

Adam Clarke:

Introduction

The genealogy of Esau, i.e., his sons, by his Canaanitish wives Adah, Aholibamah, and Bashemath, Genesis 36:1-3. The children of Adah and Bashemath, Genesis 36:4. Of Aholibamah, Genesis 36:5. Esau departs from Canaan and goes to Mount Seir, Genesis 36:6-8. The generations of Esau, i.e., his grandchildren, while in Seir, Genesis 36:7-19. Anah finds mules ((Yemim)) in the wilderness, Genesis 36:24. The generations of Seir, the Horite, Genesis 36:29-30. The kings which reigned in Edom, Genesis 36:31-39. The dukes that succeeded them, Genesis 36:40-43.

Verse 1

These are the generations of Esau - We have here the genealogy of Esau in his sons and grandsons, and also the genealogy of Seir the Horite. The genealogy of the sons of Esau, born in Canaan, is related Genesis 36:1-8; those of his grandchildren born in Seir, Genesis 36:9-19; those of Seir the Horite, Genesis 36:20-30. The generations of Esau are particularly marked, to show how exactly God fulfilled the promises he made to him, Genesis 25 and 27; and those of Seir the Horite are added, because his family became in some measure blended with that of Esau.

Verse 2

His wives - It appears that Esau's wives went by very different names. Aholibamah is named Judith, Genesis 26:34; Adah is called Bashemath in the same place; and she who is here called Bashemath is called Mahalath, Genesis 28:9. These are variations which cannot be easily accounted for; and they are not of sufficient importance to engross much time. It is well known that the same persons in Scripture are often called by different names.

Anah the daughter of Zibeon - But this same Anah is said to be the son of Zibeon, Genesis 36:24, though in this and Genesis 36:14 he is said to be the daughter of Zibeon. But the Samaritan, the Septuagint, (and the Syriac, in Genesis 36:2), read son instead of daughter, which Houbigant and Kennicott contend to be the true reading. Others say that daughter should be referred to Aholibamah, who was the daughter of Anah, and granddaughter of Zibeon. I should rather prefer the reading of the Samaritan, Septuagint, and Syriac, and read, both here and in Genesis 36:14, "Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah the son of Zibeon," and then the whole will agree with Genesis 36:24.

Verse 6

Esau took his wives, etc. - So it appears that Esau and Jacob dwelt together in Canaan, whither the former removed from Seir, probably soon after the return of Jacob. That they were on the most friendly footing this sufficiently proves; and Esau shows the same dignified conduct as on other occasions, in leaving Canaan to Jacob, and returning again to Mount Seir; certainly a much less fruitful region than that which he now in behalf of his brother voluntarily abandoned.

Verse 12

Timna was concubine to Eliphaz - As Timna was sister to Lotan the Horite, Genesis 36:22, we see how the family of Esau and the Horites got intermixed. This might give the sons of Esau a pretext to seize the land, and expel the ancient inhabitants, as we find they did, Deuteronomy 2:12.

Amalek - The father of the Amalekites, afterwards bitter enemies to the Jews, and whom God commanded to be entirely exterminated, Deuteronomy 25:17, Deuteronomy 25:19.

Verse 15

Dukes of the sons of Esau - The word duke comes from the Latin dux, a captain or leader. The Hebrew *aluph* (alluph) has the same signification; and as it is also the term for a thousand, which is a grand capital or leading number, probably the *aluphey* (alluphey) or dukes had this name from being leaders of or captains over a company of one thousand men; just as those among the Greeks called (chiliarchs), which signifies the same; and as the Romans called those centurions who were captains over one hundred men, from the Latin word centum, which signifies a hundred. The ducal government was that which prevailed first among the Idumeans, or descendants of Esau. Here fourteen dukes are reckoned to Esau, seven that came of his wife, Adah, four of Bashemath, and three of Aholibamah.

Verse 16

Duke Korah - This Dr. Kennicott pronounces to be an interpolation. It is certain, from Genesis 36:4, that

Eliphaz was Esau's son by Adah; and from Genesis 36:11, Genesis 36:12, that Eliphaz had but six sons, Temar, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, Kenaz, and Amalek. It is also certain, from Genesis 36:5, Genesis 36:14, that Korah was the son of Esau (not of Eliphaz) by Aholibamah; and as such he is properly mentioned in Genesis 36:18: These are the sons of Aholibamah, Esau's wife: duke Jeush, duke Jaalam, Duke Korah. It is clear, therefore, that some transcriber has improperly inserted duke Korah in Genesis 36:16; from which interpolation both the Samaritan text and the Samaritan version are free. - Kennicott's Remarks. Everything considered, I incline to the opinion that these words were not originally in the text.

Verse 20

These are the sons of Seir the Horite - These Horites were the original inhabitants of the country of Seir, called the land of the Horites, and afterwards the land of the Idumeans, when the descendants of Esau had driven them out. These people are first mentioned Genesis 14:6.

Verse 21

These are the dukes of the Horites - It appears pretty evident that the Horites and the descendants of Esau were mixed together in the same land, as before observed; and Calmet has very properly remarked, that if we compare this verse with Genesis 36:30, there were princes of Seir in the country of Seir, and in that of Edom; and in comparing the generations of Seir and Esau, we are obliged to consider these princes as contemporary.

Verse 24

This was that Anah that found the mules in the wilderness - The words **x•x^a x" xTM xŽx•** (eth kaiyemim), here translated mules, has given rise to a great variety of conjectures and discordant opinions. St. Jerome, who renders it aquas calidas, warm springs, or hot baths, says there are as many opinions concerning it as there are commentators.

The Septuagint has $\text{I}, \text{I} \hat{\epsilon} \text{I}^{1/2} \text{I}^{\text{TM}} \text{I}^{1/4} \mu \text{I}^{1/2}$, which seems to be the name of a man; but this is expressed in a great variety of ways in different MSS. of that version.

The Syriac renders it (may^ā©), waters; the author of this version having read in the Hebrew copy from which he translated. x^zxTMx[•] (mayim), waters, for xTMx^zx[•] (yemim), the two first letters being transposed.

Onkelos translates the word **x'x'x'xTMx** (gibbaraiya), giants, or strong or powerful men.

The Samaritan text has (haaimim), and the Samaritan version (am aimai), the Emim, a warlike people, bordering upon the Horites.

The Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel paraphrases the place thus: "This is the Anah who united the onager with the tame ass, and in process of time he found mules produced by them." R. D. Kimchi says, that "Zibeon was both the father and brother of Anah; and this Anah, intent on heterogeneous mixtures, caused asses and horses to copulate, and so produced mules." R. S. Jarchi is of the same opinion. See his comment on this place.

Bochart believes the Emim are meant; and argues forcibly, 1. That x̄z̄x̄|x̄• (matsa), he found, never signifies to invent, but rather the meeting with or happening on a thing which already exists. 2. That mules are never called x̄TMx̄z̄x̄• (yemim) in the Scriptures, but x̄z̄x̄"x̄"x̄TMx̄• (peradim). 3. That Anah fed Asses only, not horses. And, 4. That there is no mention of mules in Palestine till the days of David. From the whole he concludes that the Emim are meant, with whom Anah fought; and he brings many places of Scripture where the same form of expression, he or they found, signifies the onset to battle, Judges 1:5; 1 Samuel 31:3; 1 Kings 13:24; 2 Chronicles 22:8; Numbers 35:27; Genesis 4:14; with many others. See the Hierozoicon, vol. i., cap. 21, p. 23S., edit. 1692.

Gusset, in Comment. Heb. Ling., examines what Bochart has asserted, and supposes that mules, not the Emim, were found by Anah.

Wagenseil would credit what Bochart has asserted, did not stronger reasons lead him to believe that the word means a sort of plant!

From the above opinions and versions the reader may choose which he likes best, or invent one for himself. My own opinion is, that mules were not known before the time of Anah; and that he was probably the first who coupled the mare and ass together to produce this mongrel, or the first who met with creatures of this race in some very secluded part of the wilderness. Is it not probable that from this Anah, or ~~x~~x x" (enah), the Enetae derived at least their fabulous origin, whom Homer mentions as famous for their race of wild mules?

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IL., lib. ii., v. 852.

**The Paphlagonians Pylaemenes rules,
Where rich Henetia breeds her Savage Mules.
Pope.**

The Enetae or Henetae, who were a people contiguous to Paphlagonia, Cappadocia, and Galatia, might have

derived their origin from this Anah, or Henah, out of which the Ἰνῆ, Ἡνῆ of the ancient Greek writers might have been formed; and according to Theophrastus, Strabo, and Plutarch, the first mules were seen among these people. See Ludov, De Dieu and Scheuchzer.

Verse 31

Before there reigned any king over - Israel - I suppose all the verses, from Genesis 36:31-39 inclusive, have been transferred to this place from 1 Chronicles 1:43-50, as it is not likely they could have been written by Moses; and it is quite possible they might have been, at a very early period, written in the margin of an authentic copy, to make out the regal succession in Edom, prior to the consecration of Saul; which words being afterwards found in the margin of a valuable copy, from which others were transcribed, were supposed by the copyist to be a part of the text, which having been omitted by the mistake of the original writer, had been since added to make up the deficiency; on this conviction he would not hesitate to transcribe them consecutively in his copy. In most MSS. sentences and paragraphs have been left out by the copyists, which, when perceived, have been added in the margin, either by the original writer, or by some later hand. Now, as the margin was the ordinary place where glosses or explanatory notes were written, it is easy to conceive how the notes, as well as the parts of the original text found in the margin, might be all incorporated with the text by a future transcriber; and his MSS., being often copied, would of course multiply the copies with such additions, as we have much reason to believe has been the case. This appears very frequently in the Vulgate and Septuagint; and an English Bible now before me written some time in the fourteenth century, exhibits several proofs of this principle. See the preface to this work.

I know there is another way of accounting for those words on the ground of their being written originally by Moses; but to me it is not satisfactory. It is simply this: the word king should be considered as implying any kind of regular government, whether by chiefs, dukes, judges, etc., and therefore when Moses says these are the kings which reigned in Edom, before there was any king in Israel, he may be only understood as saying that these kings reigned among the Edomites before the family of Jacob had acquired any considerable power, or before the time in which his twelve sons had become the fathers of those numerous tribes, at the head of which, as king himself in Jeshurun, he now stood.

Esau, after his dukes, had eight kings, who reigned successively over their people, while Israel were in affliction in Egypt.

Verse 33

Jobab the son of Zerah - Many have supposed that Jobab is the same as Job, so remarkable for his afflictions and patience; and that Eliphaz, mentioned Genesis 36:10, etc., was the same who in the book of Job is called one of his friends: but there is no proper proof of this, and there are many reasons against it.

Verse 35

Smote Midian in the field of Moab - Bishop Cumberland supposes that this was Midian, the son of Abraham by Keturah, and that he was killed by Hadad some time before he was one hundred and nine years of age; and that Moses recorded this, probably, because it was a calamity to the ancestor of Jethro, his father-in-law - Orig. of Nat., p. 14.

Verse 40

These are the names of the dukes that came of Esau - These dukes did not govern the whole nation of the Idumeans, but they were chiefs in their respective families, in their places - the districts they governed, and to which they gave their names. Calmet thinks that those mentioned above were dukes in Edom or Idumea at the time of the exodus of Israel from Egypt.

Verse 43

He is Esau the father of the Edomites - That is, The preceding list contains an account of the posterity of Esau, who was the father of Edom. Thus ends Esau's history; for after this there is no farther account of his life, actions, or death, in the Pentateuch.

1. As Esau is so considerable a person in polemic divinity, it may be necessary, in this place especially, to say something farther of his conduct and character. I have already, in several places, endeavored, and I hope successfully, to wipe off the odium that has been thrown upon this man, (see the notes on Genesis 27 (note) and Genesis 33 (note)), without attempting to lessen his faults; and the unprejudiced reader must see that, previously to this last account we have of him, his character stands without a blot, except in the case of selling his birthright, and his purpose to destroy his brother. To the first he was led by his famishing situation and the unkindness of his brother, who refused to save his life but on this condition; and the latter, made in the heat of vexation and passion, he never attempted to execute, even when he had the most ample means and the fairest opportunity to do it.

Dr. Shuckford has drawn an impartial character of Esau, from which I extract the following particulars:

Esau was a plain, generous, and honest man, for we have no reason, from any thing that appears in his life or actions, to think him wicked beyond other men of his age or times; and his generous and good temper appears from all his behavior towards his brother. When they first met he was all humanity and affection, and he had no uneasiness when he found that Jacob followed him not to Seir, but went to live near his father. And at Isaac's death we do not find that he made any difficulty of quitting Canaan, which was the very point which, if he had harbored any latent (evil) intentions, would have revived all his resentments. He is indeed called in Scripture the profane Esau; and it is written, Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated; but there is, I think, no reason to infer, from any of those expressions, that Esau was a very wicked man, or that God hated or punished him for an immoral life. For, 1. The sentence here against him is said expressly to be founded, not upon his actions, for it was determined before the children had done good or evil. 2. God's hatred of Esau was not a hatred which induced him to punish him with any evil, for he was as happy in all the blessings of this life as either Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob; and his posterity had a land designed by God to be their possession, as well as the children of Jacob, and they were put in possession of it much sooner than the Israelites; and God was pleased to protect them in the enjoyment of it, and to caution the Israelites against invading them with a remarkable strictness, Deuteronomy 2:4, Deuteronomy 2:5. And as God was pleased thus to bless Esau and his children in the blessings of this life, even as much as he blessed Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob, if not more, why may we not hope to find him with them at the last day, as well as Lot or Job or any other good and virtuous man, who was not designed to be a partaker of the blessing given to Abraham? 3. All the punishment inflicted on Esau was an exclusion from being heir to the blessing promised to Abraham and to his seed, which was a favor not granted to Lot, to Job, to several other very virtuous and good men. 4. St. Paul, in the passage before cited, only intends to show the Jews that God had all along given the favors that led to the Messiah where he pleased; to Abraham, not to Lot; to Jacob, not to Esau; as at the time St. Paul wrote the Gentiles were made the people of God, not the Jews. 5. Esau is indeed called profane, (ἡμίθεος,), but I think that word does not mean wicked or immoral, ἡμίθεος, or ἡμίθεος, ἡμίθεος, ἡμίθεος, he was called profane for not having that due value for the priest's office which he should have had; and therefore, though I think it does not appear that he was cut off from being the heir of the promises by any particular action in his life, yet his turn of mind and thoughts do appear to have been such as to evidence that God's purpose towards Jacob was founded on the truest wisdom. — Shuckford's Connections, vol. ii., p.174, etc.

The truth is, the Messiah must spring from some One family, and God chose Abraham's through Isaac, Jacob, etc., rather than the same through Ishmael, Esau, and the others in that line; but from this choice it does not follow that the first were all necessarily saved, and the others necessarily lost.

2. To some the genealogical lists in this chapter will doubtless appear uninteresting, especially those which concern Esau and his descendants; but it was as necessary to register the generations of Esau as to register those of Jacob, in order to show that the Messiah did not spring from the former, but that he did spring from the latter. The genealogical tables, so frequently met with in the sacred writings, and so little regarded by Christians in general, are extremely useful. 1. As they are standing proofs of the truth of the prophecies, which stated that the Messiah should come from a particular family, which prophecies were clearly fulfilled in the birth of Christ. 2. As they testify, to the conviction of the Jews, that the Messiah thus promised is found in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, who incontestably sprang from the last, the only remaining branch of the family of David. These registers were religiously preserved among the Jews till the destruction of Jerusalem, after which they were all destroyed, insomuch that there is not a Jew in the universe who can trace himself to the family of David; consequently, all expectation of a Messiah to come is, even on their own principles, nugatory and absurd, as nothing remains to legitimate his birth. When Christ came all these registers were in existence. When St. Matthew and St. Luke wrote, all these registers were still in existence; and had they pretended what could not have been supported, an appeal to the registers would have convicted them of a falsehood. But no Jew attempted to do this, notwithstanding the excess of their malice against Christ and his followers; and because they did not do it, we may safely assert no Jew could do it. Thus the foundation standeth sure.