

The Family Line of Esau

In the previous topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain that the resurrection is taught in both the Old Testament and New Testament. In fact, that hope was also taught by those who were not descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Job said, in Job 19:25-27, “For I know *that* my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this *I know*, that in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. *How* my heart yearns within me!” That hope gives those who follow the Lord peace as they face death. In this topic, we will see that we are given the family line of Esau.

In Genesis 36:1-8, we read, “Now this *is* the genealogy of Esau, who is Edom. 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. 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. 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.” Here, we see the children that were born to Esau while he was still in the land of Canaan.

Esau moved from Canaan to Mount Seir during the time that Jacob was in Haran. Genesis 32:3 says, “Then Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother in the land of Seir, the country of Edom.” Jacob also promised Esau that he would visit him in Seir. Genesis 33:14 says, “...Please let my lord go on ahead before his servant. I will lead on slowly at a pace which the livestock that go before me, and the children, are able to endure, until I come to my lord in Seir.” In this verse, we see that Jacob promised he would come to Mount Seir to visit Esau sometime in the future. Then, Genesis 33:16 adds, “So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir.” The Bible does not record when Jacob made one or more visits to Esau in Seir. However, we saw in the previous topic that Esau came to Hebron at the time of the death of Isaac, so they saw one another again at that time.

The north edge of the land of Edom begins at the south end of the Salt Sea (today the Dead Sea). That meant that the north edge of the land of Edom was only about 30 miles from the city of Hebron. We see that the reason Esau had moved to Edom was due to the fact that their flocks were so large it would have been impossible for them to find adequate food for all of their cattle and sheep if they lived close together. Both Jacob and Esau had accumulated a large amount of animals and other possessions. Just the gift of animals Jacob had given to Esau showed that because the Lord had blessed Jacob, he had gained many animals. Genesis 32:13-15 says, “So he lodged there that same night, and took what came to his hand as a present for Esau his brother: two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams,

thirty milk camels with their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten foals.” This gift gave Esau five hundred and eighty additional animals. To give that many animals showed that the Lord had blessed Jacob with a huge number of animals.

We go on to read about the family of Esau. Genesis 36:9-19 says, “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 Basemath, Esau’s wife.

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. 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.” We see a key statement about Esau in these verses. We see that he became the father of the Edomites, and they settled in Mount Seir.

Mount Seir is actually a range of mountains that extends from the area to the south and east of the Salt Sea to what today is called the Gulf of Aqaba. That area became known as Edom. God gave that area to Esau and his descendants, as Deuteronomy 2:4-5 says, “And command the people, saying, ‘You *are about to* pass through the territory of your brethren, the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir; and they will be afraid of you. Therefore watch yourselves carefully. Do not meddle with them, for I will not give you *any* of their land, no, not so much as one footstep, because I have given Mount Seir to Esau *as a possession.*’” Later, Joshua told the people of Israel, in Joshua 24:4-5, “To Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. To Esau I gave the mountains of Seir to possess, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt. Also I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt, according to what I did among them. Afterward I brought you out.” These two statements were made to Israel when Israel was ready to pass through Edom on the way from Egypt to Israel and later when Joshua came to the end of his life.

Genesis 36:20-30 says, “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, Zaavan, and Akan. These *were* the sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran. 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.” In these verses, we see that Seir was the name of the person and his descendants who had lived in that area before Esau and his family arrived. We see that they were considered Horites. The name “Horite” originally meant *cave dweller*. These people were probably given that name when they first moved into that region because of the fact that they lived in caves rather than immediately building houses. We are given a list of their leaders.

Finally, we are given a list of the kings who ruled the land of Edom before there were any kings in the land of Israel. From the time Esau moved to that area and it became known as Edom, until the time Saul became the first king of Israel, was a period of about eight hundred years. This included a time period of more than four hundred years in which the nation of Israel developed from the family of Jacob to a nation of more than two million people. In addition, it also included the forty years Israel was in the wilderness plus the period of time which included the events recorded in the books of Joshua and Judges.

Genesis 36:31-43 says, “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. 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.” Here, we see that Esau was the father of Edom so the names of the kings during this period would have been descendants of Esau. This gives a summary of the family of Esau and the primary way we will learn more about his descendants will be when they have conflict with Israel and are mentioned in different places throughout the Old Testament.

We want to help our physical and spiritual children be able to understand and explain that when the name of the nation of Edom appears in other passages in the Old Testament it refers to the nation that descended from Esau. This is also a part of the fulfillment of the prophecy made to Abraham that he would be the father of many nations. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children to understand and explain these things.