

Genesis 36 – To Gain The World But Lose Your Soul?

NOTE: We are now returning to the main storyline of Genesis. Back to the lines of the seeds. This begins another “toledoth” statement in Genesis.

I. The Blessing of Family And Prosperity (1-8)

A. Esau’s Family (1-5)

1. Esau is called Edom

- a. Genesis makes sure we are reminded that Esau is also named Edom
- b. In addition to the significance of his people being named Edomites, this reminds us that Esau sold his birthright
 - i. Gen. 25:30 - And Esau said to Jacob, “Let me eat some of that red stew, for I am exhausted!” (Therefore his name was called Edom.)

2. Esau’s Wives (2-3)

- a. Esau’s Three Canaanite Wives are named
- b. “took wives from the Canaanites” – the same phrase used in 28:1, 6 – this reminds us of Isaac and Rebecca’s disapproval of his wives
- c. Adah, Oholibamah, Basemath

3. Esau’s Sons (4-5)

B. Esau’s Prosperity (6-8)

1. Esau and his family move permanently to Seir

- a. Esau leaves the promised land voluntarily after Isaac’s death
 - i. This leaves Jacob alone to inherit the promised land
 - ii. This shows Esau continues to disregard his birthright which he sold
- b. Esau probably traveled between Seir and his homeland while Isaac was alive and only after his death moved permanently

2. Esau moves permanently because of his prosperity

- a. God has blessed Esau with prosperity just like Jacob
- b. God has grown Esau’s herds and servants so that the land won’t sustain both he and Jacob

II. The Blessing of Descendants (9-14)

A. Esau is blessed with a multitude of descendants

- 1. The sons are mentioned again (with grandsons) to show that Esau’s family grows to become the Edomites

B. Esau is given as many descendants as Jacob

- 1. Some say 12 (not counting the concubines child) – others say 13
- 2. Esau is blessed because he also is Isaac’s son
- 3. This is part of the promise that Abraham would be the father of many nations

III. The Blessing of A Nation (15-19)

A. Notice The Names Are The Same

- 1. Genesis lists the same names to show that Esau’s descendants became chiefs of great clans in Edom

B. Demonstrates The Building of Clans

1. Esau didn't just have a big family – they grew into a nation
2. Esau's lineage was that of clan leaders in a mighty nation

IV. The Blessing of Conquest (20-30)

A. The List of Seir's Descendants – these are the people who live in Seir

B. Why is this list here?

1. These are the tribes of people that Esau conquered at Seir
 - a. Deut. 2:12 - The Horites also lived in Seir formerly, but the people of Esau dispossessed them and destroyed them from before them and settled in their place, as Israel did to the land of their possession, which the Lord gave to them.)
2. Esau is blessed with victory over the people of the land of Seir
 - a. He was not just blessed with descendants and a nation
 - b. He was given victory to conquer

V. The Blessing of Political Rule (31-39)

A. The list of Kings over Edom is given

B. The Edomites have kings long before Israel does

VI. The Blessing of Territory (40-43)

A. The Edomites are listed according to their "dwelling places"

B. The Edomites build and prosper in cities long before Israel

From all we see, Esau prospered much more, and much faster than Israel. If you were looking from the outside, you would say that Esau was doing much better. Esau prospered in every single worldly way. He lacked absolutely nothing. And Israel's suffering is just beginning. There will be a famine and betrayal, Israel will be forced into Egypt which will inevitably lead to slavery. By all accounts, Esau looks like he has a much better life. But Esau does not have the promise of God. Esau has gained the whole world but that is all that he has.