

## Genesis (2011) 36

- Having reached the end of Isaac's toledot, we reach an interlude with Chapter 36
  - The next toledot we will study will be the toledot of Jacob
    - Specifically, we'll study the story of his children
    - The book of Genesis contains 10 toledots, or genealogies, altogether
    - This chapter gives us the ninth toledot
  - Let's remember that the story of Genesis isn't concerned with telling an interesting story or documenting the lives of interesting people
    - It is a very interesting story and it does revolve around some very interesting people
    - But, Genesis is a story of Man's creation and fall, and God's response to that fall
      - The response of God was to promise a Seed Who would come into the world to save Creation from the fall
      - That Seed is Jesus Christ
    - So in Genesis we're focused on the stories of those who are connected in some way to God's fulfillment of His promise
      - Obviously, the patriarchs are important to the fulfillment of that promise
      - Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are men who produce the nation of Israel
      - And Israel will be the people to bring the Messiah into the world
- With Abraham and Isaac, Moses focused on which of two possible heirs received the seed promise
  - In the case of Abraham, Isaac received the promise and in the case of Isaac, Jacob received the promise

- But in both cases, Moses allotted a chapter to bringing to an end the story of the rejected son
- Chapter 25 was devoted to Ishmael
- And this chapter is devoted to Esau
- After these chapters are complete, neither Ishmael nor Esau appears in Moses' narrative again
- But the people of Ishmael, that is the Arabs, and the people of Esau, the Edomites, do feature prominently in Israel's history
  - So these chapters help us connect the dots between the events of the patriarch's lives, and later events in the nation
- So Chapter 36 is the generations of Esau
  - As we study the scripture, we are likely tempted to skip over a chapter like Chapter 36
    - That's understandable, since the chapter doesn't contain much of a narrative
    - It reads more like a laundry list
  - This is an opportunity for us to appreciate the difference between reading the Bible and studying the Bible
    - Reading the Bible is "leaning back" activity, and in those times we might skip a genealogy chapter for good reason
    - Studying the Bible is "leaning forward" behavior, when we pick up pen and paper (or computer) and dig deep into the word
  - Today we're going to take today to study Chapter 36 because there are important issues and people connected with it
    - The chapter is actually two genealogies in three parts
    - The first genealogy runs from vs.1-8
      - It describes the wives and sons of Esau born while he lived in the land of Canaan
    - The second genealogy begins in v.9 and runs to the end of the chapter
      - It comes in two parts

- The first part is the sons and grandsons of Esau born outside the land while he lived in Edom, southern Jordan
- The final part describes the various chiefs or leaders of the clan of Edomites

[Gen. 36:1](#) Now these are the records of the generations of Esau (that is, Edom).

[Gen. 36:2](#) Esau took his wives from the daughters of Canaan: Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Oholibamah the daughter of Anah and the granddaughter of Zibeon the Hivite;

[Gen. 36:3](#) also Basemath, Ishmael's daughter, the sister of Nebaioth.

[Gen. 36:4](#) Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau, and Basemath bore Reuel,

[Gen. 36:5](#) and Oholibamah bore Jeush and Jalam and Korah. These are the sons of Esau who were born to him in the land of Canaan.

[Gen. 36:6](#) Then Esau took his wives and his sons and his daughters and all his household, and his livestock and all his cattle and all his goods which he had acquired in the land of Canaan, and went to another land away from his brother Jacob.

[Gen. 36:7](#) For their property had become too great for them to live together, and the land where they sojourned could not sustain them because of their livestock.

[Gen. 36:8](#) So Esau lived in the hill country of Seir; Esau is Edom.

- The genealogy of Esau begins with his three wives
  - Immediately we're reminded of his choice to take wives of the Canaanites, a cursed people
    - While Esau was wrong simply to take multiple wives, we must remember that his brother took two wives as well (plus concubines)
    - Multiple marriages were wrong for both men, but Esau's chief sin was to live in unbelief
      - He held no regard for the promises of God, including the seed promise
      - He held no regard for the Lord's command not to take wives from the Canaanites
      - He was a godless man
  - If you are one to notice details, you may have recognized that Esau's three wives have different names
    - Confusing matters still further, the name changes involve one name moving from one wife to another

- Originally, Esau had Basemath, Judith, and Mahalath
- Now Esau's wives are called (in the same order) Adah, Oholibamah, Basemath
  - Adah means ornament, while her original name of Basemath meant perfumed
  - Oholibamah means the tent of the high place, which is a place of idol worship, while her original name Judith meant praiseworthy
  - Finally, Mahalath becomes Basemath
- After Esau had established his family in the land, he left Canaan and went to settle in the hill country of Seir, which becomes Edom
  - His livestock had become so numerous, he could no longer live alongside his brother Jacob
    - We remember that as Jacob re-entered the land, he met Esau and discovered that Esau was quite wealthy himself
    - Esau lived in the south of the land but as Jacob arrived, he moved down to Seir to find enough land for both of them
  - It's not merely happenstance that Esau chose to move outside the land promised to Jacob
    - Take note that though almost all of Jacob's sons were born outside the land, the Lord was faithful to bring Jacob's family back into the land
    - Meanwhile, Esau's sons were all born inside the land
      - Nevertheless, Esau despised the birthright and was godless, so he eventually leaves the promised land
      - For Esau, every piece of land was equally valuable so long as it met his needs
  - Moses reminds us that the the inheritance and destinies of a man of faith and a man of the world have nothing in common
    - God told Abraham concerning Isaac and Ishmael:

[Gen. 21:10](#) Therefore she said to Abraham, “Drive out this maid and her son, for the son of this maid shall not be an heir with my son Isaac.”

[Gen. 21:11](#) The matter distressed Abraham greatly because of his son.

[Gen. 21:12](#) But God said to Abraham, “Do not be distressed because of the lad and your maid; whatever Sarah tells you, listen to her, for through Isaac your descendants shall be named.

[Gen. 21:13](#) “And of the son of the maid I will make a nation also, because he is your descendant.”

- Likewise, God has separated Jacob and Esau
  - They were already separated spiritually
  - And they will be separated in eternity
  - And now they are separated physically
- If the inheritance that Jacob will receive is not to appear until the Kingdom of Christ arrives, what difference does it make whether Esau lives in Canaan?
  - Canaan is a picture of the promised land of the kingdom
  - And God pushes both Ishmael and Esau out of the land to emphasize that the ungodly share nothing with God’s children
- God makes distinctions between His children and the unredeemed in the world
  - But false teachers and ungodly men will tell you that this distinction will commonly appear in the form of wealth
  - They will lie to you telling you that God intends believers to be wealthy
  - They point to the way God blesses believers in the Bible at times, like Abraham and Jacob
  - And then they tell us that if we aren’t wealthy too, then God must be displeased with us
- But the stories of Ishmael and Esau gives us perfect examples to disprove such false teaching
  - Both Ishmael and Esau were wealthy just like Isaac and Jacob

- In fact, in Genesis 21:13, we read that God promised to make Ishmael a nation
      - God made that promise to Abraham before he had any children
      - And even though Abraham did the wrong thing to produce Ishmael, nevertheless God blessed Ishmael as promised
  - The truth is, God blesses both believer and unbeliever with material provision as He chooses, to suit his purposes
    - Many unbelievers are wealthy
    - In fact, I bet wealthy people are, more often not, unbelievers
    - But remember that while they may be rich in earthly terms, they are destitute in eternity
    - While we may entertain sinful desires for more of this world, we should remember we have an inheritance in heaven beyond anything we could find on earth
- So Esau moved about 80-100 miles south-southeast into Seir
  - Originally, Esau's family probably arrived peacefully
    - But inevitably disputes arose with the people living in the land
    - And then Esau destroyed the inhabitants of Seir by force as well as by intermarriage

**Deut. 2:12** The Horites formerly lived in Seir, but the sons of Esau dispossessed them and destroyed them from before them and settled in their place, just as Israel did to the land of their possession which the LORD gave to them.)

- God ensures that Esau finds a home in Edom, just as He ensured Jacob's family would find their home in Canaan
  - Throughout the rest of scripture, the place of Edom becomes synonymous with evil, ungodly, sinful people
  - Just as Canaan becomes a picture of the Promised Land, Edom becomes a picture of Hell and judgment for the unbeliever

- Even more importantly, the place of Edom is initially a tormentor of Israel
  - The people of Israel often fight the Edomites
  - In the time of Jesus, the family of Herod, who ruled over and terrorized the Jews, were decedents of the Edomites
    - But God promises that one day Israel will turn the tables on the Edomites
    - The Messiah will fight for Israel and crush Edom forever

[Num. 24:15](#) He took up his discourse and said,

“The oracle of Balaam the son of Beor,  
And the oracle of the man whose eye is opened,

[Num. 24:16](#) The oracle of him who hears the words of God,

And knows the knowledge of the Most High,  
Who sees the vision of the Almighty,  
Falling down, yet having his eyes uncovered.

[Num. 24:17](#) “I see him, but not now;

I behold him, but not near;  
A star shall come forth from Jacob,  
A scepter shall rise from Israel,  
And shall crush through the forehead of Moab,  
And tear down all the sons of Sheth.

[Num. 24:18](#) “Edom shall be a possession,

Seir, its enemies, also will be a possession,  
While Israel performs valiantly.

[Num. 24:19](#) “One from Jacob shall have dominion,  
And will destroy the remnant from the city.”

- Therefore, Esau’s residence in Seir, and his people’s temporary life in Edom, becomes a picture God uses in scripture
  - Esau himself pictures the unbeliever
    - Esau’s family pictures the unbelieving, sinful world that hates God’s word and God’s people
    - Edomites persecute the Jews, picturing the way the enemy uses unbelievers to attack God and God’s people
  - God permits these people to live side by side with His children for reasons that fit His purpose in creation

- They serve to chastise the people of Israel when they sin
- They become antagonists for Israel to conquer when God wishes to show His mighty power in Israel
- But one day, the Lord will have a final victory over the ungodly in the world
  - And the destruction of Edom will become a final picture of Christ's triumphant return at His Second Coming

**Is. 63:1** Who is this who comes from Edom,  
 With garments of glowing colors from Bozrah,  
 This One who is majestic in His apparel,  
 Marching in the greatness of His strength?  
 "It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save."

**Is. 63:2** Why is Your apparel red,  
 And Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press?

**Is. 63:3** "I have trodden the wine trough alone,  
 And from the peoples there was no man with Me.  
 I also trod them in My anger  
 And trampled them in My wrath;  
 And their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments,  
 And I stained all My raiment.

**Is. 63:4** "For the day of vengeance was in My heart,  
 And My year of redemption has come.

- Israel has always understood that the destruction of Edom was a necessary precursor to the arrival of their promised King and Kingdom
  - The Psalmist said as much in his psalm remembering the suffering of Israel in the Babylonian captivity

**Psa. 137:1** By the rivers of Babylon,  
 There we sat down and wept,  
 When we remembered Zion.

**Psa. 137:2** Upon the willows in the midst of it  
 We hung our harps.

**Psa. 137:3** For there our captors demanded of us songs,  
 And our tormentors mirth, saying,  
 "Sing us one of the songs of Zion."

**Psa. 137:4** How can we sing the LORD'S song  
 In a foreign land?

**Psa. 137:5** If I forget you, O Jerusalem,

May my right hand forget her skill.

[Psa. 137:6](#) May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth  
If I do not remember you,  
If I do not exalt Jerusalem  
Above my chief joy.

[Psa. 137:7](#) Remember, O LORD, against the sons of Edom  
The day of Jerusalem,  
Who said, "Raze it, raze it  
To its very foundation."

[Psa. 137:8](#) O daughter of Babylon, you devastated one,  
How blessed will be the one who repays you  
With the recompense with which you have repaid us.

[Psa. 137:9](#) How blessed will be the one who seizes and dashes your little ones  
Against the rock.

- The rest of the chapter tells the genealogy of Esau after he leaves the land
  - He has more sons and these sons become chiefs and leaders in Edom
  - To finish the chapter, we'll read through the list of the sons of Esau, and note a few interesting names along the way

[Gen. 36:10](#) These are the names of Esau's sons: Eliphaz the son of Esau's wife Adah, Reuel the son of Esau's wife Basemath.

[Gen. 36:11](#) The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho and Gatam and Kenaz.

[Gen. 36:12](#) Timna was a concubine of Esau's son Eliphaz and she bore Amalek to Eliphaz. These are the sons of Esau's wife Adah.

[Gen. 36:13](#) These are the sons of Reuel: Nahath and Zerah, Shammah and Mizzah. These were the sons of Esau's wife Basemath.

[Gen. 36:14](#) These were the sons of Esau's wife Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah and the granddaughter of Zibeon: she bore to Esau, Jeush and Jalam and Korah.

- One of Esau's sons is Eliphaz, and his son is Teman
  - Teman was father of the Temanites
    - One of Job's counselors was Eliphaz, the Temanite
    - The story of Job happened in this area and probably around the time of Genesis 36
  - One of Esau's descendants was Amalek

- He is father of the Amalekites, who settled in the Sinai and the Negev desert in southern Israel
- These people were the first people to attack Israel after they settled in the land
- They later defeated and ruled over the nation of Israel in the time of Judges
  - Saul defeated them
  - David attacked them
  - And they were finally exterminated under Hezekiah
- This completes the list of Esau's descendants
  - In this list you find a total of 13 tribes, just as in Israel
  - Israel has 12 tribes until Joseph's sons
- Now we read a marathon of names to end the chapter, looking at the chiefs or leaders of Esau's family

**Gen. 36:15** These are the chiefs of the sons of Esau. The sons of Eliphaz, the firstborn of Esau, are chief Teman, chief Omar, chief Zepho, chief Kenaz,

**Gen. 36:16** chief Korah, chief Gatam, chief Amalek. These are the chiefs descended from Eliphaz in the land of Edom; these are the sons of Adah.

**Gen. 36:17** These are the sons of Reuel, Esau's son: chief Nahath, chief Zerah, chief Shammah, chief Mizzah. These are the chiefs descended from Reuel in the land of Edom; these are the sons of Esau's wife Basemath.

**Gen. 36:18** These are the sons of Esau's wife Oholibamah: chief Jeush, chief Jalam, chief Korah. These are the chiefs descended from Esau's wife Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah.

**Gen. 36:19** These are the sons of Esau (that is, Edom), and these are their chiefs.

- The clans were lead by chiefs because initially the people were not a nation in the land of Edom
  - Esau's family were tribes with chiefs over a tribe
- The next part of the chapter deals with the genealogy of the Horites, the native peoples of Seir that Esau conquered

**Gen. 36:20** These are the sons of Seir the Horite, the inhabitants of the land: Lotan and Shobal and Zibeon and Anah,

[Gen. 36:21](#) and Dishon and Ezer and Dishan. These are the chiefs descended from the Horites, the sons of Seir in the land of Edom.

[Gen. 36:22](#) The sons of Lotan were Hori and Hemam; and Lotan's sister was Timna.

[Gen. 36:23](#) These are the sons of Shobal: Alvan and Manahath and Ebal, Shepho and Onam.

[Gen. 36:24](#) These are the sons of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah – he is the Anah who found the hot springs in the wilderness when he was pasturing the donkeys of his father Zibeon.

[Gen. 36:25](#) These are the children of Anah: Dishon, and Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah.

[Gen. 36:26](#) These are the sons of Dishon: Hemdan and Eshban and Ithran and Cheran.

[Gen. 36:27](#) These are the sons of Ezer: Bilhan and Zaavan and Akan.

[Gen. 36:28](#) These are the sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran.

[Gen. 36:29](#) These are the chiefs descended from the Horites: chief Lotan, chief Shobal, chief Zibeon, chief Anah,

[Gen. 36:30](#) chief Dishon, chief Ezer, chief Dishan. These are the chiefs descended from the Horites, according to their various chiefs in the land of Seir.

- The Horites were cave-dwellers (the name means cave-dweller)
  - They lacked fortified cities, and so they were relatively easy for Esau to defeat
  - He then intermarried with them and in the uniting of Esau and the Horites, a nation of Edom was formed
    - Esau's family controlled that land
    - Prior to that merger, the people of Seir were ruled by chiefs over clans much like Esau's family
    - The land of Seir was not a single nation but a region of individual clans
- After Esau conquered the people of Seir, the nation formed with kings ruling over all the people

[Gen. 36:31](#) Now these are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the sons of Israel.

[Gen. 36:32](#) Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom, and the name of his city was Dinhabah.

[Gen. 36:33](#) Then Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah became king in his place.

[Gen. 36:34](#) Then Jobab died, and Husham of the land of the Temanites became king in his place.

[Gen. 36:35](#) Then Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who defeated Midian in the field of Moab, became king in his place; and the name of his city was Avith.

[Gen. 36:36](#) Then Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah became king in his place.

[Gen. 36:37](#) Then Samlah died, and Shaul of Rehoboth on the Euphrates River became king in his place.

[Gen. 36:38](#) Then Shaul died, and Baal-hanan the son of Achbor became king in his place.

[Gen. 36:39](#) Then Baal-hanan the son of Achbor died, and Hadar became king in his place; and the name of his city was Pau; and his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, daughter of Mezahab.

[Gen. 36:40](#) Now these are the names of the chiefs descended from Esau, according to their families and their localities, by their names: chief Timna, chief Alvah, chief Jetheth,

[Gen. 36:41](#) chief Oholibamah, chief Elah, chief Pinon,

[Gen. 36:42](#) chief Kenaz, chief Teman, chief Mibzar,

[Gen. 36:43](#) chief Magdiel, chief Iram. These are the chiefs of Edom (that is, Esau, the father of the Edomites), according to their habitations in the land of their possession.

- These last verses become a closing record to finish the discussion of Esau and his family
  - It's likely that this list ends with those who were in power in Edom at the time Moses was writing Genesis
    - It's interesting that the kings didn't appear to come from a single family dynasty, like in Egypt
    - Instead, the throne moved around from family to family, perhaps based on military power or an election
  - Edom is never said to have a capital city because the throne moved from tribe to tribe
  - Also, it's clear toward the end that the Canaanite pagan god Baal had made his influence known
    - One of the last kings, Baal-hanan, his name means that Baal is gracious
    - And of the 81 names in the list, only two have the name of God (el) in their name
    - Further confirmation of the ungodly nature of Esau's posterity
- Finally, it's interesting that Moses mentions that Edom had kings before Israel
  - Remember, when Moses wrote this book, Israel had never had a king nor sought for a king
    - So how did Moses know to say that Edom had kings before Israel?
    - Simply, the Holy Spirit inspired Moses

- But we also know that God had promised to Jacob that his family would have kings
  - So Moses would only need to know the promise given to Jacob to understand that one day Israel would have kings
  - Even if that day were still in the future
- Next week, we turn our attention to the lives of Jacob's sons, and Judah and Joseph in particular.
  - The study of Joseph is probably one of the most famous and powerful stories recorded in all of Scripture
    - Through Joseph we see a clear picture of Christ, as many have taught
    - A man of supreme patience and trust in God
  - But we also see an even clearer picture of God's power and sovereignty, of His unchangeable purpose and His love
    - His wisdom and power to keep His promises, using even the sin of men to accomplish His will
    - With this story, we enter the home stretch in the book of Genesis