

Pentwater Bible Church

Generations of Esau Genesis Message Seventy Genesis 36: 1 - 37: 1



Joseph's Brothers Sell Him into Captivity; Konstantin Flavitsky 1855

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Dentwater Bible Church

Genesis Message Seventy

The Generations of Esau

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Daniel E. Woodhead

Review:

JACOB RETURNS TO BETHEL

Genesis 35: 1-15

The Lord God now appeared to Jacob for a fourth direct revelation. He told him to , *Arise, go up to Beth-el, and dwell there.* He also told him to *make there an altar unto God.* It was there that he fled from Esau and where the Abrahamic Covenant was confirmed to him. Jacob had been in Shechem for ten years. This was not how he should have complied with the solemn vow he made to God (Genesis 28: 20-22) to return to Bethel his father's home. The tragic incident with Dinah's rape was probably the consequence of his failure to accommodate his debt to God (Deuteronomy 23: 21).

Apparently since he was in Shechem for so long he had no intention of going the fifteen miles to Bethel to fulfill his vow to Jehovah God. Perhaps Jacob still did not realize that the situation with Dinah was the divine retribution for his failure to keep his vow. The God of the universe did not forget and made the situation at Shechem such that he could no longer stay there. God was now commanding him to go and build an altar in Bethel to Him. Periodically the Patriarchs would build altars on their own to God. This time however, God was issuing a direct commandment for Jacob to do so. Because of Jacob's response it appears that he is now getting the full impact of God's righteousness and his responsibility to conform to His commands. He says to the entire entourage with him, *"Put away the foreign gods that are among you, and purify yourselves, and change your garments."* He may or may not have known of the teraphim that Rebecca had stolen from Laban but the Canaanite slaves and servants from Shechem certainly had them. The people who came with him from Haran (Genesis 30: 43) probably had them too. Jacob knew that he must rid his camp of any idols that could induce idol worship. God does not permit any rival gods (Exodus 20: 3). The burial of the idols because they were dead, was followed by a ritual purification through the washing of the body (Mikveh). This was a sign of the purification of the heart from the defilement of idolatry. They also put on clean and festal clothes, as a symbol of the sanctification and lifting of the heart to the Lord. It is worthy to note they left the idols and earrings representing them at Shechem. Earrings in themselves are not wrong. These were used for magical purposes and therein lies the problem. They had to be put away (Hosea 2: 13). In a like manner of the Mikveh when a New Testament person accepts Christ and becomes a believer he or she must be baptized as a outward sign expressing their inward regeneration for all to see.

Remembering what Simeon and Levi did to the men of Shechem and the fear Jacob had of reprisal from the neighboring cities God gave him divine protection for the trip to Bethel (*they journeyed: and a terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob*).

Jacob arrived at Bethel, which is also called Luz. He built an altar and named the place *El-beth-el* which means “The God of the House of God.”

Genesis 35: 8 records the death of Deborah who was Rebecca’s nurse (Genesis 24: 59). She had previously been a life-long wet-nurse to Rebecca, which means that Rebecca had died while Jacob was working for Laban in Haran. She probably nursed Esau and Jacob as infants then came to him in Shechem after Rebecca’s death. Deborah was about one hundred eighty years old at death. The name of the place of her burial was Allon-Bacuth, which means “The Oak of Weeping.” The mourning at her death, and including it in the text, are evidence that she must have been a faithful and highly esteemed servant in Jacob’s house.

In verse nine another divine appearance to Jacob occurs which is the second appearance of Jehovah God to Jacob since he came from Paddan-Aram. The purpose was to again reconfirm the Abrahamic Covenant through Jacob for a second time. Thirty years before He appeared to him before his journey to Paddan-Aram in a dream. This time it was in daylight and visible as the Shekinah Glory (*And God went up from him*). He identifies Himself as El-Shaddai, The Mighty God! God reaffirms his name change to Israel and says, “*be fruitful and multiply.*” Then He makes four promises to Jacob:

1. A nation shall be of you (one nation).
2. A company of nations shall be of you (the twelve tribes).
3. Kings shall come out of your loins (Forty nine plus Jesus).
4. The Land is promised personally to Jacob, not only to his offspring.

The pillar that Jacob sets up gets dedicated with oil and a drink offering. The drink offering added to the pillar and oil signify Jacob’s treatment of it as the House of God. Finally there is a reaffirmation of the name Beth-El honoring a place of worship and a place of offerings.

THE DEATH OF RACHEL AT BENJAMIN’S BIRTH

Genesis 35: 16-20

Rachel was dying as she gave birth to Benjamin the only son to be born in The Land. The other eleven were all born in Mesopotamia. She called him Ben-Oni which means son of my distress or suffering. Because the root of the name *oni* is *aven*, which connotes an iniquity or lie, some see this as divine retribution for her sins and Jacob’s vow to kill the person who stole Laban’s teraphim (Genesis 31: 32). She was buried on the way to Ephrath, which is the region where Bethlehem is located. The road to Bethlehem is the central trunk route, which runs throughout the Hill Country of Ephraim and Judah. At the time I Samuel 10: 2 was written it says that Rachel’s sepulcher is on the border of Benjamin at Zelzah. Even though tradition places Rachel’s tomb on the outskirts of Bethlehem it is actually in the territory of Benjamin near the city of Ramah.

As she dies in childbirth the midwife comforts her and lets her know it is a boy. She realizes that she is dying hence the name she gives the boy means suffering. Jacob is obviously very blessed at the time of his grief of losing Rachel so he renames the boy Benjamin which means “Son of my right hand.” This is indicative of a position of honor.

He places a pillar at her grave and it was still there in Samuel's day and Jeremiah's day as well. Its specific location has been lost today.

JACOB'S SONS AND REUBEN'S SIN

Genesis 35: 21-26

Jacob's new name, Israel is now used to identify him as he journeys to the tower (Migdal) of Eder. This is on the outskirts of Bethlehem and is mentioned in Micah 4: 8. It is in this place that Reuben had sexual relations with his father's concubine Bilhah. She had been Rachel's handmaid and gave birth to Dan and Naphtali. Some see this as a possible usurpation of Jacob's position as head of the family. A similar event happened with King David and his son Absalom (II Samuel 3: 7; 12: 8; 16: 20-22). Eventually Israel learned what had happened and did nothing at that time. He would though when he was dying and handing out blessings to his sons (Genesis 49: 3-4). Ruben will lose the birthrights as first-born for this heinous sin. Finally this section of scripture ends with a listing of the twelve sons of Israel who were born in Paddan-Aram with the exception of Benjamin who was born in the Land.

THE DEATH OF ISAAC

Genesis 35: 27-29

Jacob came to his father. This is the first recorded meeting of the two since Jacob came back to the Land. Isaac probably never got to meet Rachel. Jacob was seventy-nine when he left and was one hundred eight when he returned. Therefore he would be with Isaac for the last twelve years of his life. Isaac lived until one hundred eighty years and was the longest living of all the Patriarchs. Jacob was one hundred twenty at the time of Isaac's death. The text says Isaac gave up the ghost and was gathered to his people affirming that there is life after death. Isaac was buried by both of his twin sons Esau and Jacob. Isaac's death is reported here to end this Toldot, but it did not occur chronologically here. He actually lived for twelve more years after Jacob returned to the Land. It is included here to conclude the Toldot. Isaac was alive when Joseph was abducted. At that time he was one hundred sixty seven. Isaac died during the time of Joseph's elevation to the prime minister's office in Egypt. Isaac died ten years before Jacob had to move to Egypt because of the famine. So he did not know of the outcome of Joseph's life.

Today's Message:

TOLDOT OF ESAU-THE SAME IS EDM

Genesis 36: 1-8

¹ Now these are the generations of Esau (the same is Edom). ² Esau took his wives of the daughters of Canaan: Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Oholibamah the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite, ³ and Basemath Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebaioth. ⁴ And Adah bare to Esau Eliphaz; and Basemath bare Reuel; ⁵ and Oholibamah bare Jeush, and Jalam,

and Korah: these are the sons of Esau, that were born unto him in the land of Canaan. ⁶And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the souls of his house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his possessions, which he had gathered in the land of Canaan; and went into a land away from his brother Jacob. ⁷For their substance was too great for them to dwell together; and the land of their sojournings could not bear them because of their cattle. ⁸And Esau dwelt in mount Seir: Esau is Edom (ASV 1901)

Two Toldots are given for Esau, one lists his wives and sons and the next one lists his sons and grandsons. There is also a second division those in the Land and those outside the Land in mount Seir. This section of Scripture tells us what became of Esau's progeny.

Esau's Wives and Children settled in the Mountains of Seir. The name Seir is a word play on the Hebrew word for hairy *sa-ar* שֵׁעָר. In the heading (Genesis 36: 1) the surname *Edom* is added to the name Esau, which he received at his birth (Genesis 25:25), which means red. This then became the designation of the land of his descendants south of the Dead Sea (see map in appendix).

The names of Esau's three wives differ from those given in the previous accounts (Genesis 26:34 and 28:9), and in one instance the father's name as well. It is not unusual for an individual to have had more than one name. It was customary in the Ancient Near East to give surnames. The daughter of Elon the Hittite is called *Adah* (the ornament), and in Genesis 26:34 *Basmath* (the fragrant); the second is called *Aholibamah* (tent-height), the daughter of Anah, daughter, i.e., grand-daughter of Zibeon the Hivite, and in 26:34, *Jehudith* (the praised or praiseworthy), daughter of Beerli the Hittite; the third, the daughter of Ishmael, is called *Basmath* here and *Mahalath* in Genesis 28:9. Esau sought a home in Seir, because he knew that Jacob, as the heir, would take the family possessions, but did not wait till he returned and actually took possession. In the clause "*went into the country*" (Genesis 36: 6), the name *Seir* or *Edom* (Genesis 36: 16) is assumed because, as the words "*into the country*" convey no understandable location by standing alone. It seems then that by Esau moving to Seir he ceded the Land of Canaan to Jacob. The land *could not bear them because of their cattle*. This was a similar situation that Abraham encountered with Lot (Genesis 13: 6). The problem centered on the arable land available since there were many city-states of the Canaanites all around them leaving little non-occupied land available.

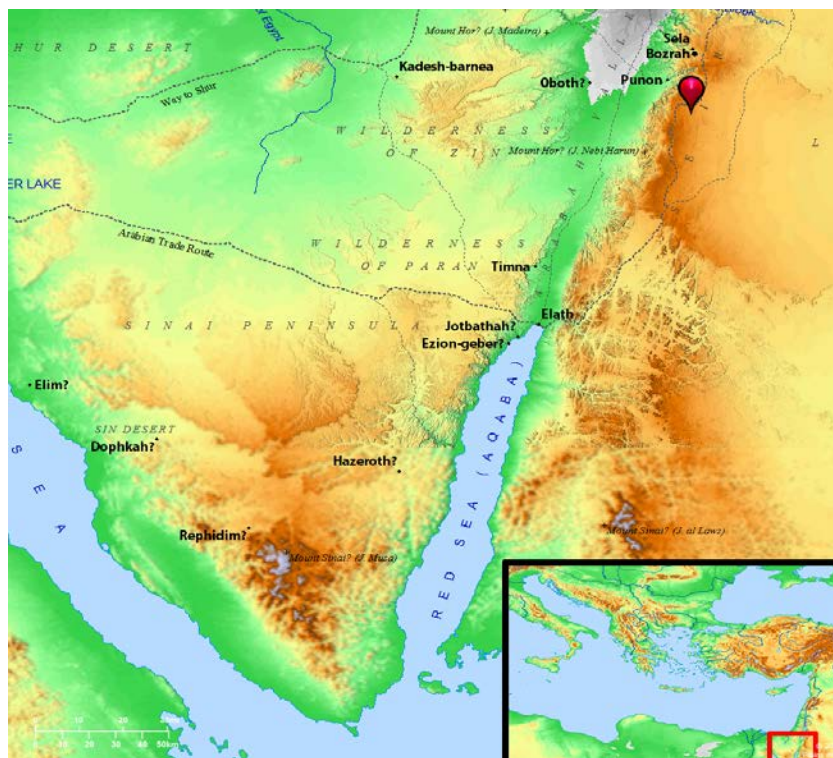
TOLDOT OF ESAU-FATHER OF THE EDMITES

Genesis 36: 9-14

⁹And these are the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in mount Seir: ¹⁰these are the names of Esau's sons: Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, Reuel the son of Basemath the wife of Esau. ¹¹And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, and Gatam, and Kenaz. ¹²And Timna was concubine to Eliphaz Esau's son; and she bare to Eliphaz Amalek: these are the sons of Adah, Esau's wife. ¹³And these are the sons of Reuel: Nahath, and

*Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah: these were the sons of Basemath, Esau's wife.
¹⁴And these were the sons of Oholibamah the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon, Esau's wife: and she bare to Esau Jeush, and Jalam, and Korah (ASV 1901).*

There is a parallel passage to this in I Chron. 1:36, 37. Both describe what became of Esau and the Edomites. Esau's Sons and Grandsons became the Fathers of Tribes. It is important to remember that individual names become clans then tribes and later nations in the Bible. Any of these entities might still be referred to by the progenitor's name. Through them he became the *father of Edom*, i.e., the founder of the Edomite nation on the mountains of Seir. *Mount Seir* is the mountainous region between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Aquaba, the northern half of which is called *Jebâl* (Gebalene) by the Arabs, the southern half, *Sheri*.



Map by Biblemapper

Two wives of Esau are introduced here, each who bore only one son. The tribes were founded not by the sons, but by the grandsons; but in that of Aholibamah the three sons were the founders (see Toldot charts in appendix). One of the sons of Eliphaz is Teman where Job's friend Eliphaz was born (Job 2: 11). Among the sons of Eliphaz we find *Amalek*, whose mother was Timna, the concubine of Eliphaz. Eliphaz was the ancestor of the Amalekites, who attacked the Israelites at Horeb as they came out of Egypt under Moses (Exodus 17:8). The allusion to the fields of the Amalekites in Genesis 14:7 does not imply that the tribe was in existence in Abraham's time, nor does the expression "*first of the nations*," in the saying of Balaam (Numbers 24:20), represent Amalek as the aboriginal or oldest tribe, but simply as the first heathen tribe by which

Israel was attacked. This was one of the terrible enemies of Israel with whom there was continual warfare. The Bible will frequently refer to an area by the name of what it would become. For example the Gaza has been referred to as the land of the Philistines prior to their actual occupation (Genesis 21: 32, 34 etc.). The tribe of Simeon finally eliminated the Amalekites in the days of Hezekiah (I Chronicles 4: 42-43).

Genesis 36: 13 names the four sons of Reuel, the son of Basemath: *Nahath, and Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah: these were the sons of Basemath, Esau's wife.* These are grandsons of Esau through his son Reuel. Genesis 36:14 then lists the sons of Oholibamah. Esau had a total of five sons and ten grandsons.

CHIEFS OF THE SONS OF ESAU

Genesis 36: 15-19

¹⁵These are the chiefs of the sons of Esau: the sons of Eliphaz the first-born of Esau: chief Teman, chief Omar, chief Zepho, chief Kenaz, ¹⁶chief Korah, chief Gatam, chief Amalek: these are the chiefs that came of Eliphaz in the land of Edom; these are the sons of Adah. ¹⁷And these are the sons of Reuel, Esau's son: chief Nahath, chief Zerah, chief Shammah, chief Mizzah: these are the chiefs that came of Reuel in the land of Edom; these are the sons of Basemath, Esau's wife. ¹⁸And these are the sons of Oholibamah, Esau's wife: chief Jeush, chief Jalam, chief Korah: these are the chiefs that came of Oholibamah the daughter of Anah, Esau's wife. ¹⁹These are the sons of Esau, and these are their chiefs: the same is Edom (ASV 1901).

The Tribe-Princes Who Descended from Esau—אֱלוֹפִים *aloofeem* was the distinguishing title of the Edomite and Horite phylarchs (Ancient title for military men who chose rulers), and it is only incidentally that it is applied to Jewish heads of tribes in Zechariah 9:7, and 12:5. It is probably derived from אֵלֶף *elef* or אֱלָפִים, *aloofeem* equivalent to מִשְׁפָּחוֹת, *michpachot, families* (1 Samuel 10:19; Micah 5:2), the heads of the families, i.e., of the principal divisions, of the tribe. The names of these *aloofeem* are not names of places, but of persons. They are identical with those of the previous list except that there are now two Korahs, one a grandson who appears as part of the lineage of Eliphaz, and the other a son as before.

DESCENDANTS OF SEIR THE HORITE

Genesis 36: 20-30

²⁰These are the sons of Seir the Horite, the inhabitants of the land: Lotan and Shobal and Zibeon and Anah, ²¹and Dishon and Ezer and Dishan: these are the chiefs that came of the Horites, the children of Seir in the land of Edom. ²²And the children of Lotan were Hori and Heman. And Lotan's sister was Timna. ²³And these are the children of Shobal: Alvan and Manahath and Ebal, Shepho and Onam. ²⁴And these are the children of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah; this is Anah who found the hot springs in the wilderness, as he fed the

asses of Zibeon his father. ²⁵And these are the children of Anah: Dishon and Oholibamah the daughter of Anah. ²⁶And these are the children of Dishon: Hemdan and Eshban and Ithran and Cheran. ²⁷These are the children of Ezer: Bilhan and Zaavan and Akan. ²⁸These are the children of Dishan: Uz and Aran. ²⁹These are the chiefs that came of the Horites: chief Lotan, chief Shobal, chief Zibeon, chief Anah, ³⁰chief Dishon, chief Ezer, chief Dishan: these are the chiefs that came of the Horites, according to their chiefs in the land of Seir (ASV 1901).

The parallel passage for this is found in, I Chronicles 1:38–42). Descendants of Seir the Horite, the inhabitants of the land, are the pre-Edomite people of the country. “*The Horite:*” is the dweller in caves, which abound in the mountains of Edom. The Horites, who had previously been an independent people (Genesis 14:6), were partly exterminated and partly subjugated by the descendants of Esau (Deuteronomy 2:12, 22). Seven sons of Seir are given as tribe-princes of the Horites, who are afterwards mentioned as *aloofeem* (Genesis 36: 29, 30), also their sons, as well as two daughters, *Timna* (Genesis 36: 22) and *Aholibamah* (Genesis 36: 25), who obtained notoriety from the fact that two of the headquarters of Edomite tribe-princes received their names (Genesis 36: 40 and 41). *Timna* was probably the same as the concubine of Eliphaz (Genesis 36: 12). There are a few instances in which the names in this list differ from those in the Chronicles passages. But they are differences, which consist of variation in form. Of *Anah*, the son of Zibeon, it is related (Genesis 36: 24), that as he fed the asses of his father in the desert, he “found הַיְעָמִים” *hayeameem*. This section ends with the Horite tribes’ chiefs’ names.

THE KINGS OF EDOM

Genesis 36: 31-39

³¹And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel. ³²And Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom; and the name of his city was Dinhabah. ³³And Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead. ³⁴And Jobab died, and Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his stead. ³⁵And Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who smote Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Avith. ³⁶And Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead. ³⁷And Samlah died, and Shaul of Rehoboth by the River reigned in his stead. ³⁸And Shaul died, and Baal-hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead. ³⁹And Baal-hanan the son of Achbor died, and Hadar reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Pau; and his wife’s name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Me-zahab (ASV 1901).

The parallel, passage for this is in I Chronicles 1:43–50. The Kings in the Land of Edom: means that Edom had kings before the Children of Israel. The lead in verse, “*These are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel,*” does not refer to the time when the monarchy was introduced into

Israel under Saul, but was written with the future in mind, that kings should come out of the loins of Jacob (Genesis 35:11; 17:4), and it merely expresses the thought, that Edom became a kingdom at an earlier period than Israel.

We can see in connection with the eight kings mentioned here, that while they follow one another, that is, one does not come to the throne until his predecessor is dead, The son never succeeds the father, but they all belong to different families and places. They were elected not sovereign. The kings were chosen by the phylarchs; and, as Isaiah 34:12 also shows, that they lived or reigned contemporaneously with these. The contemporaneous existence of the *aloofeem* and the kings may also be inferred from Exodus 15:15. Of all the kings of Edom, not one is named elsewhere. Some identify the fourth, *Hadad* (Genesis 36: 35), with the Edomite Hadad who rose up against Solomon (I Kings 11:14).

Of the tribe-cities of these kings only a few can be identified now. *Bozrah*, a noted city of the Edomites (Isaiah 34:6; 43:1, Micah 2: 12 etc.), is still to be traced in *el Buseireh*, a village with ruins in *Jebal*. It is now called Petra. During the Great Tribulation the main concentration of Jews and their leaders will have fled Jerusalem and Israel. They will be at the sheepfold of Bozrah in the land of Edom, which is present-day south Jordan. This is known today as Petra. The Antichrist's main purpose for the Campaign of Armageddon is to annihilate the Jews. The armies of the world will move southward from Jerusalem to Bozrah (Jeremiah 49:13-14). There are at least four passages in scripture, which show us the location of the place of Christ's Second Coming as Bozrah (Isaiah 34: 1-7; 63: 1a; Habakkuk 3:3; Micah 2: 12-13). The nations of the earth will gather at Bozrah in order to destroy the Remnant of Israel gathered there. Micah 2: 12-13 describes the Jews assembled there waiting for Christ and the Second Coming.

Micah 2: 12-13

¹²I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as a flock in the midst of their pasture; they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men. ¹³The breaker is gone up before them: they have broken forth and passed on to the gate, and are gone out thereat; and their king is passed on before them, and Jehovah at the head of them (ASV 1901).

Therefore the Remnant of Israel will be gathered at Bozrah where they will be besieged by the forces of the Antichrist. Finally, they will be able to break the siege because Jesus the King is leading them. The breaker, the King and Jehovah are all the same. At the Second Coming the Christ will enter into battle with the forces of the Antichrist, which have gathered at this city.

The land of the *Temanite* (Genesis 36: 34) is a province in northern Idumaea, with a city, *Teman*, which is as mentioned where Eliphaz, Job's friend came from. Of the last king, *Hadar* (Genesis 36: 39; not Hadad, as it is written in I Chronicles 1:50), the wife, the mother-in-law, and the mother are mentioned: his death is not mentioned here, but is added by the later chronicler (I Chronicles 1:51).

THE CHIEFS OF ESAU

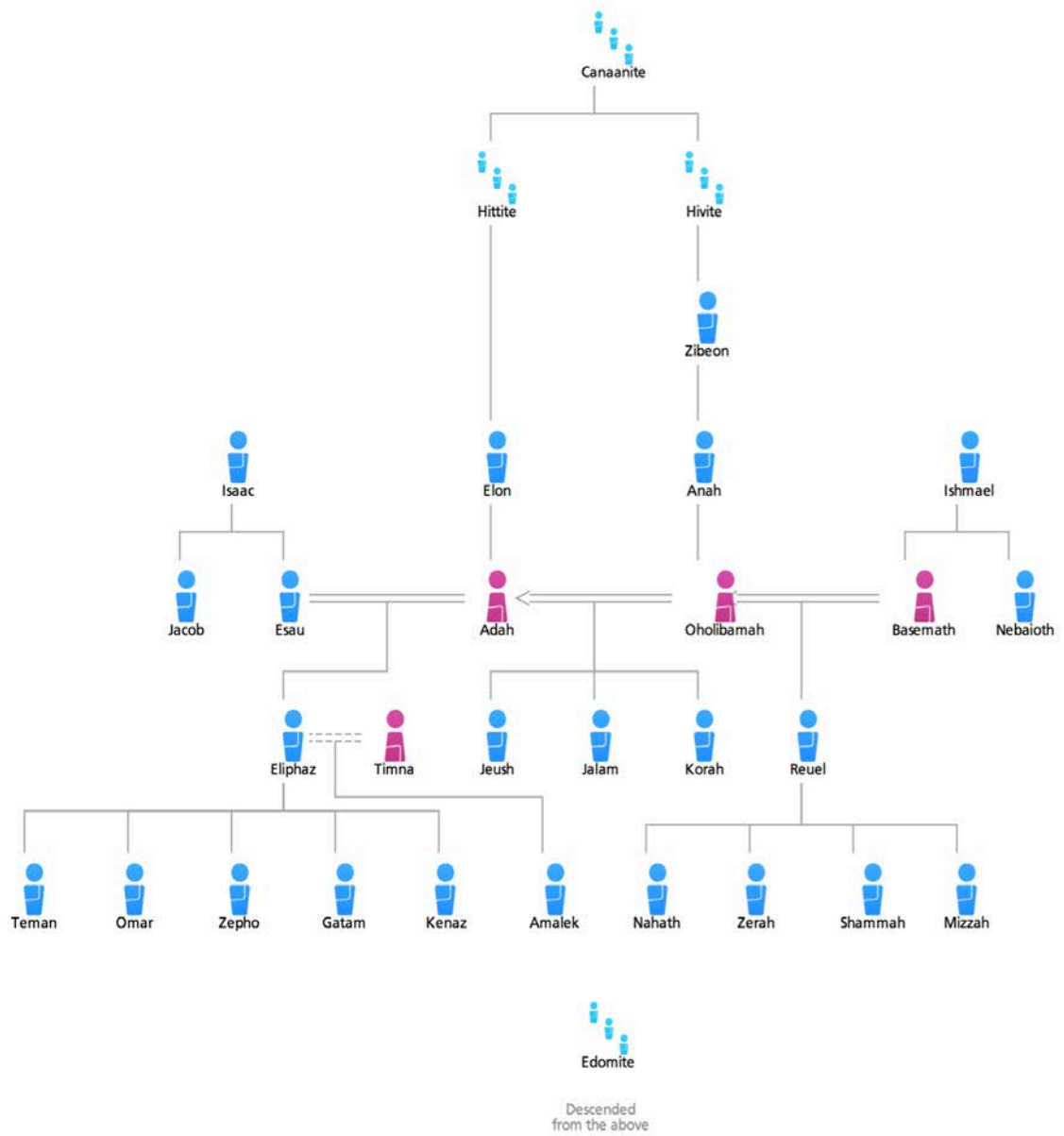
Genesis 36: 40-37: 1

⁴⁰And these are the names of the chiefs that came of Esau, according to their families, after their places, by their names: chief Timna, chief Alvah, chief Jetheth, ⁴¹chief Oholibamah, chief Elah, chief Pinon, ⁴²chief Kenaz, chief Teman, chief Mibzar, ⁴³chief Magdiel, chief Iram: these are the chiefs of Edom, according to their habitations in the land of their possession. This is Esau, the father of the Edomites. 37: ¹And Jacob dwelt in the land of his father's sojournings, in the land of Canaan. (ASV 1901).

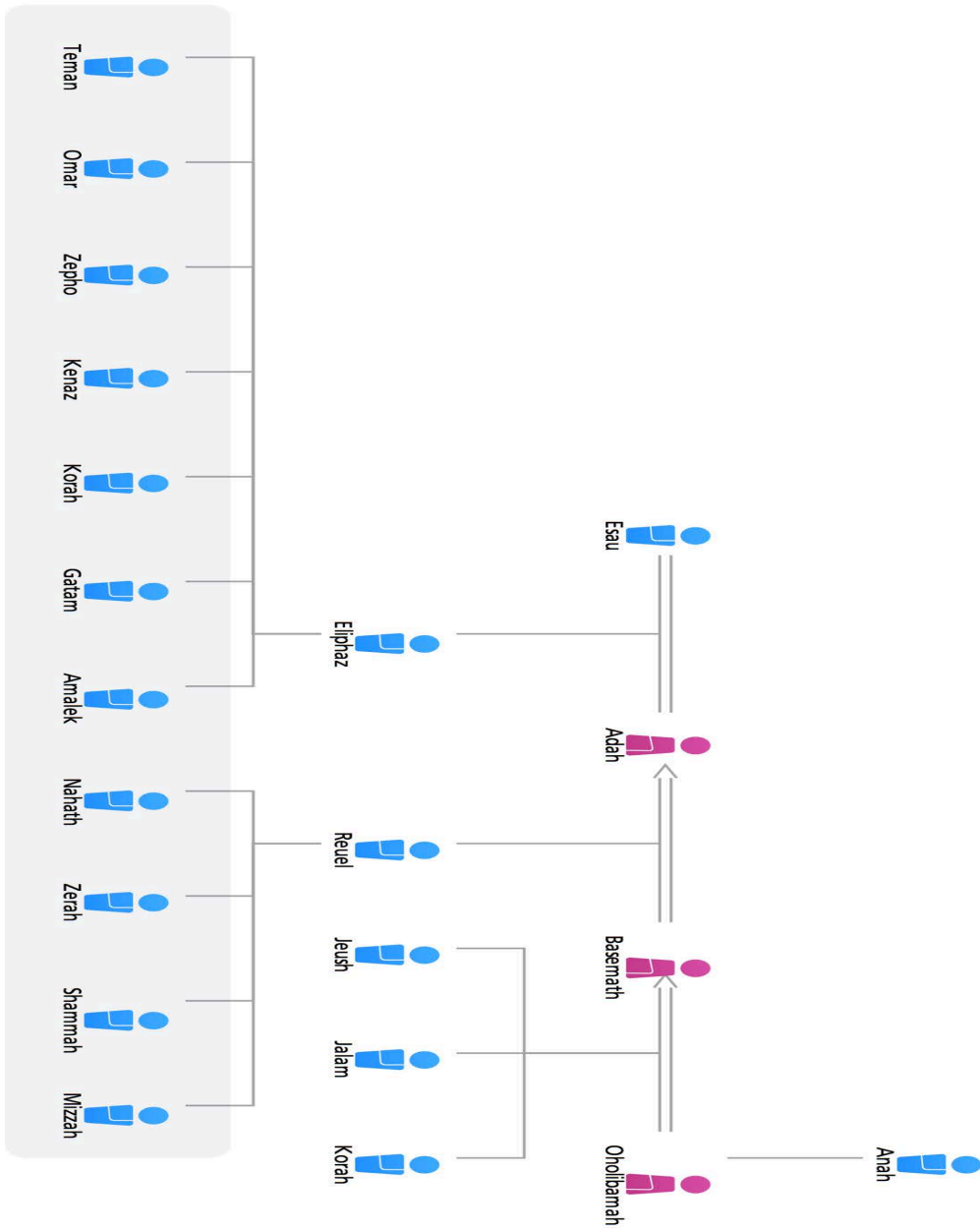
The parallel passage is found in I Chronicles 1:51–54. The names which follow relate to the capital cities of the old Phylarchs is evident from the expression in the heading, “After their places, by their names,” as compared with Genesis 36:43, “According to their habitations in the land of their possession.” This shows the sphere of ownership as opposed to their relationship to each other which we saw earlier. *Pinon* is the same as *Phunon*, an encampment of the Israelites (Numbers 33:42–43), celebrated for its mines, in which many Christians were condemned to labor under Diocletian, between Petra and Zoar, to the northeast of Wady Musa. “This is Esau, the father (founder) of Edom” from him sprang the great nation of the Edomites, with its princes and kings, upon the mountains of Seir. As a concluding verse, Esau now disappears from the Genesis record and will not be heard from again except as an illustration to a principle. Finally Jacob’s destination in the Land is stated ending this section of Scripture. The Story of the Jews, the Covenanted, elect, people of God continues for the balance of Scripture.



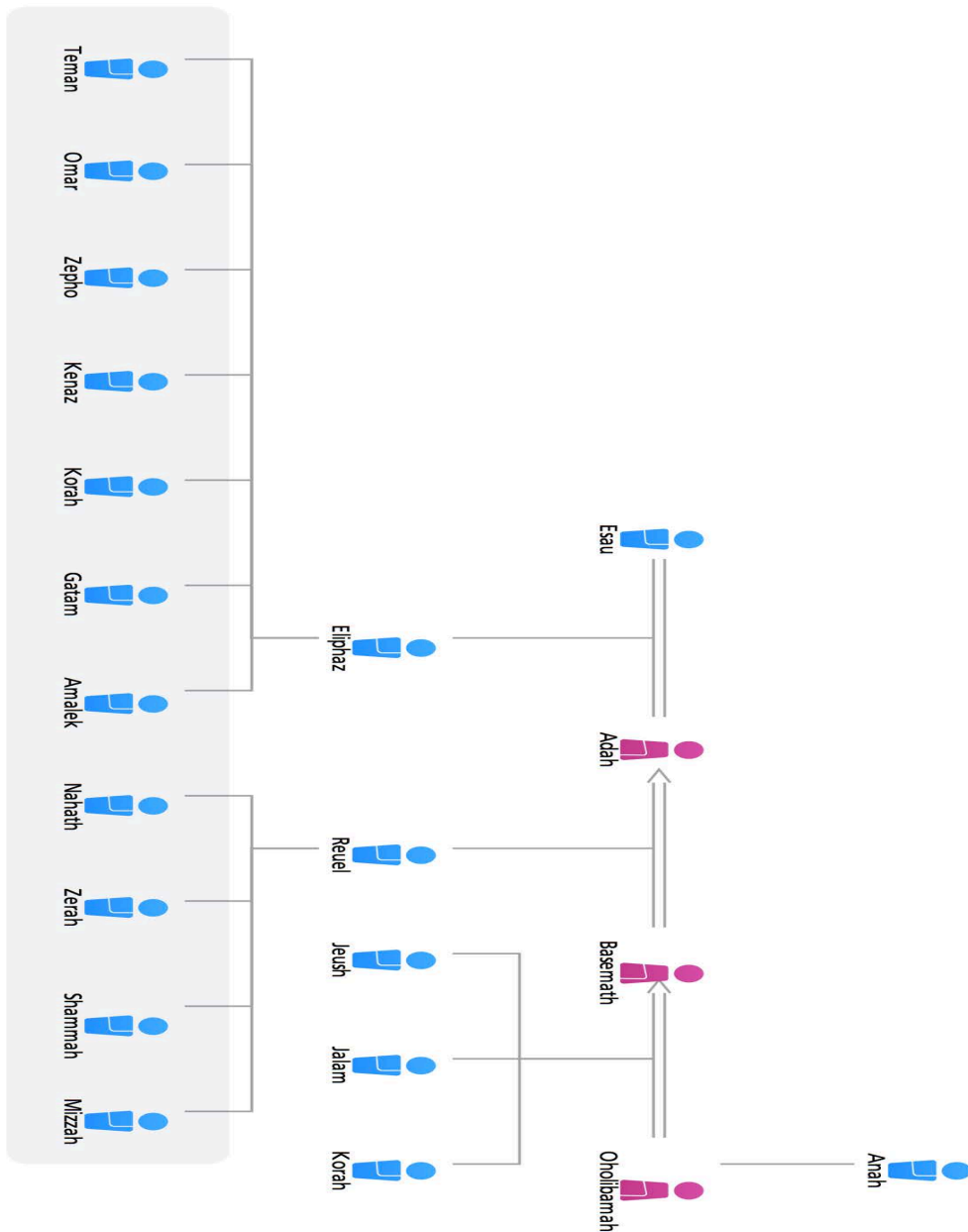
Sons of Esau – Edom – Present day Southern Jordan



The Family Tree of Esau Genesis 36: 1-14 Chart from Logos Software



Eliphaz (A Son of Esau) Genesis 36: 15-16



The Chiefs of Esau Genesis 36: 15-19 From Logos Software

NEXT WEEK: THE BEGINNING THE STORY OF JOSEPH

Please Call or e-mail with any questions or comments.

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