

EXPOSITION OF GENESIS

Message #78

Genesis 36:1-37:1

Genesis 36 is one tough chapter. It is difficult to read and difficult to preach. Actually, Genesis 36 is very important or God would not have placed it in His Word, nor would He repeat this lineage list again in I Chronicles 1:34-54.

EVEN THOUGH THOSE WHO ARE GODLESS ARE TEMPORARILY SUCCESSFUL, PROSPEROUS, LARGE, POWERFUL, POLITICAL AND DOMINATE, GOD WANTS HIS PEOPLE TO KNOW THAT THE GODLY PEOPLE WILL ALWAYS BE PROTECTED BY HIM AND ALWAYS RECEIVE HIS BLESSINGS.

FACT #1 — This chapter features the generations of Esau. 38:1a

We may recall that there are ten “generations” (toledoth) sections in Genesis. These sections are designed to pick out a key ancestor and inform us as to what became of his family. We may remember that Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of soup (Genesis 25:27-34). **God meant less to him that the immediate gratification of the flesh, so he sold his birthright.** So we could understand this generations section referring to- this is what became of the worldly family of Esau, who less"-about World he prospered". Esau and his family become a worldly success story.

FACT #2 — Esau was Edom. 36:1b

Dr. C. I. Scofield makes an important comment on this point: “Edom (called “Seir” Gen. 32:3; 36:8) is the name of the country lying south of the ancient Kingdom of Judah and extending from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Aqaba. It includes the ruins of Petra, and is bounded on then north by Moab. Peopled by descendants of Esau (Gen. 36: 1-19), Edom has a remarkable prominence in the prophetic Word as (together with Moab) the scene of the final.,destl'.uction of Gentile world .power in the Day of the LORD” (C. I Scofield, *New Scofield Reference Bible*, Footnote #2, p. 52). Scriptures are very clear that these Edomites are Israel’s enemies and will be destroyed (Psalm 137:7; Isaiah 34:1-18; 63:1-6; Jeremiah 49:17-22; Ezekiel 25:12-14; Obadiah 1-21). **The Arab world will eventually come down.** Let us remember that Jacob and Esau were from the same family. A family that loves God can produce one child who is godly and one who is godless.

FACT #3 — Esau was disobedient. 36:2a

It was totally contrary to the Word and will of God to marry a Canaanite woman. Esau’s own father, Isaac, had clearly set this forth (Genesis 28:6). So immediately we see that Esau is not interested in obeying the Word of God. He lived life on his own terms. Now carefully note the context - Jacob, Who is now following God, has just buried his wife Rachel (35:19-20), whereas Esau, who is rebellious against God, seems to be living happily ever after with his Canaanite wives.

FACT #4 — Esau was prosperous . 36:2b-43

Worldly Sign of Prosperity #1 - He had many wives. 36:2-3

Esau had a stable of women at his disposal. From the Canaanite perspective, he looked like a winner but from God's perspective, he was a loser.

Worldly Sign of Prosperity #2 - He had many children. 36:4-6a, 9-43

Esau's lineage is quite impressive. In fact, from three worldly standpoints, his children are Worldly success stories:

(Worldly Standpoint #1) - He had both sons and daughters. 36:6a, 9-13

(Worldly Standpoint #2) - He had sons who became chiefs. 36:15-19, 40-43

The Hebrew word "chief" refers to one who is a leader of a family or tribe (Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 51).

(Worldly Standpoint #3) - He had relatives who became kings. 36:31-39

Although we cannot state specifically how these kings were related to Esau, we must assume they were royalty related to him because they are called "the kings who reigned in the land of Edom."

Worldly Sign of Prosperity #3 - He had many possessions. 36:16b-7

Worldly Sign of Prosperity #4 - He was a military success. 36:20-30

When Esau moved to Seir, the land was inhabited by Seirites. According to Deuteronomy 2:12, this presented no problem for Esau or for his family, they just destroyed them and took the land. What Esau doesn't realize is that the reason for any success he had was because of the blessing of God and his link with Isaac to Abraham.

Tucked away in this massive and impressive lineage context is the fact that Jacob stayed in Canaan (Genesis 36:6; 37:1). It was Esau who had married the Canaanite women so the logical candidate to stay would have been him. But that is not what God wanted. God wanted Jacob here in this land and that is precisely what He sovereignly accomplished.

Lessons:

- 1) The World's best may appear massive and God's best may appear miniscule.
- 2) The temporal prosperity of the worldly is even controlled by God.
- 3) Great political worldly leaders are typically not great godly spiritual leaders.
- 4) God keeps accurate lists of both faithful and unfaithful.
- 5) Just because one is successful does not mean he is not alienated from God.
- 6) In the end, God's faithful elect will always end up being blessed.