more warning on that topic in just a few verses time.

But back in chapter 28, as a result of the grief Esau's wives brought, we read:

Genesis 28:1

Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, and said to him: "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan.

And he sends him off to Padan Aram, to uncle Laban, to find a wife from his family. But meanwhile, his older twin brother, Esau, is looking on. And we read a few verses later:

Genesis 28:6-9

Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Padan Aram to take himself a wife from there, and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan," and that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother and had gone to Padan Aram. Also Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan did not please his father Isaac. So Esau went to Ishmael and took Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife in addition to the wives he had.

So Esau tried to find favour with his parents, by marrying one of his cousins — a girl from Abraham's descendants. But now he has three wives, which is not what God had intended for him. And those are the wives that we're talking about here in verses 2 & 3 of chapter 36. However, you may have noticed we have five or six names, for in those earlier chapters of Genesis we read their names are Judith, Basemath, and Mahalath — but here we read they are Adah, Aholibamah, and Basemath. So what's going on?

Simply, they went by more than one name — or had their names changed. Not something that is new to us, for we've already seen Abram become Abraham, Sarai become Sarah, and Jacob become Israel. And we probably all know of people who go by more than one name — Tig, for example! Or my cousin Dave, who is known by many of his friends as Frank. So this isn't anything unusual, but why the name change?

Well, one suggestion is that Esau had originally changed the names of his first two wives, in order to make their names more palatable to Isaac and Rebekah — for Adah (one of his first wives) shared her name with one of Lamech's two wives back in Genesis 4, the first example of Polygamy recorded in the Bible (an uncomfortable memory, perhaps). And Aholibamah's name meant "tent of the high place" (an allusion to idol worship), contrasted to Judith (which she was also known as) which meant "praised".

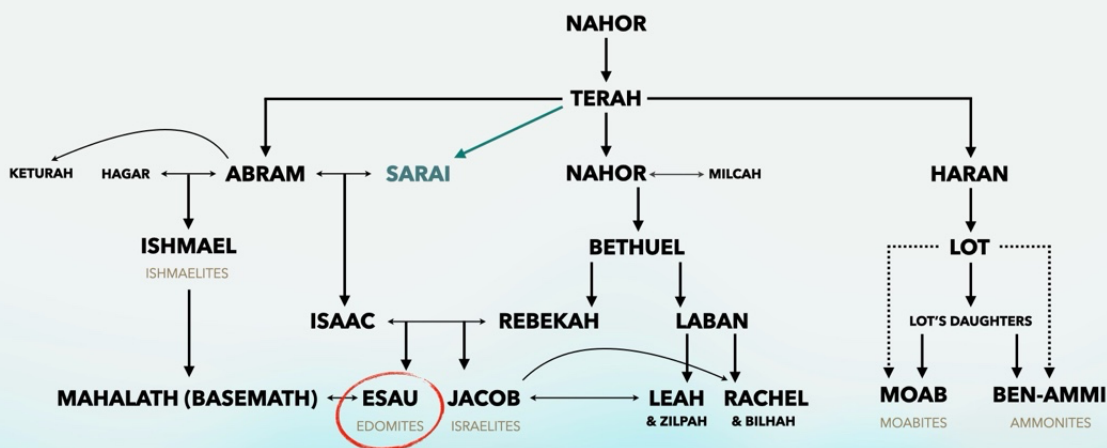
We really don't know that this is the reason for the alternate names, but the point made by that commentator is valid, that we often try and dress up sin in more palatable terms. Whether it is calling adultery "having an affair", or fornication being simply called a "fling", or homosexuality and sodomy being called "gay", or abortion being called "womens' health care".

Whatever the case here, Esau definitely *had* made an intentional decision to marry those who didn't worship the same God as his father, Isaac, and his grandfather, Abraham. And significantly, we read that they were of these giant tribes — the Hittites and Hivites — that we know from elsewhere, were hell-bent on destroying God's people. That's worth making a note of as we look at their descendants, of which the next generation is recored in verses 4-5:

Genesis 36:4-5

Now Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau, and Basemath bore Reuel. And Aholibamah bore Jeush, Jaalam, and Korah. These were the sons of Esau who were born to him in the land of Canaan.

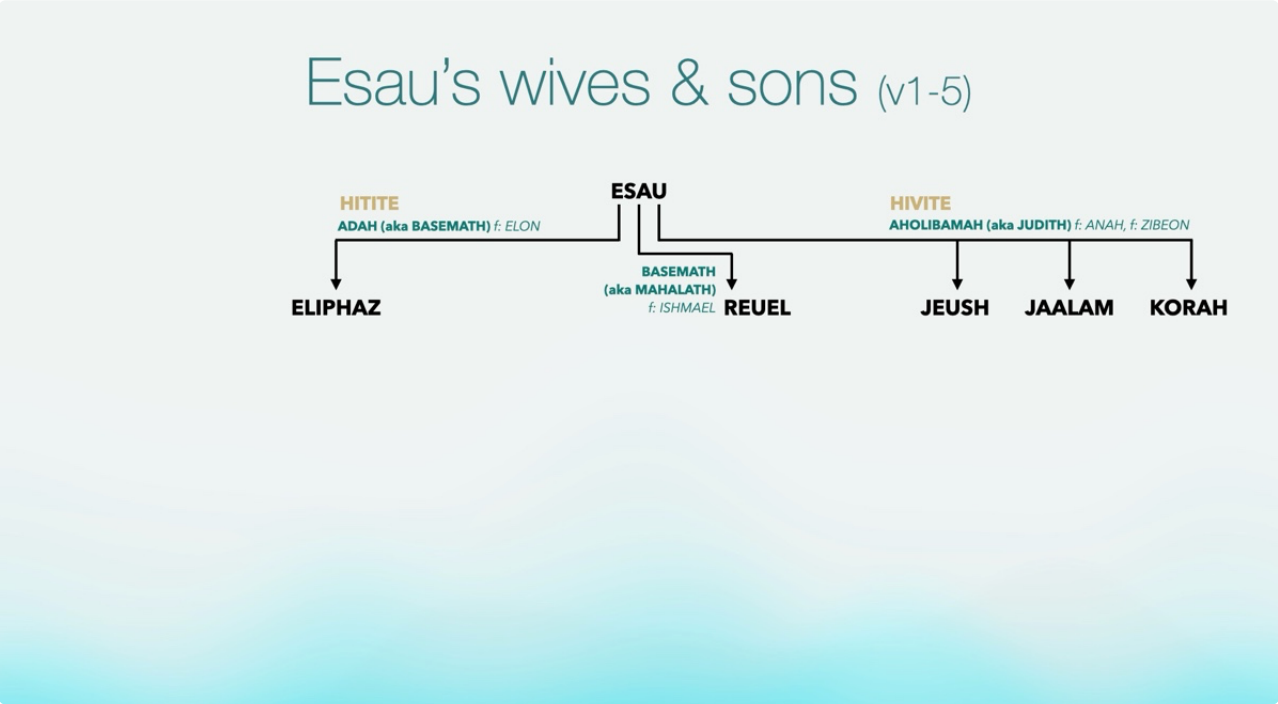
Abraham's extended family



So, to help a little, let's start by looking at Abraham's genealogy that leads to this. First we see Nahor, his son (Terah), and his three sons, Abram (who would become Abraham), and Nahor and Haran. Terah also fathers Sarah, albeit through another woman.

We then see Abraham’s two sons — Ishmael, the son of the flesh, and Isaac, the son of promise, through whom the line through to Jesus would come. Meanwhile Nahor’s own family expands, and his granddaughter is Rebekah, whom Isaac marries (and they, we know, are the parents of Esau and Jacob). While Jacob would marry Leah, and then Rachel on his mother’s side of the family, Esau (for this third wife) marries Mahalath (Ishmael’s daughter) on his father’s side of the family.

And it’s to Esau and his descendants that we now turn our attention:



And as we’ve just read in these opening 5 verses, he had three wives — here called Adah, Basemath and Aholibamah — and 5 sons, called Eliphaz, Reuel, Jeush, Jaalam and Korah. A different Korah to the one we find at Moses time, but the same Eliphaz we read of in the book of Job — Eliphaz the Temanite to be precise, named so after the region his eldest son, Teman, settled in. And not the best of counsel to Job, for sure.

We then read in verses 6-8:

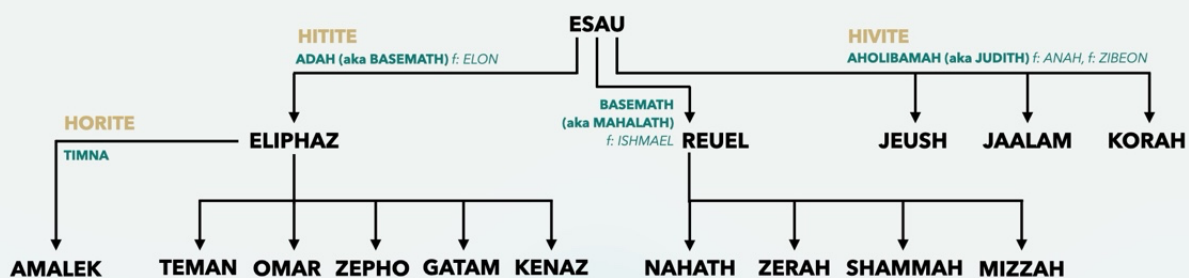
Genesis 36:6-8
 Then Esau took his wives, his sons, his daughters, and all the persons of his household, his cattle and all his animals, and all his goods which he had gained in the land of Canaan, and went to a country away from the presence of his brother Jacob. For their possessions were too great for them to dwell together, and the land where they were strangers could not support them because of their livestock. So Esau dwelt in Mount Seir. Esau is Edom.

Rather reminiscent of the situation with Lot, who parted ways with *Abraham* because the land they were in couldn't support their *combined* livestock, we see Esau now parts company with Jacob — for what, as far as the Bible tells us, will be the last time. And so, as is always the case, there is a separating of those who want to be governed by God (such as Jacob was) and those who want to govern themselves (as we see Esau did). That doesn't mean that God wouldn't bless him at all, for we read in both Deuteronomy and Joshua that *God* gave the land to Esau as a possession, however it also doesn't mean that there were no consequences to Esau's choices as he tried to do things his own way. For we read:

Genesis 36:9-14

And this is the genealogy of Esau the father of the Edomites in Mount Seir. These were the names of Esau's sons: Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, and Reuel the son of Basemath the wife of Esau. And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz. Now Timna was the concubine of Eliphaz, Esau's son, and she bore Amalek to Eliphaz. These were the sons of Adah, Esau's wife. These were the sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. These were the sons of Aholibamah, Esau's wife, the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon. And she bore to Esau: Jeush, Jaalam, and Korah.

Genealogy of Esau (v9-14)



And so we see Esau's first son (Eliphaz) has 5 sons (in Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam and Kenaz), and Esau's second son (Reuel) has four sons (in Nahath, Zerah, Shammah and Mizzah). No sons of Jeush, Jaalam or Korah are recorded, but in verse 12 we're told of a sixth son that Eliphaz had via a concubine of his, called Timna (who presumably is where we get the name for the Timna valley from today). And this son is a man by the name of Amalek.

Does that name sound familiar? If we've read the Old Testament, it should, for we see the Amalakites (his descendants) battled against Israel time and time again. In fact they were the first adversary they faced after crossing the Red Sea, as they left Egypt. A famous battle, in which God gave Israel the victory. But it's a battle that never should have happened, for they were family! Amalek was *Esau's* grandson, as Kohath (*Moses* grandad) was himself *Jacob's* grandson. So why did Amalek come to fight Israel?

Well, when we look at his ancestors, it becomes clear, for the Hitties (whom his father was *one of* through his *mothers* side) were a giant race; descendents of the fallen angels and women on the earth after the flood, that we've looked at in previous chapters, whose very purpose was to wipe out the line through to Christ. And furthermore, his mother herself was a Horite, yet another one of these giant tribes.

That, and the Amalekites' treatment of Israel, is why God was so clear when He later instructed Israel through Moses, saying in Deuteronomy 25:

Deuteronomy 25:17-19

"Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you were coming out of Egypt, how he met you on the way and attacked your rear ranks, all the stragglers at your rear, when you were tired and weary; and he did not fear God. Therefore it shall be, when the LORD your God has given you rest from your enemies all around, in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance, that you will blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. You shall not forget.

That's not Amalek himself, but the nation that was named after him. And Israel *did* battle with them again. We first see that in the book of Judges, when the people of Moab and Ammon (Lot's descendants) joined with the Amalekites to attack Israel. In that case God allowed it because of Israel's disobedience.

But even more significantly, we see God later re-iterate this command from Deuteronomy to King Saul (through the prophet Samuel), telling him to *utterly* destroy the Amalekites — not sparing a *single* person. Yet, in 1 Samuel 15 we read:

1 Samuel 15:9

But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were unwilling to utterly destroy them. But everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed.

That is, Saul did a half job. He went out to battle. He destroyed much of the people, even some of their possessions. But he spared their king, a man by the name Agag, and it seems at least a few others, for that man's descendents became known as the Agagites, one of whom was none other than Haman in the book of Esther, who tried to commit total genocide against the Jews — and got extremely close to success.

Of course, Saul made a monumental mistake there. And we read how Samuel famously rebuked him, saying "to obey is better than sacrifice". **But consider the root of all this** — it was Esau's choice to marry a Canaanite woman (specifically a Hittite), and their son's choice to marry a Canaanite woman (specifically a Horite). Without that, Amalek would not have been born in the first place, nor would have Haman been born. That is, this intermarrying with those who didn't fear the Lord, or worship Him, actually gave rise to nations and individuals that tried to annihilate all of Jacob's descendants! What dire consequences this nearly had, for without the pure line through to Christ, we would not have a Saviour ourselves!

First then, this once more underlines the wholly consistent message the Bible delivers to those desiring to marry, that no Christian should marry an unbeliever. But secondly, it should really serve as stark reminder that our own choices *will* affect how we can talk to our own children. In Esau's case, his error was repeated by his son. And, what could Esau have said to stop that? For he himself had done the same! How could he have said, "*Hey kid, don't marry a Canaanite woman*" without seeming a hypocrite?

Oh, what example our own choices are and will be to our children! Not only regarding relationships — but in *all manner of things*. We need to lead them in righteousness. We need to lead them in Godliness. Indeed, how much more helpful is it as a parent to set an example to our children as someone who never gets drunk, never takes drugs, never steals, never lies, never cheats their way out of doing a hard days work they are being paid for by their employer?! Let us remember that the little eyes around us, are learning from us. Every single minute.

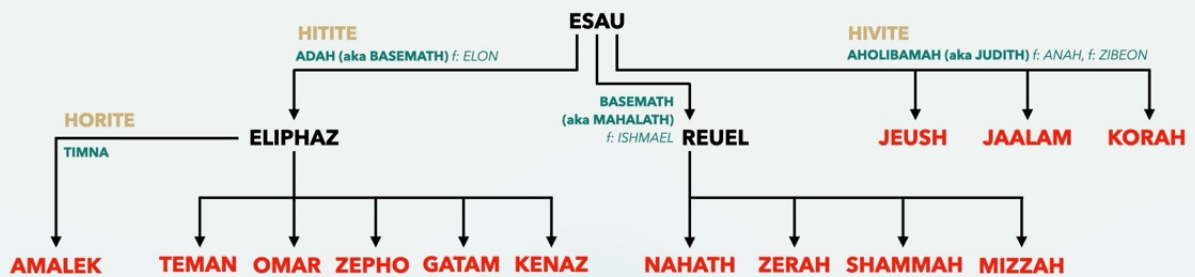
By extension to this, we must all — whether we have children or not — set an example to one another! And those in ministry must take special care to live honourably — that’s why the Biblical requirements for a pastor or elder are not about theology degrees, but how a man lives... what his relationship with God is like, and what his relationship to his fellow man is like.

Now, coming back to this chapter in Genesis, we have seen Esau’s sons and grandsons listed. But next, we see that most of them were given responsibility as chiefs of the land, taking charge of it, and becoming overseers of it — fulfilling what Isaac had said, that Esau would live by the sword. We read:

Genesis 36:15-19

These were the chiefs of the sons of Esau. The sons of Eliphaz, the firstborn son of Esau, were Chief Teman, Chief Omar, Chief Zepho, Chief Kenaz, Chief Korah, Chief Gatam, and Chief Amalek. These were the chiefs of Eliphaz in the land of Edom. They were the sons of Adah. These were the sons of Reuel, Esau’s son: Chief Nahath, Chief Zerah, Chief Shammah, and Chief Mizzah. These were the chiefs of Reuel in the land of Edom. These were the sons of Basemath, Esau’s wife. And these were the sons of Aholibamah, Esau’s wife: Chief Jeush, Chief Jaalam, and Chief Korah. These were the chiefs who descended from Aholibamah, Esau’s wife, the daughter of Anah. These were the sons of Esau, who is Edom, and these were their chiefs.

Chiefs of Edom (v15-19)



So then, three of Esau’s sons, and all of his grandsons listed in those prior verses, become chiefs in the land of Edom (as you can see here in red), overpowering those who were already living there, as recorded in Deuteronomy chapter 2, which says:

Deuteronomy 2:12

The Horites formerly dwelt in Seir, but the descendants of Esau dispossessed them and destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their place, just as Israel did to the land of their possession which the LORD gave them.)

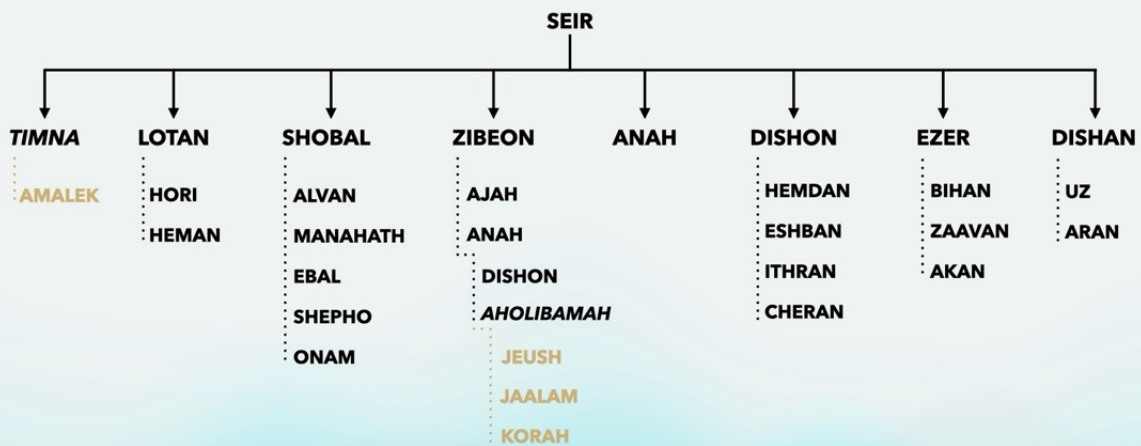
So at least initially, they did a good thing in destroying these giant tribes (and verses 20-22 of that chapter make it clear that God gave Esau's family victory). But, as we've already seen, Esau and his family also intermarried with these ungodly people, which I believe is why we have the next 9 verses written down for us, so we know where they came from, and that they were a real people.

We read:

Genesis 36:20-28

These were the sons of Seir the Horite who inhabited the land: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. These were the chiefs of the Horites, the sons of Seir, in the land of Edom. And the sons of Lotan were Hori and Hemam. Lotan's sister was Timna. These were the sons of Shobal: Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam. These were the sons of Zibeon: both Ajah and Anah. This was the Anah who found the water in the wilderness as he pastured the donkeys of his father Zibeon. These were the children of Anah: Dishon and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah. These were the sons of Dishon: Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran. These were the sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zaaavan, and Akan. These were the sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran.

Sons of Seir (v20-28)



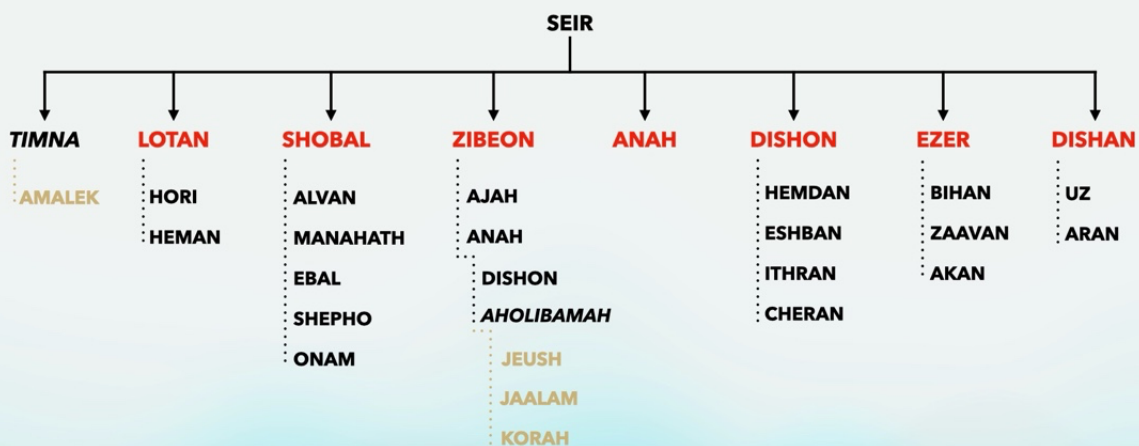
So, then this gives us the context for two individuals that the Edomites marry. We read of Seir’s sons — Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer and Dishan. And then we’re told of Lotan’s own sons. But next, Lotan’s sister, Timna, is mentioned — for it is through her that Amalek is born. We’re then told of Shobal’s sons, and then Zibeon’s sons. But unlike his brothers, we’re also told of his grandchildren Dishon, and Aholibamah — the only other woman mentioned in this list, for she became Esau’s wife, bearing *him* three of his five sons. Of Seir’s son, Anah, there are no children recorded, and Moses completes this list noting the sons of Dishon, Ezer and Dishan.

Now, like Esau (in fact, preceding him) the sons of Seir also set themselves up as chiefs, or rulers of the land — so it seems, Esau had learned this behaviour from them. And we’re told in the following verses that it was all of Seir’s sons that became these chiefs:

Genesis 36:29-30

These were the chiefs of the Horites: Chief Lotan, Chief Shobal, Chief Zibeon, Chief Anah, Chief Dishon, Chief Ezer, and Chief Dishan. These were the chiefs of the Horites, according to their chiefs in the land of Seir.

Chiefs of the Horites (v29-30)



Again, to make clear, all of Seir’s sons were given this responsibility, as you can see here in red.

Having then told us of Esau’s wives, sons, grandsons, how they had intermarried with the people in the land, and followed their pattern of governing it, Moses now tells us that in a short amount of time, kings were appointed over Edom — way earlier than in Israel. We read:

Genesis 36:31-39

Now these were the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the children of Israel: Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom, and the name of his city was Dinhabah. And when Bela died, Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his place. When Jobab died, Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his place. And when Husham died, Hadad the son of Bedad, who attacked Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his place. And the name of his city was Avith. When Hadad died, Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his place. And when Samlah died, Saul of Rehoboth-by-the-River reigned in his place. When Saul died, Baal-Hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his place. And when Baal-Hanan the son of Achbor died, Hadar reigned in his place; and the name of his city was Pau. His wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.

The kings of Edom (v40-43)



And this tells us a couple of things. First, the Edomite nation was a real people, governed by real kings, in real places. None of this is made up — and there are several fascinating archaeological discoveries made in recent times that support the Biblical account.

But second, the Edomite people were quite different to the people of Israel at this time, in at least one regard. For while Israel's very name meant *governed by God*, the people of Edom wanted to govern themselves, and ultimately follow a man's leading, rather than God's leading. And doesn't that say everything about Esau?! He was a man that was so desperate for a bowl of stew, that he sold his birthright. He was so upset with Jacob, that he was willing to take matters into his own hands and kill him (which is why Jacob needed to flee home). And he was a man who chose not *one* wife, but *two*, *both* of whom grieved his parents. Yes, he had good moments — such as the grace he showed to Jacob as they were reunited — but ultimately he was a man who did what he wanted.

Now, again, this should remind us of our responsibilities. But lest, you think — *“what hope have I got to influence others given all the mistakes I’ve made?!”* — look at the examples of David, or of the apostles Peter and Paul. These were men who made big mistakes — yet the Lord did a great work in them, and *through* them. What I want you to go away with today isn’t any feeling that *you’re* not good enough, but that *what* isn’t good enough, is not caring about the legacy you leave.

Now then, as we close out this chapter, we read another list of chiefs — of those with responsibility. This time described as the chiefs of Esau, rather than the chiefs of Edom. But since those are the same things, why do we have two different lists? Because the first, in verses 15-19, are listed by the sons or grandsons of Esau. But here in the second, the chiefs are listed by geography, by the places that they ruled. We read:

Genesis 36:40-43

And these were the names of the chiefs of Esau, according to their families and their places, by their names: Chief Timnah, Chief Alvah, Chief Jetheth, Chief Aholibamah, Chief Elah, Chief Pinon, Chief Kenaz, Chief Teman, Chief Mibzar, Chief Magdiel, and Chief Iram. These were the chiefs of Edom, according to their dwelling places in the land of their possession. Esau was the father of the Edomites.

And again, this land that they ruled in was mostly what we know as southern Jordan today, where significant archaeological evidence of the Edomites is found.

Now, this might be the end of the chapter, but it certainly wasn’t the end of the Edomites. Of course, I’ve already spoken of Amalek and his descendants — but the wider group of people known as the Edomites come up several times throughout the rest of the Bible. In fact, the prophecy of Obadiah is directly against the nation of Edom, for their treatment of Israel. First for refusing to allow Israel safe passage through their territory as they came out of Egypt, as we read in the book of Numbers:

Numbers 20:14-20

Now Moses sent messengers from Kadesh to the king of Edom. “Thus says your brother Israel: ‘You know all the hardship that has befallen us, how our fathers went down to Egypt, and we dwelt in Egypt a long time, and the Egyptians afflicted us and our fathers. When we cried out to the LORD, He heard our voice and sent the Angel and brought us up out of Egypt; now here we are in Kadesh, a city on the edge of your border. Please let us pass through your country. We will not pass through fields or vineyards, nor will we drink water from wells; we will go along the King’s Highway; we will not turn aside to the right hand or to the left until we have passed through your territory.’ ” Then Edom said to him, “You shall not pass through my land, lest I come out against you with the sword.” So the children of Israel said to him, “We will go by the Highway, and if I or my livestock drink any of your water, then I will pay for it; let me only pass through on foot, nothing more.” Then he said, “You shall not pass through.” So Edom came out against them with many men and with a strong hand. Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his territory; so Israel turned away from him.

That was indeed terrible treatment of what was ultimately their family.

Then, much later on, after Israel had settled in the promised land, and had many kings themselves, we see how Israel turned away from the Lord and were judged by Him, being taken into captivity in Babylon. But as that happened, the people of Edom, rather than coming to their rescue or even offering them refuge, actually acted as their enemies, taking joy in their captivity, and plundering the land. And for both those moments of ill treatment, Edom itself was judged — God saying to them in advance through Obadiah:

Obadiah 1:2-4

"Behold, I will make you small among the nations; You shall be greatly despised. The pride of your heart has deceived you, You who dwell in the clefts of the rock, Whose habitation is high; You who say in your heart, 'Who will bring me down to the ground?' Though you ascend as high as the eagle, And though you set your nest among the stars, From there I will bring you down," says the LORD.

This also makes sense of what we read in Malachi chapter 1, that "...Jacob I have loved; But Esau I have hated". First, God had chosen Israel and specifically called them out as a nation, giving preference to them, that there might be a line through to the Messiah. But second, Esau or Edom, had treated Israel so poorly, that God had to judge them. What a sad thing to see, how a nation took after a man who failed to live right before God.

J Vernon McGee, summed this up well, saying *"The pride of their heart was a declaration of independence, a soul that says it can live without God and does not have a need for God. That is Esau."* And I would add, let that not be us!

Application questions

This might be a chapter with many names, genealogies and lists of those who ruled — but let us not miss what we can learn from it. This week, in light of what we've looked at this morning, ask yourself these two questions:

- What impact is your personal example having on your family, and those around you?
 - How are your decisions affecting those in your church family?
- What is influencing you? Your relationships? Your screen time? Your friends?
 - It may not be your relationship or marriage, but it may be many other things

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