

Esau Son Of Isaac And Rebekah

'Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to be his wife ... Rebekah was barren so Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife then Rebekah conceived. The babies struggled together within her (causing distress). Rebekah said, "If it be so, why do I live?" She went to inquire of the Lord. He said to her, "Two nations are in your womb. Two nations will be separated from your body. One nation will be stronger than the other. The elder child will serve the younger." When her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. The first was born red all over like a hairy garment. They named him Esau (meaning red and hairy). Then his brother was born with his hand holding Esau's heel. He was named Jacob (usurper or supplanter). Isaac was sixty years old when Rebekah bore them. The boys grew. Esau was a skilful hunter, a man of the field. Jacob was a quiet man, living in tents. Isaac favoured Esau because he ate his venison. Rebekah favoured Jacob. After Jacob boiled some stew, Esau came in from the field and was famished. Esau said to Jacob, "Please feed me some red stew, for I am famished." Jacob said, "First, sell me your birthright." Esau said, "Behold, I am about to die. What good is the birthright to me?" Jacob said, "Swear to me first." Esau swore to him. He sold his birthright to Jacob. Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils. He ate and drank, rose up and went his way. Esau trivialised his birthright' (Genesis 25:20 to 34).

Esau had a very promising beginning. He was the son of Isaac and grandson of Abraham. He was a strong, aggressive, red-headed man. As a hunter, he would have needed to be strong. They did not have machinery to carry carcasses back home, but the animals were tied to poles carried by two men. Esau was hungry after a long day of hunting and demanded Jacob give him some food. Esau was more concerned about the immediate future, his stomach, rather than his long-term future, his birthright. For one plate of food, Esau gave up all he should have inherited as the eldest son. His impulsive, impatient nature caused him to miss out. He trivialised his birthright. By the time Isaac was near the end of his life and wanted to bestow all the blessings on Esau, as the eldest would expect, Jacob, with the deceitful help of Rebekah, stole Esau's inheritance too. The blessing Isaac wanted to give Esau was purely economic, not a spiritual blessing. In those days, the father's blessing was like a last Will and Testament. Esau was not happy once he realised he had forfeited the right to his birthright. 'Look carefully lest there be anyone who falls short of the grace of God ... lest there be any wicked person like Esau who sold his birthright for one meal. When afterward, he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected for he found no place for a change of mind though he sought it diligently with tears' (Hebrews 12:15 to 17). 'By faith, Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come' (Hebrews 11:20).

Esau ended up with five wives and apparently only five sons. Judith, Basemath and her sister Adah were Hittite women. 'When Esau was forty years old he married Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. The daughters-in-law grieved Isaac and Rebekah' (Genesis 26:34 & 35). Oholibamah was a Hivite and Mahalath was an Ishmaelite. Esau's sons Eliphaz, Reuel, Jeush, Jalam and Korah were born to him in the land of Canaan (Genesis 36:1 to 5). The Hittite tribe were descendents of Heth, great-grandson of Noah ... Noah – Ham – Canaan – Heth, and they were a very violent tribe of people who engaged in human sacrifices, so we can understand why Isaac and Rebekah, who worshipped God would be aggrieved by those women. Esau and Adah had a son they named Eliphaz, Esau's firstborn (Genesis 36:15). Eliphaz lived in Teman and was called Eliphaz the Temanite. This man, Eliphaz the Temanite was one of the men who was a friend of Job (Job 2:11). By fitting these verses together, we can determine the precise time when Job lived – during the time of Esau and Jacob.

'When Isaac was old and his eyes were dim so he could not see, he called Esau his elder son and said to him, "My son?"

Esau: "Here I am, Father."

Isaac: "See now, I am old. I do not know the day of my death. Please take your quiver and your bow, go out to the field and take me venison. Make me savoury food such as I love and bring it to me so I may eat and so my soul may bless you before I die."

Rebekah heard when Isaac spoke to Esau his favourite son. Esau went to the field to hunt for venison and to bring it to his father. Rebekah spoke to Jacob her favourite son saying, "Behold, I heard your father speak to Esau saying, 'Bring me venison and make me savoury food so I may eat and bless you before the Lord before my death'. My son, obey my voice according to what I command you. Go to the flock and bring to me two good kids of the goats. I will make them savoury food for your father, such as he loves. You will take it to your father so he may eat, so he may bless you before his death."

Jacob: "Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man and I am a smooth man. What if my father touches me? I will seem to him as a deceiver and I would bring a curse on myself, not a blessing."

Rebekah: "Let your curse be on me, my son. Only obey my voice and go to get them for me."

Jacob went and got the goats and brought them to his mother. His mother made savoury food such as Isaac loved. Rebekah took the good clothes of Esau, which were with her in the house and put them on Jacob.

She put the skins of the kids of the goats on his hands and on the smooth of his neck. She gave the savoury food and the bread she had prepared, into the hand of Jacob.

Jacob went to Isaac and said, "My father?"

Isaac: "Here I am. Who are you, my son?"

Jacob: "I am Esau your firstborn. I have done what you asked me to do. Please arise, sit and eat of my venison so your soul may bless me."

Isaac: "How is it that you have found it so quickly, my son?"

Jacob: "Because the Lord gave me success."

Isaac: "Please come near so I may feel you, whether you are really my son Esau or not."

Jacob went near to Isaac who felt his hands and said, "The voice is Jacob's voice but the hands are the hands of Esau." Isaac did not recognize him because his hands were hairy like Esau's hands. So he blessed him. He said, "Are you really my son Esau?"

Jacob: "I am."

Isaac: "Bring the food near to me and I will eat of my son's venison so my soul may bless you."

Jacob brought it near to Isaac and he ate. He brought him wine and he drank. His father Isaac said to him, "Come near now and kiss me, my son." Jacob came near and kissed him. Isaac smelled the smell of his clothing and blessed him saying, "Behold, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed. God give you of the dew of the sky, of the fatness of the earth, plenty of grain and new wine. Let peoples serve you and nations bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers (relatives). Let your mother's (grand)sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you. Blessed be everyone who blesses you." As soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob had just gone out from the presence of Isaac, Esau his brother came in from his hunting. He made savoury food and brought it to his father.

Esau: "Let my father arise and eat of his son's venison so your soul may bless me."

Isaac: "Who are you?"

Esau: "I am your son, your firstborn, Esau."

Isaac trembled violently: "Who then is he who has taken venison and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before you came and have blessed him? Yes, he will be blessed."

When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with an exceeding great and bitter cry and said to his father, "Bless me, even me also, my father."

Isaac: "Your brother came with deceit and has taken away your blessing."

Esau: "He is rightly named Jacob for he has supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright. Now he has taken away my blessing. Have you reserved a blessing for me?"

Isaac: "Behold, I have made him your lord and all his brothers (relatives) have I given to him for servants. With grain and new wine have I sustained him. What then will I do for you, my son?"

Esau: "Have you but one blessing my father? Bless me, even me also my father." Esau lifted up his voice and wept.

Isaac: "Behold, of the fatness of the earth will be your dwelling and of the dew of the sky from above. By your sword you will live and you will serve your brother. It will happen, when you break loose you will shake his yoke from off your neck."

Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing his father blessed him. Esau said in his heart, "The days of mourning for my father are at hand, then I will kill my brother Jacob."

The words of Esau were told to Rebekah who said to Jacob, "Behold, your brother Esau comforts himself about you by planning to kill you. Now my son, obey my voice. Arise, flee to my brother Laban in Haran. Stay with him a few days until your brother's fury turns away from you and he forgets what you have done to him, then I will send and get you from there. Why should I be bereaved of you both in one day?"

Rebekah said to Isaac, "I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth. If Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these, what good will my life be to me?" (Genesis 27:1 to 46).

Isaac never did curse Rebekah for helping Jacob deceive him as Jacob had feared. Isaac was not at all angry with Jacob for deceiving him. On the contrary, Isaac blessed Jacob again, bestowing on Jacob the Land of Israel initially promised to Abraham, and sent him off to find a good wife amongst his cousins. Jacob had received the economic blessings, now he received the spiritual blessing making him the chosen one to continue God's plan to create His own nation. Rebekah was the daughter of Abraham's nephew/Isaac's cousin Bethuel (Genesis 24:15) making Isaac and Rebekah cousins. Isaac wanted Jacob to marry another cousin from within the family, rather than a woman from among the neighbouring tribes. 'Isaac called Jacob, blessed him and commanded him, "You will not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Paddan Aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father. Take a wife from there from the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother. May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful, and multiply you so you may be a company of peoples and give you the blessing of Abraham, to you and to your descendents with you so you may inherit the land where you travel, which God gave to Abraham." ... Esau saw Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to take a wife from Paddan Aram, and as Isaac blessed Jacob, he gave him a command, "You will not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan." Esau saw Jacob obey his father and his mother and go to Paddan Aram. Esau saw the daughters of Canaan did not please Isaac his father

so Esau went to Ishmael and took, besides the wives he already had, Mahalath the (grand)daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son to be his wife' (Genesis 28:1 to 9). Mahalath was a cousin of Esau, so he married a cousin to try to appease Isaac.

After serving Rebekah's deceitful, idolatrous brother Laban for about twenty years, Jacob was instructed by God to return home. By that time Rebekah had died. She never did send for Jacob as she promised. As Jacob travelled home with his four wives and children, Esau intimidated Jacob so much he was terrified and distressed. 'Jacob sent messengers in front of him to Esau his brother, to the land of Seir, the field of Edom. Jacob commanded his servants saying, "This is what you will tell my lord Esau, 'This is what your servant Jacob says. I have lived as a foreigner with Laban and stayed until now. I have cattle, donkeys, flocks, male and female servants. I have sent to tell my lord so I may find favour in your sight'."

The messengers returned to Jacob saying, "We came to your brother Esau and he comes to meet you with four hundred men with him."

Jacob was greatly afraid and was distressed. He divided the people who were with him, the flocks, the herds and the camels into two companies. He said, "If Esau comes to the one company and strikes it, then the company which is left will escape." Jacob prayed, "God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, Lord Who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your relatives and I will do you good'. I am not worthy of the least of all the loving kindnesses and of all the truth You have shown to Your servant, for with just my staff I passed over this Jordan and now I have become two companies. Please deliver me from the hand of my brother Esau, for I fear him lest he come and strike me, the mothers with the children. You said, 'I will surely do you good and make your descendents as numerous as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered there are so many'." Jacob lodged there that night and took from what he had with him, a gift for Esau; two hundred female goats, twenty male goats, two hundred ewes, twenty rams, thirty milk camels and their colts, forty cows, ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten foals. He delivered them into the hands of his servants, every herd by itself and he said to his servants, "Pass over before me and put space between the herds." He commanded those in front saying, "When Esau my brother meets you and asks you, 'Whose are you? Where are you going? Whose are these before you?' Then you will reply, 'They are your servant Jacob's. It is a gift sent to my lord Esau. Behold, he is behind us'." Jacob commanded the second, the third and all that followed the herds saying, "This is how you will speak to Esau when you find him. You will say, 'Not only that, but behold your servant Jacob is behind us'." Jacob said, "I will appease him with the gift that goes before me and afterward I will see his face. Perhaps he will accept me" (Genesis 32:3 to 20).

Jacob sent his mistresses Bilhah and Zilpah and their children, then Leah and her children before Rachel and her son Joseph would meet up with Esau. 'Jacob saw Esau was coming with four hundred men. He divided the children between Leah, Rachel and the two mistresses. He put Bilhah and Zilpah and their children in front, Leah and her children after, then Rachel and Joseph at the rear. Jacob passed over in front of them and bowed himself to the ground seven times until he came near to his brother. Esau ran to meet him, embraced him, fell on his neck, kissed him and they wept. The mistresses came near with their children and they bowed themselves. Leah and her children came near and bowed themselves. After them, Joseph came near with Rachel and they bowed themselves.

Esau: "What do you mean by all this company I met?"

Jacob: "To find favour in the sight of my lord."

Esau: "I have enough my brother, let that which you have be yours."

Jacob: "Please no, if I have found favour in your sight, receive my gift at my hand because I have seen your face as one sees the face of God, and you were pleased with me. Please take the gift I brought to you because God has dealt graciously with me and because I have enough." Jacob urged Esau and he took the gift.

Esau: "Let us take our journey and go, and I will go before you."

Jacob: "My lord knows the children are tender and the flocks and herds with me have their young. If they overdrive them one day, all the flocks will die. Please let my lord pass over before his servant and I will lead on gently, according to the pace of the livestock before me and according to the pace of the children, until I come to my lord to Seir."

Esau: "Let me now leave with you some of the folk who are with me."

Jacob: "Why? Let me find favour in the sight of my lord."

Esau returned that day on his way to Seir' (Genesis 33:1 to 16).

It seems by what we read above, Jacob's huge gift of 580 head of breeding livestock to Esau, was to compensate for taking his inheritance. It was like an apology. Jacob's twenty years away achieved two things; Esau had forgiven him and Jacob was a changed man and was much less self-centred. Esau did do as Isaac predicted and 'shook Jacob's yoke off his neck'. That was evident when, 'Esau ran to meet Jacob, embraced him, fell on his neck, kissed him and they wept', and, 'I have seen your face as one sees the face of God and you were pleased with me'. 'Isaac gave up the spirit and died, and was gathered to his people, old and full of days. Esau and Jacob, his twin sons buried him' (Genesis 35:29). It seems like the twins

remained on friendly terms. Although Jacob was blessed by Isaac, Esau was also economically blessed with a lot of livestock – a sign of wealth. Esau and Jacob did not have enough space to stay together so they parted company but remained in contact. 'Esau took his wives, his sons, his daughters and all the members of his household, with his livestock, all his animals and all his possessions he had gathered in the land of Canaan and went into a land away from his brother Jacob. Their substance was too great for them to dwell together and the land of their travels could not bear them because of their livestock. Esau lived in the hill country of Seir. Esau is Edom' (Genesis 36:6 to 8).

When the Children of Israel were seeking their own land, the Lord told them not to try to possess Esau's land. 'You are to pass through the border of your brothers the children of Esau who dwell in Seir, and they will be afraid of you. Take good heed to yourselves; do not contend with them for I will not give you their land, no, not so much as for the sole of the foot to tread on because I have given Mount Seir to Esau for a possession' (Deuteronomy 2:4 & 5). 'I (the Lord) gave to Isaac his sons Jacob and Esau, and I gave to Esau Mount Seir to possess it' (Joshua 24:4). However, that blessing did not last and the Lord seems to have destroyed all of Esau's descendents, because of sin. The Lord eventually dis-inherited Esau's descendents. 'How Esau will be plundered! How your hidden treasures are sought out! All the men of your alliance have brought you on your way to the border. The men who were at peace with you have deceived you and overcome you. Friends who eat your bread lay a snare under you. There is no understanding in Esau. In that day, I (the Lord) will destroy the wise men out of Edom and understanding out of the mountain of Esau. Your mighty men will be dismayed, everyone will be cut off from the mountain of Esau by slaughter ... The house of Jacob will be a fire, the house of Joseph a flame and the house of Esau will be stubble ... There will not be any remaining in the house of Esau.' Indeed, God has spoken' (Obadiah 1:6 to 9 & 18). The Lord said, "Esau was Jacob's brother, yet I loved Jacob but Esau I hated and made his mountains a desolation and gave his heritage to the jackals of the wilderness" (Malachi 1:2 & 3). 'As it is written, "Jacob I loved but Esau I hated"' (Romans 9:13).

The Lord knew Esau would not act in accordance with His divine will so before the boys were born, Jacob was the chosen son to continue the genetic line of Abraham. Jacob had to learn how to lead, how to run an economy, how to train an army and how to raise his family to be Godly, something he failed to do. All of Jacob's sons except Joseph were wicked men, cruel, violent and savage. They were more like Esau than Jacob. Only Joseph remained strong in the Lord. Rebekah seemed to be an opportunist. She took the opportunity to marry a stranger (Isaac) and be part of God's plan. She took the opportunity to raise Jacob above Esau. She was the boys' mother. She would have known which of her two sons would do the work of the Lord, and by the actions of Esau, she knew he was not the more Godly of her twin sons. Rebekah already knew, by what the Lord said to her before her twins were born, one would be stronger than the other; the elder would serve the younger. Taking that knowledge to heart, Rebekah made sure her quieter but spiritually stronger son Jacob would receive the spiritual blessing from Isaac. We can see by how Isaac blessed Jacob, after he knew about the deception, he had intended for Jacob to receive the blessing to continue God's plan and promises to Abraham. Isaac knew Jacob would be the spiritual heir to God's divine mission – to secure a nation for Himself. Jacob was a quiet man, more inclined to pray and worship God.

If Esau had followed the Lord as Isaac and Jacob did, the Lord would be the God of Abraham, Isaac and Esau, but because Esau was so carnal, the Lord rejected him and proclaimed His hatred for him. Jacob replaced Esau in the chosen family lineage so we have the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. By what is written in the Book of Romans, Esau was never called by God to His service like Jacob was. God knows in advance who will grow up to have a heart for Him and who will turn away and before the twins were born, the Lord told Rebekah her younger twin would be a leader. 'Rebekah conceived by our father Isaac. Being not yet born, neither having done anything good or bad so the purpose of God according to His own will might stand, not of works but of Him who calls, it was said to Rebekah, "The elder will serve the younger." As it is written, "Jacob I loved but Esau I hated" (Romans 9:10 to 13).

The Lord has used Esau as an example of how not to behave. Esau scorned and gave away his birthright – the inheritance given to the firstborn son which was 100% of what the father had amassed, along with a prophetic blessing. He married Hittite women who made the lives of his parents miserable. He severely intimidated Jacob and his family. Even after all this, the Lord gave the mountains of Seir as Esau's inheritance for himself and his descendents. Eventually though, the sin of Esau's descendents angered the Lord so much, He proclaimed His hatred of Esau and had most of the family slaughtered, giving Mount Seir to animals. Abraham had two sons; Ishmael and Isaac. The eldest son Ishmael was sent away while the younger son Isaac became part of the chosen family. Isaac's elder son Esau was sent away while the younger son Jacob became part of the chosen family. All of Jacob's sons died in Egypt. Only Jacob's and Joseph's remains were taken back to Israel and buried. They were part of the chosen family and were to be buried in the land chosen by God for His chosen people. There is one prophecy regarding Esau's land that

has not yet come to pass. 'Saviours will go up on Mount Zion to judge the mountains of Esau and the Kingdom will be God's' (Obadiah 1:21).

Amen and God bless you.

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