

PART FORTY-FOUR

EDOMITE GENEALOGIES

(Genesis 36:1-43)

The Biblical Account

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 Obolibamah 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 Obolibamah bare Jeush, and Jalam, and Korah: these are the sons of Esau, that were born unto him in the land of Canaan. 6 And 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. 7 For their substance was too great for them to dwell together; and the land of their sojournings could not bear them because of their cattle. 8 And Esau dwelt in mount Seir: Esau is Edom.

9 And these are the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in mount Seir: 10 these 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. 11 And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho and Gatam, and Kenaz. 12 And Timna was concubine to Eliphaz Esau's son; and she bare to Eliphaz Amalek: these are the sons of Adah, Esau's wife. 13 And these are the sons of Reuel: Nabath, and Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah: these were the sons of Basemath, Esau's wife. 14 And these were the sons of Obolibamah the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon, Esau's wife: and she bare to Esau Jeush, and Jalam, and Korah.

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15 *These 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, 16 chief Korah, chief Gatam, chief Amalek: these are the chiefs that came of Eliphaz in the land of Edom; these are the sons of Adah. 17 And these are the sons of Reuel, Esau's son: chief Nabath, 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. 18 And these are the sons of Obolibamah, Esau's wife: chief Jeush, chief Jalam, chief Korah: these are the chiefs that came of Obolibamah the daughter of Anah, Esau's wife. 19 These are the sons of Esau, and these are their chiefs: the same is Edom.*

20 *These are the sons of Seir the Horite, the inhabitants of the land: Lotan and Shobal and Zibeon and Anah, 21 and Dishon and Ezer and Dishan: these are the chiefs that came of the Horites, the children of Seir in the land of Edom. 22 And the children of Lotan were Hori and Heman; and Lotan's sister was Timna. 23 And these are the children of Shobal: Alvan and Manabath and Ebal, Shepfo and Onam. 24 And these are the children of Zibeon: Aiab and Anah; this is Anah who found the hot springs in the wilderness, as he fed the asses of Zibeon his father. 25 And these are the children of Anah: Dishon and Obolibamah the daughter of Anah. 26 And these are the children of Dishon: Hemdan and Esbhan and Itbran and Cberan. 27 These are the children of Ezar: Bilban and Zaavan and Akan. 28 These are the children of Dishan: Uz and Aran. 29 These are the chiefs that came of the Horites: chief Lotan, chief Shobal, chief Zibeon, chief Anah, 30 chief Dishon, chief Ezer, chief Dishan: these are the chiefs that came of the Horites, according to their chiefs in the land of Seir.*

31 *And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of*

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Israel. 32 And Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom; and the name of his city was Dinbabab. 33 And Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerab of Bozrah reigned in his stead. 34 And Jobab died, and Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his stead. 35 And 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. 36 And Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead. 37 And Samlah died, and Shaul of Reboboth by the River reigned in his stead. 38 And Shaul died, and Baal-hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead. 39 And 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-zabab.

40 And 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, 41 chief Obolibamah, chief Elah, chief Pinon, 42 chief Kenaz, chief Teman, chief Mibzar, 43 chief Magdiel, chief Iram: these are the chiefs of Edom, according to their habitations in the land of their possessions. This is Esau, the father of the Edomites.

1. *The History of Esau.*

“Esau and Jacob shook hands once more over the corpse of their father. Henceforth their paths diverged, to meet no more’ (Delitzsch). As Esau had also received a divine promise (25:23), and the history of his tribe was already interwoven in the paternal blessing with that of Israel (27:29 and 40), an account is given in the book of Genesis of his growth into a nation; and a separate section is devoted to this, which, according to the invariable plan of the book, precedes the *tholedoth* of Jacob” (K-D, 320). The account subdivides into six (or perhaps 7) sections, depending on the inclusion of vv. 6-8 into the

first section which would then begin with v. 1 and conclude with v. 8, as in the pages here *infra*. Skinner suggests seven sub-divisions as follows: (1) "Esau's wives and children (vv. 1-5); (2) His migration to Mount Seir (vv. 6-8); (3) a list of Esau's descendants (vv. 9-14); (4) an enumeration of clans or clan-chiefs of Esau (vv. 15-19); (5) two Horite lists: a genealogy (vv. 20-28), a list of clans (vv. 29-30); (6) the kings of Edom (vv. 31-39); (7) a second list of clans of Esau (vv. 40-43). The lists are repeated with variations in 1 Chron. 1:35-54" (ICCG, 428). Kraeling suggests the following subsections: (1) the tribes that could claim descent from Esau; (2) the "dukes" or chiefs of the sons of Esau, "*i.e.*, probably the centers furnishing a thousand-man unit for the Edomite army"; (3) the tribes of the pre-Edomite inhabitants who are called Horites; (4) the Edomite kings who had reigned before Israel had a king. (See Kraeling, BA, 89).

"The Edomites apparently had an illustrious history. Little is known about them beyond this summary account (Gen. 36:1-43) which indicates that they had several kings even before any king reigned in Israel. In this way the Genesis narrative disposes of the collateral line before resuming the patriarchal account" (OTS, 37). "Conformably to the plan pursued in the composition of this historical book, the Tholedoth of Esau precedes the ensuing account of the family history of Jacob, as the Tholedoth of Ishmael (25:12-17) that of Isaac; the Tholedoth of Japheth and Ham (10:1-20) that of Shem; and the Tholedoth of Cain (4:18) that of Seth. *Esau, who is Edom*. The latter name was applied to him in reference to the peculiar color of his skin at birth, rendered more significant by his inordinate craving for the *red* pottage, and also by the fierce sanguinary character of his descendants (cf. Ezek. 25:12, Obad. 10). The name Edom is prominently introduced at the commencement of this

genealogical record, because it formed the national designation of Esau's posterity" (Jamieson, CECG, 226). We prefer the subdivisions suggested by Keil-Delitzsch, and repeated in *The Jerusalem Bible* as given *infra*.

2. *Esau's Wives and Children in Canaan, and Their Settlement in Seir* (vv. 1-8; cf. Chron. 1:35ff).

"Our chief difficulty (here) arises from a comparison of the names of Esau's wives as they previously appeared. In 26:34 the Canaanite wives bore the names, 'Judith, the daughter of Beeri the Hittite,' and 'Basemath, the daughter of Elon the Hittite,' whereas in 28:9, the Ishmaelite wife is described as 'Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael.' Apparently, then, Judith must be identified with Oholibamah, Basemath with Adah, for both are followed by the name of the same father 'Elon,' and Mahalath must be the Basemath of our list, because in each case follows the father's name, 'Ishmael.' The reason for identifying Judith with Oholibamah may be made somewhat more convincing by noting that Oholibamah is described (v. 2) as 'the daughter of Anah.' Now Anah, according to v. 24, discovered 'hot springs'; but *be'er* is the Hebrew word for spring. However, in the former list he is described as *Beeri*—'spring-man.' Such changes of names need surprise no one, for Orientals commonly go under several names, especially the women, who frequently received a new name at marriage. Men should, therefore, not speak here of a 'contradiction as to Esau's wives' and call this 'a crucial difficulty'" (EG, 934). Again: "Since the Anah of v. 2 no doubt is a man (cf. v. 25), the word *bath* ('daughter') following it cannot refer to him but must be used in the looser sense of 'granddaughter' and naturally refers here to Oholibamah. This same Anah appears here as a 'Hivite' but in 26:34 as a 'Hittite.' The difficulty resolves itself quite readily when we observe that 'Hittite' is simply a more general designation of Canaanites, which use of the term is found in Josh. 1:4, 1 Kings 10:29, 2 Kings 7:6.

For the Hittites were a very prominent group among the inhabitants of the land and so came to stand for all of them. If in v. 20, however, Anah appears as a Horite, a term meaning 'cave dweller,' why should not one, originally a Hivite, also be able to dwell in a cave and so merit the additional cognomen 'Horite?' (*ibid.*, p. 935). ("Cave dweller," that is, a *troglydite*: Horite may not even have been a tribal or ethnic designation). (The student is referred to Part 40 of the present text, section 3 *supra*, under the caption "Esau Takes Another Wife." There are several standard works which deal with the technicalities that occur in this chapter (36). We suggest the following commentaries on Genesis: by Keil and Delitzsch (BCOTP), by Whitelaw (PCG), by Jamieson (CECG), by Lange (CDHCG), and especially the thoroughgoing analysis of the chapter by William Henry Green (UBG, pp. 417-429), in which the composite theory is clearly refuted. Every argument put forward by the critics is answered clearly in this great work in which the nit-picking methodology of the self-styled analytical experts, who seldom if ever agree among themselves, is exposed. We see no reason for devoting any more time or space here to this phase of our subject, C.C.C.). (For interesting comments by Jewish sources on these various women and their relatives, the student is referred to *The Soncino Chumash*, published by the Soncino Press, London.).

We now read that Esau took his wives, sons, daughters, servants, livestock, "and all his possessions" which he had accumulated in Canaan and went into a land *away from Jacob*. The separation evidently was similar to that which had occurred between Abraham and Lot in earlier times. "We are brought to the time where Esau sees the necessity of leaving the land of Canaan, which has definitely been assigned to his brother Jacob. It will be difficult to determine whether he took this step before Jacob's return from Mesopotamia or some time thereafter.

For there is the possibility that Esau's and Jacob's flocks could not subsist together even when the flocks which were potentially Jacob's were still in reality under Isaac's care. The more likely construction to put upon the case would be that Jacob with his large flocks and herds, freshly returned from Mesopotamia, made the problem a critical one. (The land could hardly support both groups). But Esau on his part was by this time resigned to his lot that he yield the preference to his brother to whom the better blessing had been given, and when a clash like that which threatened between Abraham's and Lot's herdsmen seemed imminent, Esau showed prudence in promptly yielding" (EG, 936). "This journey was undertaken after Jacob had returned from Haran and settled in Canaan, possibly after their father's death. Esau had probably settled in Seir before Jacob's return, but dwelt only in the plain, the inhabitants of the mountains not allowing him to settle higher up. Now that Jacob returned, Esau recognized that the land would be his, whereupon he made an expedition and captured the Mountain country" (SC, 215).

It seems obvious that Esau, too, had grown enormously wealthy (cf. 27:39-40). It is certainly to be doubted, however, that he had grown spiritually, that is, in the direction of putting aside his *profanity*. We recall the words of the old Catechism: "Why does God, seemingly at least, often permit the wicked to prosper while evil befalls the good?" The answer: "For two reasons: 1. Because the righteous can be confirmed in true holiness only by trials and sufferings; and 2. Because God will not allow even the little good which the wicked may do, to go unrewarded; and therefore as He cannot reward it in the next world, He takes this means of allowing it to be rewarded in this present world." (Cf. Matt. 5:45, 13:27-30; Rom. 12:19, Acts 17:31, Rom. 2:16, etc.).

It must be true that these patriarchs were at a great disadvantage for the time being. Canaan was literally only "the land of their sojournings." (Cf. v. 7). Hence, they must have been moving about, utilizing unclaimed pasturage, "and yet, no doubt, wealthier than the actual inhabitants of the land. The resulting jealousy of the native inhabitants will have made their position more difficult" (EG, 937). The text seems to indicate clearly, however, that this was a separation between the brothers. Esau simply moved to *a land away from his brother Jacob*. "Since Jacob had purchased the birthright, he was naturally Isaac's heir and became entitled to the heritage of the land of Canaan. Hence Esau sought another country (Sforno). The Midrash explains that he left on account of the decree that Abraham's children would be strangers in a foreign land before they inherited Canaan; whereupon Esau declared, 'I want neither the land nor the prior payment,' viz. to be a stranger elsewhere; hence he left. Another reason was his feeling of shame at having sold the birthright (Rashi)" (SC, 216). (Cf. Gen. 15:12-16).

"*So Esau dwelt in Mount Seir; Esau is Edom.*" This means that he chose this land south of the Dead Sea for his permanent home. "Seir"—or "Mount Seir," since it is such mountainous terrain—was the original name of the land. "Exactly how this occupation proceeded we do not know. . . . As we have suggested, a process of conquest may have been involved. As the material of this chapter suggests, intermarriage with native Seirites or Horites figured quite largely in the process. Sometimes intermarriage may have preceded, sometimes may have followed upon certain stages of the conquest, until the aboriginal inhabitants were eliminated and the Edomite stock had become the dominant factor" (EG, 937). Jamieson writes: "The design of this historical sketch of Esau and his family is to show how the promise (27:39, 40) was fulfilled. In temporal prosperity he far exceeds his brother; and it is

remarkable that, in the overruling providence of God, the vast increase of his worldly substance was the occasion of his leaving Canaan, and thus making way for the return of Jacob. *Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir.* This was divinely assigned as his possession (Josh. 24:4, Deut. 2:5). It was not a 'land of promise' to him, as Canaan was to Jacob; but as the prediction in his father's testamentary blessing pointed, so he received it as the fulfilment of his destiny, Providence paving the way for it in the natural course of events. Having become allied by marriage with the family of Seir, he removed to the mount, and settled there with his family. Upon the rapid increase of his descendants into a tribe, it became evident that both the Edomites and the Horites could not find room enough in the country, and that the one or the other must give way; the former disputed the possession, and having, by Heaven favoring his arms, proved superior in the contest, Esau destroyed the great mass of the Horites, and, incorporating the remnant with his own race, finally 'dwelt in mount Seir,' as the dominant power: (hairy, rough, rugged) Mount Seir, inhabited by the Edomites, included that mountainous region which extends from the Dead Sea to the Elanitic Gulf" (Jamieson, 227). (The earliest mention of Mount Seir is in the account of Chedorlaomer's campaign in the days of Abraham (Gen. 14:6): here it is said that the Horites were then its inhabitants. "The Horites were the Hurrians, now known so well from the cuneiform tablets from ancient Nuzu and other sites, who invaded N. Mesopotamia, between 1780 and 1600, and gradually spread over Palestine and Syria" (UBD, 991). The route of the Exodus would have been through Seir (Deut. 2:1), but as God had given this region to Esau for a possession, the Israelites were forbidden to enter it (Deut. 2:5). The mention of Esau's removal to Mount Seir follows immediately the mention of Isaac's death and burial (Gen. 35:27-29, 36:1-8; cf. 32:3). In his fare-

well address Joshua spoke of God's giving Mt. Seir to Esau (Josh. 24:4). Chieftains of the Horites were called 'the children of Seir in the land of Edom' (Gen. 36:21, 30; cf. Ezek. 35:2ff.). Esau is said to have dispossessed the Horites of Mt. Seir (Gen. 32:3; 36:20ff.; Deut. 2:1-29, Josh. 24:4). Simeonites drove out the Amalekites who had hidden in Seir (1 Chron. 4:42ff.). "The majesty of God was associated with the awesome grandeur of Mt. Seir (Deut. 33:2, Judg. 5:4)." The Chronicler relates how King Amaziah of Judah (c. 800-783 B.C.) went to the Valley of Salt and slew 10,000 men of Seir but paid homage to their gods (2 Chron. 25:11-24). Isaiah's words, 'Watchman, what of the night?' came from Seir (Isa. 21:11).

The sons of Esau that were born in Canaan were five in number: by Adah, Eliphaz; by Basemath, Reuel; by Oholibamah, Jeush, Jalam and Korah. Adah and Basemath had each one son, while Oholibamah was the mother of three sons, all of whom became heads of different tribes: but in the case of the other two wives, it was their grandsons who attained that distinction.

3. *Esau's Sons and Grandsons as Fathers of Tribes* (vv. 9-14; cf. 1 Chron. 1:35-37).

Esau's descendants in Seir. Through his sons and grandsons Esau became the *father of Edom*, i.e., the founder of the Edomitish nation on the mountains of Seir. This, it should be noted, is the history of Esau *in Mount Seir*. The section which preceded it was his history in the land of Canaan. Where in vv. 1-8 we have only the names of those who in the strictest sense were 'sons of Esau,' here the same expression is used in the looser sense and takes in the grandsons, at least those of Eliphaz and Reuel, and incidentally also those of *Amalek*.

Of all those persons mentioned in this section, *Amalek* (vv. 12, 16) is the one who must be studied especially, in connection with Old Testament history. Among the

sons of Eliphaz we find this Amalek, whose mother was Timna, the concubine of Eliphaz. (See 1 Chron. 1:36; here "Timna and Amalek" is a more concise form of saying, "and from Timna, Amalek"). "Amalek was, of course, the ancestor of the Amalekites, who attacked the Israelites at Horeb as they were coming out of Egypt under Moses (Exo. 17:8-16), and not merely of a mixed tribe of Amalekites and Edomites, belonging to the supposed original Amalekite nation. . . . The allusion to the fields of the Amalekites in ch. 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 (Num. 24:20), represent Amalek as the aboriginal or oldest tribe, but simply as the first heathen tribe by which Israel was attacked. The Old Testament says nothing of any fusion of Edomites or Horites with Amalekites, nor does it mention a double Amalek. . . . If there had been an Amalek previous to Edom. with the important part which they took in opposition to Israel even in the time of Moses, the book of Genesis would not have omitted to give their pedigree in the list of the nations. At a very early period the Amalekites separated from the other tribes of Edom and formed an independent people, having their headquarters in the southern part of the mountains of Judah, as far as Kadesh (14:7; Num. 13:29, 14:43, 45), but, like the Bedouins, spreading themselves as a nomad tribe over the whole of the northern portion of Arabia Petrea, from Havilah to Shur on the border of Egypt (1 Sam. 15:3, 7; 27:8); whilst one branch penetrated into the heart of Canaan, so that a range of hills, in what was afterwards the inheritance of Ephraim, bore the name of the mountains of the Amalekites (Judg. 12:15, 5:14). Those who settled in Arabia seem also to have separated in the course of time into several branches, so that Amalekite hordes invaded the land of Israel in connection sometimes with the Midianites and the sons of the East (the Arabs, Judg.

6:3, 7:12), and at other times with the Ammonites (Judg. 3:13). After they had been defeated by Saul (1 Sam. 14:48, 15:2ff.), and frequently chastised by David (1 Sam. 27:8, 30:1ff.; 2 Sam. 8:12), the remnant of them was exterminated under Hezekiah by the Simeonites on the mountains of Seir (1 Chron. 4:42, 43)" (K-D, 323-324).

Thus it will be seen that the Amalekites were inveterate enemies of Israel. The Edomites generally were equally so (Ezek. 35:5), although God forbade His people to hate or to despoil them (Deut. 23:7; 2:4-6; 2 Chron. 20:10). As a matter of fact, "Edom became a symbol of the hardened unbelief and hostility of the world to the people of God and as such was declared by the prophets to be the object of God's wrath and conquering power in the Last Days (Isa. 11:14; 34:5-6; Obad. 1:1-4, Amos 9:12)" (HBD, 59).

The distinguished Jewish commentator, Maimonides (1135-1204), has some very important things to say about the fate of the Amalekites and the Edomites. Cf. Exo. 17:13-15, Deut. 25:17-19. He writes as follows: "There are in the Law portions which include deep wisdom, but have been misunderstood by many persons; they require, therefore, an explanation. I mean the narratives contained in the Law which many consider as being of no use whatever e.g., the list of the various families descended from Noah, with their names and territories (Gen. 10); the sons of Seir the Horite (*ibid.*, 26:20-30); the kings that reigned in Edom (*ibid.* 31. seq.), and the like. . . . Every narrative in the Law serves a certain purpose in connexion with religious teaching. It either helps to establish a principle of faith, or to regulate our actions, and to prevent wrong and injustice among men; and I will show this in each case." As a case in point, Maimonides asks: "Had Moses nothing else to write than, 'And the sister of Lotan was Timna' (Gen. 36:22)?" He continues: "The list

of the families of Seir and their genealogy is given in the Law (Gen. 36:20-30), *because of one particular commandment*. For God had distinctly commanded the Israelites concerning Amalek to blot out his name (Deut. 25:17-19). Amalek was the son of Eliphaz and Timna, the sister of Lotan (Gen. 36:12, 22). The other sons of Esau were not included in this commandment. But Esau was by marriage connected with the Seirites, as distinctly stated in Scripture; and Seirites were therefore his children; he reigned over them; his seed was mixed with the seed of Seir, and ultimately all the countries and families of Seir were called after the sons of Esau who were the predominant family, and they assumed more particularly the name Amalekites, because these were the strongest in that family. If the genealogy of these families of Seir had not been described in full they would all have been killed, contrary to the plain words of the commandment. For this reason the Seirite families are fully described, as if to say, the people that live in Seir and the kingdom of Amalek are not all Amalekites; they are the descendants of some other man, and are called Amalekites because the mother of Amalek was of their tribe. The justice of God thus prevented the destruction of an (innocent) people that lived in the midst of another people (doomed to extirpation); for the decree was pronounced only against the seed of Amalek" (GP, 380-382).

"If we note Amalek as belonging among the Edomites (v. 12), we can understand how, being the son of a concubine, he may have been discriminated against and how that may have resulted in his separation from his brethren. For according to Exod. 17:8 and Num. 13:29 and 14:25 the Amalekites must have held territory much farther to the west. According to Judg. 5:14 and 12:15 they must have once occupied territory much farther to the north. Gen. 14:7 points to the fact that Amalekites had once dwelt much farther eastward, although in this

passage the term refers to territory which later was occupied by Amalekites. All of this cannot seem strange if it be borne in mind that all these tribes may have been more or less nomadic in their day" (EG, 939).

4. *The Clan-Chiefs (Tribe-Princes) of Edom* (vv. 15-19).

That is, dukes-phylarchs, leaders, chieftains of tribes. "The term [*alluphim*], though used in the general sense of ruler by the later Hebrew writers (Jer. 13:21; Zech. 9:7, 12:5-6), is exclusively employed in the Pentateuch as a designation of the Edomite princes (see Exod. 15:15), corresponding to the title of shiekhs among the modern Bedouins. Fourteen alluphim are mentioned here, and each Edomite tribe took the name of its founder, or, as some conjecture from v. 40, the duke was called after the name of the tribe. From Eliphaz, the eldest son of Esau, sprang seven dukes, three of whom have obtained prominent notice in Scripture history" (Jamieson, 227): (1) Duke *Temán*, eldest son of Eliphaz, was chief of a tribe which gave its name to a province of Idumea frequently mentioned by Scripture writers (Jer. 49:7, 20; Ezek. 25:13, Amos 1:12, Obad. 9, Hab. 3:3). This tribe seems to have risen to a position of great importance, and extended over a large portion of the territory of Edom; so that duke Temán was entitled to be mentioned first, not only as the eldest son of Eliphaz, but as the *premier* duke of Edom. (2) Duke *Kenaz* was founder of the Kenezite tribes, some of whose distinguished members, as Caleb and Othniel (Josh. 14:14, Judg. 3:9) were adopted into Israel. (3) Duke *Amalek*, whose independence and widespread occupancy of Palestine and Syria, caused them to be mentioned frequently in the Old Testament records. All the other ducal sons of Eliphaz ruled over tribes in the south, as their territorial names indicate. Those of Reuel (v. 17) abode in the original territory of Esau, as seems evident

from the designation, "Zerah of Bozrah" (v. 33). "But they roam over a wide circuit [to this day] to the neighborhood of the Hauran, and the country between the Euphrates and the Tigris; and in the north and west of the Persian Gulf the names of Reuel's descendants are to be traced in the classical writings and in modern times" (Jamieson, *ibid.*, 228).

5. *Descendants of Seir the Horite*, (vv. 20-30; cf. 1 Chron. 1:38-42).

According to Deut. 2:12, the Horites of Seir were supplanted by the descendants of Esau. In vv. 20-30 here the inhabitants of the land, or pre-Edomite population of the country. *The Horite*, that is the *Troglodyte*, the dweller in caves, which abound in the mountainous country of Edom. "The Horites, who had previously been an independent people (14:6), were partly exterminated and partly subjugated by the descendants of Esau (Deut. 2:12, 22)" (K-D, 324). "Seir, with a colony of Horites from Lebanon, settled in the mountains south of Canaan a generation before the time of Abraham, and in their new possessions continued that mode of life to which they had been accustomed in their original settlement, viz., that of dwelling in caves on account of the intense heat (Jer. 49:7-22). Hence they were called Troglodytes (in our version, Horites); and doubtless they were the excavators of those wonderful rock-habitations which abound in the ravines and the soft limestone cliffs around Petra" (Jamieson, 228). The names of the sons of Seir who became heads of tribes are listed here, as were the ducal descendants of Esau in the earlier part of the chapter. Their form of government must have been the same as that which was first adopted in Edom—that of *alluphim* or *shieks*—exercising independent authority over district tribes. These chiefs were Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, Dishan.

6. *The Kings of Edom* (vv. 31-39; 1 Chron. 1:43-50).

"*The kings in the land of Edom,*" that is, "before the children of Israel had a king" (K-D). "'Before an Israelite king ruled Edom,' rather than the sense understood by the Greek: 'before a king ruled in Israel'" (JB, 59). It is interesting to note "in connection with the eight kings mentioned here, that whilst they follow one another, that is to say, one never comes to the throne till his predecessor is dead, yet the son never succeeds the father, but they all belong to different families and places, and in the case of the last the statement that 'he died' is wanting. From this it is unquestionably obvious that the sovereignty was elective: that the kings were chosen by the phylarchs, and, as Isa. 34:12 also shows, that they lived or reigned contemporaneously with these. The contemporaneous existence of the *Alluphim* and the kings may also be inferred from Exo. 15:15 as compared with Num. 20:14ff. Whilst it was with the king of Edom that Moses treated respecting the passage through the land, in the song of Moses it is the princes who tremble with fear on account of the miraculous passage of the Red Sea (cf. Ezek. 32:29). Lastly, this is also supposed by the fact, that the account of the seats of the phylarchs (vers. 40-43) follows the list of the kings. . . . Of all the kings of Edom, not one is named elsewhere" (K-D, 326). "Of the last king, *Hadar* (v. 39; not Hadad, as it is written in 1 Chron. 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 (1 Chron. 1:51). This can be explained easily enough from the simple fact, that at the time when the table was first drawn up. Hadad was still alive and seated upon the throne. In all probability, therefore, Hadad was the king of Edom, to whom Moses applied for permission to pass through the land (Num. 20:14ff.). At any rate the list is evidently a record relating to the Edomitish

king of a pre-Mosaic age. But if this is the case, the heading, v. 31, does not refer to the time when the monarchy was introduced into Israel under Saul, but was written with the promise in mind, that kings should come out of the loins of Jacob (35:11, cf. 17:4ff.), and merely expresses the thought, that Edom became a kingdom at an earlier period than Israel. Such a thought was by no means inappropriate to the Mosaic age. For the idea, 'that Israel was destined to grow into a kingdom with monarchs of his own family, was a hope handed down to the age of Moses, which the long residence in Egypt was well adapted to foster' (Delitzsch)" (K-D, 328). Concerning v. 31, especially the statement, *before there reigned any king over the children of Israel*, Jamieson interprets: that is, "previous to the time of Moses, who was virtually the first king of Israel (cf. Exod. 18:16-19 with Deut. 33:5), though the words are usually considered as pointing to the reign of Saul." Skinner writes: "This may mean either before the institution of the monarchy in Israel, or before any Israelitish sovereign ruled over Edom. The natural *terminus ad quem* is, of course, the overthrow of the Edomite independence by David. The document bears every mark of authenticity, and may be presumed to give a complete list of Edomite kings. Unfortunately the chronology is wanting. An average reign of 20 years for the eight kings is perhaps a reasonable allowance in early unsettled times; and the foundation of the Edomite monarchy may be dated approximately from 150 to 200 years before the time of David" (ICCG, 434). Concerning this monarchy Skinner adds: "The monarchy was obviously not hereditary, none of the kings being the son of his predecessor; that it was elective is more than we have a right to assume. Frazer finds here an illustration of his theory of female succession, the crown passing to men of other families who married the hereditary princesses; but v. 39 is fatal to this view. The fact that the kings reigned in different

cities supports an opinion that they were analogous to the Hebrew Judges, *i.e.*, local chiefs who held supreme power during their life, but were unable to establish a dynasty. A beginning of the recognition of the hereditary principle may be traced in the story of Hadad 'of the seed of royal' (1 Ki. 11:14ff.), who is regarded as heir-presumptive to the throne" (*ibid.*, 435). Suffice it here to conclude with the opinions of the Rabbis: "*These are the kings.*" Eight are enumerated, and corresponding to this number eight descended from Jacob who overthrew Edom's independence, making it tributary. The eight are: Saul, Ishbosheth, David, Solomon, Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa and Jehoshaphat. In the reign of Joram, Jehoshaphat's son, Edom rebelled and regained its independence (2 Ki. 8:20) (Rashi). '*Before there reigned any king over the children of Israel.*' Some believe that this phrase was written prophetically. Yitschaki maintained that it was written in the time of Jehoshaphat, but for expressing this opinion his book deserves to be burnt. *King* here refers to Moses, and the meaning is that Edom had eight kings before the time of Moses (Ibn Ezra). Sforno explains similarly" (SC, 218).

Again this word from Maimonides (GP, 382): "The kings that have reigned in the land of Edom are enumerated (Gen. 36:31ff.) on account of the law, 'Thou mayst not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother' (Deut. 17:15). For of these kings none was an Edomite; wherefore each king is described by his native land: one king from this place, another king from that place. Now I think that it was then well known how these kings that reigned in Edom conducted themselves, what they did, and how they humiliated and oppressed the sons of Esau. Thus God reminded the Israelites of the fate of the Edomites, as if saying unto them, Look unto your brothers, the sons of Esau, whose kings were so and so, and whose deeds are well known. Learn therefrom that no nation

ever chose a foreigner as king without inflicting thereby some great or small injury upon the country."

7. *More Chiefs of Edom* (vv. 40-43; cf. 1 Chron. 1:51-54).

K-D entitle this section: *Seats of the Tribe-Princes of Esau according to their Families*. It seems evident from the wording of the caption here, "after their places, by their names," by way of comparison with v. 43, "according to their habitations in the land of their possession," that the names that follow v. 31 are not a second list of Edomite tribal princes (that is, of those who continued the ancient regime, with its hereditary aristocracy, after the death of Hadar), but refer to the capital cities of the old phylarchs. Therefore there is nothing surprising in the fact that out of the eleven names only two correspond to those given in vv. 15-19. "This proves nothing more than that only two of the capitals received their names from the princes who captured or founded them, viz. *Timah* and *Kenaz*. Neither of these has been discovered as yet" (K-D, 328). *Abolibamah* (site unknown) probably got its name from the Horite princess (v. 25). Pinon apparently is *Pbunon*, an encampment of the Israelites (Num. 33:42-43), celebrated for its mines, between Petra and Zoar, in which many Christians were condemned to hard labor under the Roman emperor, Diocletian. Some authorities hold that *Mibzar* is Petra; but this is called *Selab* (2 Ki. 14:7), we are told by way of objection. The objection, however, is not valid, because in the ASV and the RSV, this term is actually translated as "the rock," seemingly an allusion to *Petra* (cf. Judg. 1:36, 2 Chron. 25:12, Obad. 3). As far as we know, the names of the other capitals or districts in the list have not as yet been identified. The concluding sentence, *This is Esau, the father* (founder) *of Edom*, (that is, from him sprang the great nation of the Edomites, with its princes and kings, upon the mountains of Seir), both terminates this section and prepares the way for the

history of the later life of Jacob, and particularly for what is often designated *the Saga of Joseph*.

Much light has now been shed, we are told, on the Edomite names in these lists from inscriptions gathered in recent years, notably through the excavations of Jaussen and Savignac. So writes Kraeling. He adds: "The allusion to the Horites (Gen. 36:20ff., cf. 14:6) requires brief attention. We are told in Deut. 2:12, 22, that they were an earlier population whom the Edomites dispossessed. The name was formerly thought to mean 'cave dwellers,' but the Egyptian inscriptions provided a name *Kharu*, which was used for southern Syria, and this was found comparable to the name Horites. Since the decipherment of the Hittite inscriptions, the *Kburri* (from whom the Egyptian name was doubtless derived) have become well known as an element in Mesopotamia and Armenia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries B.C. The Mitannians belonged to this group, and a Hurrian grammar has even been written in recent years. According to the laws of the Hebrew language *Kburri* would become *Khorim-Horites*, and so the equation is perfect. That some Hurrian group got down as far as Edom and held control there for a time need not be doubted. It is easier to believe than the suggestion that Horites is an error for Hivites, in three different connections. In the period of migration, splinter groups often push very far in their desperate search for a place to settle. Such groups bring little with them that is distinctive and that could be found archaeologically" (BA, 89). The survey of Nelson Glueck in 1936-38, this author goes on to say, has shown that the early agricultural civilization in this region, as in Moab and points farther north, was wiped out about 1900-1750 B.C. This was the time of the Amorite migration, and it seems reasonable to believe that the Amorites were the agent of destruction. There is no mention of Edomite places in the Amarna letters of the fourteenth century. About 1300

B.C., however, so Glueck discovered, a new agricultural civilization arose in Edom. Its founders could have been the Horites, who then were soon succeeded by the Edomites" (BA, 89). (We do not have space here to delve into the problems associated with the respective identities of the Hurrians, Hivites, Horites, Hittites, Canaanites, etc. Dr. Speiser has some very pertinent suggestions about this problem which the student may want to investigate: see ABG, pp. 280-283). Unfortunately, most of the late modern critics seem obsessed with the notion that the names of these persons whose lives are narrated in the Patriarchal Age were not names of persons, but names of tribal groups rather than the names of their eponymic founder-ancestors. This notion must be evaluated as purely gratuitous. The same assumption has generally prevailed with respect to the "heroes" of early Greek and Roman times. However, archaeology has definitely proved that these names are not mythical, not even legendary, one might well say, but names of actual personages; and the events associated with their names have been proved to have been actual historical events. No more positive proof of this fact could be offered than the story of the Siege of Troy.

REVIEW QUESTIONS ON PART FORTY-FOUR

1. Give the subdivisions of this chapter as suggested by Keil and Delitzsch and by *The Jerusalem Bible*.
2. Explain the phrase, "Esau, who is Edom."
3. For what purpose is the line (*toledoth*) of Esau inserted at this point? How is this method in line with that of the entire content of Genesis?
4. Where and when does Esau himself disappear from the narrative?
5. What probably brought about the separation of the tribes of Esau and Jacob?

GENESIS

6. How was the divine promise of Gen. 27:39-40 fulfilled for Esau?
7. In what way does the separation of Esau and Jacob remind us of that which took place between Abraham and Lot?
8. In what respect were the patriarchs at a great disadvantage with regard to the land of Canaan?
9. Where was Mount Seir? What Biblical events are associated with this region?
10. What are the most significant references to it in the Old Testament?
11. Name Esau's wives and their sons as they were in Canaan.
12. What specific reason is assigned Scripturally for Esau's migration to Seir?
13. Which one of Esau's grandsons came to figure most prominently in Old Testament history?
14. Trace the relationship between the Israelites and the Amalekites as presented in the patriarchal records.
15. What specific command did God enjoin with respect to the Amalekites? Tell the story of Saul's disobedience to this command and the consequences thereof.
16. What is the Maimonidean explanation of the Divine purpose in inserting the various Edomite genealogies into the Old Testament record? What principle does he lay down with respect to these O.T. stories?
17. Could the fact that Amalek was the son of a concubine have affected his separation from his people? What was the general geographical distribution of the Amalekites, and what does this suggest?
18. When and by whom were the Amalekites exterminated?
19. In connection with Gen. 15:16, what does this ultimate destruction of the Amalekites teach us with respect to Divine Providence?

EDOMITE GENEALOGIES

20. What general function did the *clan-chiefs* of Edom serve? What general names are applied to them?
21. What does the name *Horite* mean? Does this have any significance in identifying this people?
22. How is this people to be associated with the topology of the country around the rock-city of Petra?
23. What are some of the possible conclusions with respect to Hadad, king of Edom?
24. What are various interpretations of the clause 31b?
25. What significance is there in the fact that the eight kings named in vv. 31-39 did not succeed one another in the royal office? State the views of Keil-Delitzsch, Skinner, Jamieson, Sir James Frazier, and the Rabbis on this subject.
26. What is the Maimonidean explanation of this listing of the kings that reigned in Edom, as these are given in vv. 31-39?
27. Explain what is meant by the phrases in v. 40, "*after their places, by their names.*"
28. Why is it generally considered that the names in section (vv. 40-43) are names of districts or their capital cities?
29. What special significance is attached to the name *Pinon*?
30. For what further development of the Biblical story does the last statement in v. 43 prepare us?
31. What archaeological discoveries by Glueck and others throw light on the history of Edom and especially on the succession of peoples that occupied this region?
32. What is the great fallacy (*a priori*) that characterizes the conclusions of modern critics with reference to the names of the patriarchs and their descendants?