

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY
Genesis 34-36 – RAPE OF DINAH AND RETURN TO BETHEL

Genesis 34 (NRSV)

34 Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to visit the women of the region.² When Shechem son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the region, saw her, he seized her and lay with her by force.³ And his soul was drawn to Dinah daughter of Jacob; he loved the girl, and spoke tenderly to her.⁴ So Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, "Get me this girl to be my wife."

⁵ Now Jacob heard that Shechem had defiled his daughter Dinah; but his sons were with his cattle in the field, so Jacob held his peace until they came.⁶ And Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him,⁷ just as the sons of Jacob came in from the field. When they heard of it, the men were indignant and very angry, because he had committed an outrage in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, for such a thing ought not to be done.

⁸ But Hamor spoke with them, saying, "The heart of my son Shechem longs for your daughter; please give her to him in marriage.⁹ Make marriages with us; give your daughters to us, and take our daughters for yourselves.¹⁰ You shall live with us; and the land shall be open to you; live and trade in it, and get property in it."¹¹ Shechem also said to her father and to her brothers, "Let me find favor with you, and whatever you say to me I will give.¹² Put the marriage present and gift as high as you like, and I will give whatever you ask me; only give me the girl to be my wife."

¹³ The sons of Jacob answered Shechem and his father Hamor deceitfully, because he had defiled their sister Dinah.¹⁴ They said to them, "We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one who is uncircumcised, for that would be a disgrace to us.¹⁵ Only on this condition will we consent to you: that you will become as we are and every male among you be circumcised.¹⁶ Then we will give our daughters to you, and we will take your daughters for ourselves, and we will live among you and become one people.¹⁷ But if you will not listen to us and be circumcised, then we will take our daughter and be gone."

¹⁸ Their words pleased Hamor and Hamor's son Shechem.¹⁹ And the young man did not delay to do the thing, because he was delighted with Jacob's daughter. Now he was the most honored of all his family.²⁰ So Hamor and his son Shechem came to the gate of their city and spoke to the men of their city, saying,²¹ "These people are friendly with us; let them live in the land and trade in it, for the land is large enough for them; let us take their daughters in marriage, and let us give them our daughters.²² Only on this condition will they agree to live among us, to become one people: that every male among us be circumcised as they are circumcised.²³ Will not their livestock, their property, and all their animals be ours? Only let us agree with them, and they will live among us."²⁴ And all who went out of the city gate heeded Hamor and his son Shechem; and every male was circumcised, all who went out of the gate of his city.

²⁵ On the third day, when they were still in pain, two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, took their swords and came against the city unawares, and killed all the males.²⁶ They killed Hamor and his son Shechem with the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went away.²⁷ And the other sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and plundered the city, because their sister had been defiled.²⁸ They took their flocks and their herds, their donkeys, and whatever was in the city and in the field.²⁹ All their wealth, all their little ones and their wives, all that was in the houses, they captured and made their prey.³⁰ Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have brought trouble on me by making me odious to the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites and the Perizzites; my numbers are few, and if they gather themselves against me and attack me, I shall be destroyed, both I and my household."³¹ But they said, "Should our sister be treated like a whore?"

Source Theory: J Source – normal; E source = **Bold**; P Source = *italicized*; Redactor = ***Bold Italicized***

GENESIS 34 – THE RAPE OF DINAH

This chapter and story is all J Source. Dinah, the only daughter of Jacob, is raped by Shechem, the prince and son of Hamor (whose name is the Hebrew word for a female donkey), a member of the ruling Canaanite family. But then, in a move not typical of rapists, Shechem seeks to have her become his wife. Jacob responds with prudence and care and begins negotiations with Shechem's family. But Jacob's sons resist and after Shechem says that he will do whatever they deceitfully say that they can only give their sister if Shechem and all the men of their town are circumcised. And so, they do as had been requested of them, they and all the men of the city.

But then, on the third day, when they were still in pain, two of the brothers, Simeon and Levi, take the initiative and follow through on their deceit, breaking faith with their new blood brothers. They murder Shechem and his father, and every male in town; they take all the women and children and pillage the city. The irony is that they use the covenant promise of circumcision, which meant life to them, as a vehicle for deception, violence and death. The specific reference to Dinah's mother establishes that Simeon and Levi (v. 25) are her full brothers, not half-brothers. This helps explain why Simeon and Levi are especially incensed at the rape of their sister in this chapter. Jacob is not happy and then becomes fearful of the surrounding peoples. But the brothers insist that their sister shouldn't be treated like a whore. Later in Genesis, Jacob will sharply condemn the violent actions of Simeon and Levi (see Genesis 49:5-7)

In the concluding exchange (34:30-31) Jacob stands in opposition to what the brothers have done. In turn, their question is narrow and self-serving, raising a new issue, namely, harlotry (34:31); once again, their shame seems to be the focus of their attention rather than Dinah. Later, Jacob will sharply condemn the violent actions and anger of Simeon and Levi (Gen 49:5-7).

SHECHEM – שֵׁכֶם – (His name probably means "Shoulder" or "Saddle" of a mount). Hamor's son, who raped Jacob's daughter Dinah (Gen 34:2). After the sexual encounter Shechem came to love Dinah and wanted to marry her (v 3). He proceeded to speak feelingly to the girl to persuade her to become his wife. Dinah seems to have remained in Shechem's house (v 26) while he and his father obtained from her family its consent to a marriage (vv 8–17). Hamor proposed that his people and Jacob's intermarry and offered to let the Israelites settle in his territory. The sons of Jacob countered by requiring that all of the city's males be circumcised. Davidson says circumcision for the Shechemites would have been a mark that they now belonged to Yahweh's chosen community. Von Rad however believes that only at a much later period did circumcision receive conscious theological significance and that the acceptance of faith in the God of Abraham was not suggested in the demand of Jacob's sons. In either case Shechem and his fellow citizens regarded circumcision as a trivial price to pay for an alliance which would have potentially increased their own power and wealth (v 23). But on the third day Simeon and Levi massacred the town's men, who lay incapacitated with fever, and fetched their sister (25–26). According to Von Rad (p. 335) the narrative depicts a prehistoric conflict of the tribes Simeon and Levi in the region around the town Shechem, which means "shoulder of mountain." The Shechemites appear anomalously in the apocryphal Book of Judith, 5:16 in a list of peoples dispossessed from the Promised Land. This inclusion may represent the author's hostility to Samaritans and especially to Shechem, which Samaritan refugees rebuilt in the Hellenistic period and which John Hyrcanus I may have taken by the time the book was written. Or the addition of Shechem could be in anticipation of Judith's denunciation (9:2) of him for raping Dinah and recollection (vv 3–4) of the subsequent taking over of his territory.

HAMOR – הַמֹּר – (His name means "Male Donkey"; See Genesis 12:36 for it being used in reference to Male Donkeys). The father of Shechem (Gen 33:19). When Jacob returned from Paddan-aram, he purchased from the sons of Hamor a piece of land, upon which he erected an altar (33:19–20). Presumably the sale happened in the presence of the representatives of the place (cf. chap. 23). Joseph was later buried there at Shechem (Josh 24:32) when his remains were removed from Egypt to Canaan. Stephen jumbled two stories when he said that "Jacob and our fathers" were buried at Shechem in a plot bought by Abraham from the sons of Hamor (Acts 7:16). Actually Jacob was buried at Machpelah in a plot bought by Abraham from the "sons of

Heth" (Gen 50:13). Hamor's son Shechem raped Jacob's daughter Dinah (34:2). At Shechem's request, Hamor, without mentioning the violation, asked for Dinah to be given in marriage to his son (vv 4–8). Both agreed to the condition of circumcision, only to be killed in that weakened state by Simeon and Levi three days later out of revenge (vv 13–29). Hamor was the prince or chief of the region around the city (v 2) However, the textual tradition appears confused about whether the tribe of which Hamor was head was Hivite (Masoretic Text) or Horite (LXX Septuagint)—cf. Josh 9:7; also note Gen 36:2, 20. These terms seem to overlap to some extent, a circumstance which was historically grounded in contacts between the two groups to the N of Canaan proper. The Hamor clan remained dominant at Shechem into the time of the judges. According to Judg 9:28, depending on how one understands the passage, either Abimelech and his deputy were put in office by the Hamorite aristocracy or the Shechemites were being urged back to traditional ways—viz., those of serving the "men of Hamor." Since the name Hamor means "(he-)ass," the MB practice among Amorites at the W Mesopotamian city-state Mari of ratifying a treaty by sacrificing an ass comes to mind. Some have supposed that the expression, "sons of the ass/Hamor," applied to the Shechemites several times, might have designated "members of a confederacy." Others have objected that although sacredness of the animal may account for the name, Hamor was an individual.

CANAANITES – כְּנַעֲנִי – The name can either mean a "tradesman" or "merchant" or "someone who is humbled" as it could come from the western Semitic root *kn* "to bend, to bow." Canaan was the son of Ham and the grandson of Noah. He is first encountered in the story of Noah's drunkenness (Gen. 9:18–27). Noah becomes drunk, lies uncovered in a tent, and his son Ham sees him naked. In retribution for this impropriety, Noah curses Ham's son Canaan. Canaan is to be a slave, a curse that may reflect the fate of some elements of the Canaanite population in Israel (Judg. 1:28). Canaan next appears in the "Table of Nations" (Gen. 10:6, 15–20) as brother of Put (Libya), Cush (Ethiopia), and Egypt. He is reckoned the father of Sidon, Heth, the Jebusites, and a host of other peoples living in the land of Israel. This expresses in the form of genealogy the human geography of early Israel: the Canaanites were the recent inhabitants of much of the land that became Israel. Thus, the native inhabitants of the land are sometimes simply called "Canaanites" (12:6).

PERIZZITES – פְּרִזִּי – The name Perizzite is identical to the noun פְּרוּזִי, meaning "rural" or "country folk," "villager." One of the older population groups of the land of Canaan, usually listed as one of the six or seven groups inhabiting the land (Exod. 3:8, 17; 23:23; 33:2; 34:11; Deut. 7:1; 20:17; Josh. 3:10; 9:1; 11:3; 12:8; 24:11; Judg. 3:5; 1 Kings 9:20; cf. Gen. 15:20). Occasionally the Perizzites are mentioned with the Canaanites as the two native peoples of Canaan (Gen. 13:7; 34:30; Judg. 1:4–5). They evidently lived in the central highlands, particularly the forested hill country of Ephraim (cf. Josh. 17:15; Judg. 1:4–5). Their identity is uncertain. Some have connected them with the Hurrians; others, with the Amorites.

The name Canaanite appears to have applied mostly to the urban society. The urban society had a complex economy, was endowed with functional diversity and was stratified into classes. It had political leaders, a wisdom class, a central treasury and collective storehouses of accumulated surplus, and a class of professional soldiers to guard and enforce rule. The name Perizzite appears to have referred to people who wanted none of all of that, who rejected urban living, centralized leadership and complex technology.

Genesis 35 (NRSV)

35 God said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel, and settle there. Make an altar there to the God who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau." ² So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Put away the foreign gods that are among you, and purify yourselves, and change your clothes; ³ then come, let us go up to Bethel, that I may make an altar there to the God who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me wherever I have gone." ⁴ So they gave to Jacob all the foreign gods that they had, and the rings that were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak that was near Shechem.

⁵ As they journeyed, a terror from God fell upon the cities all around them, so that no one pursued them. ⁶ Jacob came to Luz (that is, Bethel), which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him, ⁷ and there he built an altar and called the place El-bethel, because it was there that God had revealed himself to him when he fled from his brother. ⁸ And Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and she was buried under an oak below Bethel. So it was called Allon-bacuth.

⁹ God appeared to Jacob **again when he came from Paddan-aram**, and he blessed him. ¹⁰ God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; no longer shall you be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name." So he was called Israel. ¹¹ God said to him, "I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall spring from you. ¹² The land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac I will give to you, and I will give the land to your offspring after you." ¹³ Then God went up from him at the place where he had spoken with him. ¹⁴ Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he had spoken with him, a pillar of stone; and he poured out a drink offering on it, and poured oil on it. ¹⁵ So Jacob called the place where God had spoken with him Bethel.

¹⁶ **Then they journeyed from Bethel**; and when they were still some distance from Ephrath, Rachel was in childbirth, and she had hard labor. ¹⁷ When she was in her hard labor, the midwife said to her, "Do not be afraid; for now you will have another son." ¹⁸ As her soul was departing (for she died), she named him Ben-oni; but his father called him Benjamin. ¹⁹ So Rachel died, and she was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem), ²⁰ and Jacob set up a pillar at her grave; it is the pillar of Rachel's tomb, which is there to this day. ²¹ Israel journeyed on, and pitched his tent beyond the tower of Eder.

²² While Israel lived in that land, Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine; and Israel heard of it. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve. ²³ The sons of Leah: Reuben (Jacob's firstborn), Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. ²⁴ The sons of Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin. ²⁵ The sons of Bilhah, Rachel's maid: Dan and Naphtali. ²⁶ The sons of Zilpah, Leah's maid: Gad and Asher. These were the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Paddan-aram.

²⁷ Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre, or Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had resided as aliens. ²⁸ Now the days of Isaac were one hundred eighty years. ²⁹ And Isaac breathed his last; he died and was gathered to his people, old and full of days; and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

Source Theory: J Source – normal; E source = **Bold**; P Source = *italicized*; Redactor = ***Bold Italicized***

ALTARS IN GENESIS

Noah's altar	Genesis 8:20–22
Abram's altar at Moreh	Genesis 12:6–7 (compare Genesis 22:2)
Abram's altar between Bethel and Ai	Genesis 12:8 (compare Genesis 13:3–4)
Abram's altar at Mamre/Hebron	Genesis 13:18
Abraham's altar at Moriah	Genesis 22:2, 9 (compare Genesis 12:6–7)
Isaac's altar at Beersheba	Genesis 26:25
Jacob's altar at Shechem	Genesis 33:20
Jacob's altar at Bethel	Genesis 35:1–7

CHAPTER 35 – RETURN TO BETHEL AND THE BIRTH OF BENJAMIN

This chapter is said to be a mix from multiple sources. God then tells Jacob to go to Bethel and to settle there. Jacob tells all his family to put away their foreign gods (idols) and purify themselves, so that they can build an altar there. They give their idols to Jacob and he buries them under the oak at Shechem. God protects them on their journey and none of the other warlords follow them.

Once again God appears and blesses Jacob and changes his name once and for all to Israel. God says that he is El Shaddai, God almighty. He tells him to be fruitful and multiply, saying that a nation and a company of nations will come from him, a continuation of the promise made to Abraham and to Isaac. Jacob set up a

pillar of stone and poured out a drink offering on it and poured oil on it and called that place Bethel (which means “house of God”).

As they journey from that place, Rachel then has a hard time in childbirth. As she is dying, she names him Ben-oni (which means “son of my sorrow”), but Jacob calls him Benjamin (which means “Son of the right hand”). Rachel dies and is buried on the way to Ephrath (that is Bethlehem). Jacob sets up another pillar there.

Then we have some strange reporting. Apparently, Reuben (Jacob’s firstborn son) slept with his father’s concubine Bilhah and Israel learned of it. But we hear nothing more about it until much later in Genesis 49:3-4 where we learn that he loses his birthright inheritance because of it. We are then given the names of the twelve sons of Jacob and told that Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre (Hebron) before Isaac died at age 180 and both Isaac and Esau buried him there. Chapter 36 is going to be all about the sons of Esau and their descendants.

EL SHADDAI – אֱלֹהֵי שָׁדַי – The Hebrew phrase used here, el shadday, which is commonly translated “God Almighty” or “the Almighty God,” is translated as such based on English translation tradition; however, this is not based on the original Hebrew but how the Septuagint (the ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament) translates shadday in the book of Job (Job 5:17; 8:5). Shadday is similar to the Hebrew term shad, meaning “breast” (Ezekiel 23:3,21,34; Song of Songs 4:5; 7:3), but “God of breasts” is not a reasonable translation. The possibly related Akkadian word shadu (meaning “mountain”)—along with the abundant testimony in the OT associating God with mountains (e.g., Sinai)—suggests that the word means “God of the mountain” or “God of the mountainous wilderness.” God is called this name in Genesis and in Exodus (Genesis 17:1; 28:3; 35:11; 48:3; Exodus 6:3).

BETHEL – בֵּית־אֵל – The name Bethel is made up of two words in Hebrew *bêt* “house, temple” + *‘ēl* “God”), thus it means “house of God.” The name of two places mentioned in the Hebrew Bible. An important town in the central hill country of Palestine, located N of Jerusalem and very close to Ai. Next to Jerusalem, this Bethel is the most frequently occurring place name in the OT, referring both to a city and to a religious sanctuary which was either in or near the city. Two factors, somewhat interrelated, are responsible for the importance of Bethel: (1) it was associated with a religious sanctuary; and (2) it lay along a crossroads and near a physical and political frontier that divided the central hill country of Palestine into two parts. Bethel became established in the Bible as a sanctuary by association with events in the lives of Abraham and Jacob. When Abram wandered South from Shechem, he pitched his tent and built an altar between Bethel and Ai (Gen 12:8), and on his return from Egypt he revisited this sacred place (Gen 13:3, 4). Jacob in his flight from Beersheba to Haran stayed there and had the famous nocturnal vision of angels ascending and descending. In the morning when he awoke, Jacob erected a pillar to mark this sacred place. Jacob called the place Bethel although the city was called Luz (Gen 28:10–22). Many years later Jacob returned to this place on his way home from Haran; he set up another altar and called the place El-Bethel (Gen 35:7). He also set up a pillar and again named the place Bethel (Gen 35:15). These biblical descriptions of events concerning Bethel are puzzling. Should a distinction be made between Bethel, a name for a sacred place, and Bethel, a name of a settlement? When did the name of the settlement Luz become Bethel?

SHECHEM – שֵׁכֶם – A city located forty-one miles north of Jerusalem in the pass between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. It dominated an important trade route and controlled a fertile valley to the east where Jacob’s sons pastured their flocks (Gen. 37:12–14). Shechem was a Korathite levitical city of refuge in the territory of Manasseh (Josh. 17:2, 7), although it is also described as being “in the hill country of Ephraim” (20:7). The Ancestral Period: Shechem was the first city visited by Abraham in his migration from Haran (Gen. 12:6), but it figures most prominently in the traditions associated with Jacob. It was the scene of the rape of Dinah by Shechem, the son of Hamor, king of Shechem (Gen. 34; note that in the narrative of the event the prince and the city have the same name). During excavation in the east gate, the decapitated skeleton of a donkey

was found, with what appeared to be the bones of an animal sacrifice nearby. The ass was probably the sacred animal of the city; the name Hamor means “ass” in Hebrew.

THE OAK OF SHECHEM – The narratives about the patriarchs of Israel (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) provide insights into the faith of God’s people before the establishment of the priesthood, tabernacle, and Law. Trees play a particularly interesting role in this faith. Sites marked by trees often became associated with appearances of Yahweh that involved divine revelation. For example, in Genesis 12:6–7, the oak at Shechem commemorated Yahweh’s appearance to Abram with the promises of the covenant. Later, in Genesis 35:4, it marked the place where Jacob buried his family’s idols to fulfill a vow to Yahweh. Due to these events, the oak at Shechem became a sacred site; it was considered a place of divine residence and encounter many years after the patriarchs. In Joshua 24:25–27, Joshua erected a stone at the oak of Shechem containing a portion of the Word of God. The site was chosen for its significance as a holy place (miqdash, “sanctuary”) for the God of Israel. In Judges 9:5–6, Gideon’s son, Abimelech, was declared king “by the oak of the pillar at Shechem.” The “pillar” at the town of Shechem also appears later in the same chapter. There, the tree is associated with divine revelation (Judges 9:34–37).

HEBRON – הֶבְרֹן – (Also known as Mamre – מַמְרָה; also known as Kiriath-arba – קִרְיַת הָאַרְבָּע). Hebron was located about 20 miles southwest of Jerusalem and 23 miles northeast of Beer-sheba. An important city located on the crest (ca. 3350 ft. elev.) of the Judean mountain ridge. Hebron factors in the biblical narratives from the patriarchal period and the monarchy. Abraham lived in the vicinity for some time and eventually purchased a cave at Machpelah in the valley below in order to bury Sarah (Genesis 23). Later Abraham himself was buried there in the cave (Gen 25:9–10), as was Isaac (Gen 35:27–29) and Rebekah, Leah, and Jacob. David was anointed king at Hebron (2 Samuel 2:4), and the city was his capital for the first seven and a half years of his reign over Judah (2 Samuel 5:4–5). Perhaps attempting to follow David’s example, Absalom declared himself king in Hebron, starting a revolt against his father David (2 Samuel 15:7–12).

Genesis 36 (NRSV)

36 *These are the descendants of Esau (that is, Edom).² Esau took his wives from the Canaanites: Adah daughter of Elon the Hittite, Oholibamah daughter of Anah son of Zibeon the Hivite,³ and Basemath, Ishmael’s daughter, sister of Nebaioth.⁴ Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau; Basemath bore Reuel;⁵ and Oholibamah bore Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. These are the sons of Esau who were born to him in the land of Canaan.*

⁶ *Then Esau took his wives, his sons, his daughters, and all the members of his household, his cattle, all his livestock, and all the property he had acquired in the land of Canaan; and he moved to a land some distance from his brother Jacob.⁷ For their possessions were too great for them to live together; the land where they were staying could not support them because of their livestock.⁸ So Esau settled in the hill country of Seir; Esau is Edom.*

⁹ *These are the descendants of Esau, ancestor of the Edomites, in the hill country of Seir.¹⁰ These are the names of Esau’s sons: Eliphaz son of Adah the wife of Esau; Reuel, the son of Esau’s wife Basemath.¹¹ The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz.¹² (Timna was a concubine of Eliphaz, Esau’s son; she bore Amalek to Eliphaz.) These were the sons of Adah, Esau’s wife.¹³ These were the sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. These were the sons of Esau’s wife, Basemath.¹⁴ These were the sons of Esau’s wife Oholibamah, daughter of Anah son of Zibeon: she bore to Esau Jeush, Jalam, and Korah.*

¹⁵ *These are the clans of the sons of Esau. The sons of Eliphaz the firstborn of Esau: the clans Teman, Omar, Zepho, Kenaz,¹⁶ Korah, Gatam, and Amalek; these are the clans of Eliphaz in the land of Edom; they are the sons of Adah.¹⁷ These are the sons of Esau’s son Reuel: the clans Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah; these are the clans of Reuel in the land of Edom; they are the sons of Esau’s wife Basemath.¹⁸ These are the sons of Esau’s wife Oholibamah: the clans Jeush, Jalam, and Korah; these are the clans born of Esau’s wife Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah.¹⁹ These are the sons of Esau (that is, Edom), and these are their clans.*

²⁰ These are the sons of Seir the Horite, the inhabitants of the land: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, ²¹ Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan; these are the clans of the Horites, the sons of Seir in the land of Edom. ²² The sons of Lotan were Hori and Heman; and Lotan's sister was Timna. ²³ These are the sons of Shobal: Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam. ²⁴ These are the sons of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah; he is the Anah who found the springs in the wilderness, as he pastured the donkeys of his father Zibeon. ²⁵ These are the children of Anah: Dishon and Oholibamah daughter of Anah. ²⁶ These are the sons of Dishon: Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran. ²⁷ These are the sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan. ²⁸ These are the sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran. ²⁹ These are the clans of the Horites: the clans Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, ³⁰ Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan; these are the clans of the Horites, clan by clan in the land of Seir.

³¹ These are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom, before any king reigned over the Israelites. ³² Bela son of Beor reigned in Edom, the name of his city being Dinhabah. ³³ Bela died, and Jobab son of Zerah of Bozrah succeeded him as king. ³⁴ Jobab died, and Husham of the land of the Temanites succeeded him as king.

³⁵ Husham died, and Hadad son of Bedad, who defeated Midian in the country of Moab, succeeded him as king, the name of his city being Avith. ³⁶ Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah succeeded him as king.

³⁷ Samlah died, and Shaul of Rehoboth on the Euphrates succeeded him as king. ³⁸ Shaul died, and Baal-hanan son of Achbor succeeded him as king. ³⁹ Baal-hanan son of Achbor died, and Hadar succeeded him as king, the name of his city being Pau; his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, daughter of Me-zahab.

⁴⁰ These are the names of the clans of Esau, according to their families and their localities by their names: the clans Timna, Alvah, Jetheth, ⁴¹ Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, ⁴² Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, ⁴³ Magdiel, and Iram; these are the clans of Edom (that is, Esau, the father of Edom), according to their settlements in the land that they held.

Source Theory: J Source – normal; E source = **Bold**; P Source = *italicized*; Redactor = **Bold Italicized**

CHAPTER 36: This chapter is said to be a mixture of P Source and J Source.

ESAU'S GENEALOGY – The appearance of Esau's genealogy here follows an established pattern. Before continuing the story of the chosen line, the author of Genesis ties up loose ends by telling what happened to Jephthah and Ham (Gen. 10), to Ishmael (Gen. 25), and now to Esau (Gen. 36). These genealogies are more than a literary device. They remind us that even those not in the covenant line are remembered by God.

SECOND GENEALOGY OF ESAU – The second genealogy of Esau is divided into four sections: Gen 36:9–14, 36:15–19, 36:20–30; and 36:31–43. The first section of this second genealogy (vv. 9–14) repeats the names and relationships of the first one (see vv. 1–4), but it continues the line to the third generation for Adah and Basemath. The sequence of Esau's wives moves according to the descending number of their children.

HIVITES – While Esau's wife Oholibamah is identified as a Hivite here, her ancestors (presumably her father and grandfather—Anah and Zibeon), appear in the genealogy of the descendants of Seir the Horite in vv. 20–30. The Hivites and Horites are likely both names for the same native Canaanite people. In Hebrew, the names differ by one letter and look very similar. Nothing is known of the Hivites outside of the biblical account. They appear in the Table of Nations (10:17) and are often listed among the Canaanite nations (Deuteronomy 7:1; Josh 3:10; Judges 3:3–5). One of the people-groups listed as indigenous to the land of Canaan prior to the Israelite conquest. Table of Nations Refers to the genealogy of Genesis 10 that lists the descendants of Noah.

SEIR – שֵׁעִיר – The migration of Esau and his family clan to Seir at this point in the narrative (Genesis 36:6-8) is chronologically problematic. Earlier Esau was already depicted as living in Seir and then returning to Seir again after his meeting with Jacob (32:3–4; 33:14, 16). Seir is part of the country of Edom and, a synonym for Edom, both in the geographical and the political sense. According to Gen 36:30, "the country of Seir" was inhabited by the Horites, whereas "the sons of Esau" were living in Edom. In Gen 36:20, Seir is personified as a Horite whose descendants live in Edom. In the archaic text of Judg 5:4, "Seir" and "the field of Edom" parallel each other. Seir is frequently referred to as "the mountain," or "mountains of Seir" (Gen 14:6; 36:8–9; Deut 2:1,

etc.). Combined, these references suggest that Seir was a mountainous region which became part of the Edomite state. Etymologically, Seir means “hairy,” whereas Edom signifies “red.” After Seir had become part of Edom (Gen 36:21), “Edom” and “Seir” became synonyms. Thus, Deut 2:12, 22 concluded from the “Horites in Seir, the inhabitants of the country” (Gen 36:20, 30) on the one hand and the “sons of Esau, this is Edom” (Gen 36:19) on the other that the Edomites conquered Seir and annihilated its previous inhabitants.

AMALEK – Amalek is in Esau’s family line by a concubine, Timna. The OT casts the Amalekites as one of Israel’s most bitter foes. The Amalekites are elsewhere not described as part of Edom (see Exod 17:8–15; Num 24:20), likely because they are descendants of a concubine. This may indicate that they were latecomers to the Edomite tribal confederation. This is supported by Gen 36:22, which describes Timna as the sister of Lotan, an indigenous Horite (v. 20). This suggests that the Edomites who migrated to Seir began to intermarry with the native population.

CHAPTER 36 NOTES – Just like with Ishmael and Isaac in Genesis 25, the son who is not the direct heir of God’s covenantal promises to Abraham appears first before the son who is the heir of that promise. The genealogy in the first 5 verses is based on Esau’s two Canaanite wives, Adah and Oholibamah and his third wife Basemath who was Ishmael’s daughter. Together, they have five children. Notice that two of Esau’s wives had different names back in Genesis 26, but it’s likely one name was given in the Canaanite culture, and the second was given in the Hittite culture. According to 36:6, Esau separated from his brother Jacob because he did not think that the land of Canaan was able to support both of their clans (which is an echo of the story of Abraham and Lot). Esau’s settling in Edom is paralleled with Jacob’s settling in Canaan (Gen 37:1). Jacob could settle in Canaan unhindered by the size of Esau’s family and herds, thus avoiding the need for them to separate as did Abraham and Lot (13:5–6).

If you don’t count Amalek who was a son of a concubine [Timna], Esau had 12 male heirs creating twelve tribes. We see this pattern of 12 descendants with Nahor (22:20–24), Ishmael (17:20; 25:13–16), and Jacob/Israel (35:23–26). The list of chiefs in verses 15-18 among Esau’s descendants introduces each grandson as the chief of a clan. This list is almost identical to the genealogy in verses 11–14. It is possible that these differences reflect changes in the standing of the tribes in Edom. In verses 20-30, we read the genealogy of the three generations of Seir the Horite. The sons of Seir the Horite were early inhabitants in Edom who were conquered by Esau as recorded in Deuteronomy 2:12. We also read the story about Anah who was able to find water in such a dry region in verse 24. In verses 31-39, we read about the 8 kings that reigned in Edom before Israel had its first king. According to Numbers 20:14, Edom had a king while Israel was still wandering in the wilderness. Finally, in verses 40-43, we read another list of chiefs who trace their lineage back to Esau. Esau was not the son of promise. Jacob was. Yet God prospered Esau and made him into the great nation of Edom, the strength of which is indicated by the lists of kings and chiefs in this chapter.

SUMMARY OF EDMITES AFTER GENESIS 36

- The Edomites prevented Israel’s passage in Numbers 20:14-21 even though Moses promised no harm and even offered to pay whatever water the Israelites drank.
- David conquered Edom in 2 Samuel 8:13-14, and Edom was subject to Israel during the reign of David and Solomon.
- After Solomon’s death, Edom remained under the control of Judah, though unattested until the time of Jehoshaphat.
- Near the end of Jehoshaphat’s reign, Edom joined enemies of Judah for a raid on En-gedi (2 Chr. 20).
- Edom successfully revolted against Jehoram (849–842), gaining freedom from Judah (2 Kgs. 8:20-22).
- The book of Obadiah is almost exclusively addressing Edom, speaking of Edom’s sins and coming judgment. Jeremiah 49 does the same.
- The end of Edom is shrouded in mystery. We know only that Edom lost its independence in the fifth century B.C., and from about 312 B.C. it was controlled by the Nabateans.