

**April 23, 2017 - Gen. 27:28 – 28:9 - Esau wants blessing - Jacob goes to Laban
Torah Reading: Gen. 27:28 – 28:9 - Esau wants blessing - Jacob goes to Laban
Esau takes wives from Ishmael.**

Psalm 22

Haftorah - Micah 5:6-14 + 6:8

Jacob's Blessing

Isaac thinks he is giving the “blessing of primogeniture” or first-born to Esau.

Genesis 27:28-29 - “Therefore God give you of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine”

God here is “Elohim,” usually used of God as Creator.

Earthly, temporal bounty - i.e., may you settle in fruitful and fertile places that are bountifully watered. But ultimately this is fulfilled in Christ's spiritual provision and nourishment of his Bride.

Genesis 27:29 - “Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you...”

Partially fulfilled when the Canaanites were subdued in the times of Joshua and the judges, and made tributary to the Israelites; and more especially when the Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites became subject to them, in the time of David. But, it will receive its principal accomplishment in the days of the Messiah's kingdom, when he shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth; when all kings shall fall down before him, and all nations serve him (Psalm 72:8; Psalm 72:11).

See **Revelation 11:15** - "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign for ever and ever."

And **Revelation 19:15** - “And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron”

Genesis 27:29 - “...be lord over your brothers, and let your mother's sons bow down to you:”

Up to this point the blessing had been general, but now Isaac bestows the birthright, carrying with it widespread dominion, precedence over all other members of the family, and special blessedness. The phrases “thy brethren” and “thy mother's sons” include all nations sprung from Abraham, and all possible offshoots from Isaac's own descendants.

The Targum of Jerusalem interprets “your mother's sons” to include the sons of Laban, his mother's brother, i.e. the Arabians and Syrians. The Zohar says this will be accomplished in the times of Messiah.

Genesis 27:29 - ...”cursed be every one that curses you, and blessed be he that blesses you.”

Compare this to Abraham’s blessing in **Genesis 12:3**. To Abraham, God promises to curse those who treat you as insignificant or dismiss you (“qalal”). Here, perhaps because it is Isaac and not God doing the blessing, Isaac calls God to “bitterly curse” (“arar”) those who “bitterly curse” Jacob. (And the same is repeated by Balaam in his blessing of Jacob/Israel in Number 24:9)

Isaac stops short of repeat Abraham’s promise that “in him should all families of the earth be blessed,” possibly because Isaac couldn’t imagine Esau appreciating this spiritual blessing. Or because only God can bestow that blessing, not Isaac. (And in fact, God does grant this to Jacob during his dream in **Genesis 28:14**).

Esau returns with “savory meat”

The Targum of Jonathan says Jacob was gone only about “two hands' breadths” out of the tent when Esau entered - a close call.

Esau gets a bad report from the Rabbis. Esau was hindered, they say, from getting true venison by angels loosing the deer he bound; The Targum of Jonathan adds that he killed a dog instead, made savory meat of it, and brought it to his father.

But the scripture describes it as “mat`am” or a tasty delicacy, which venison or other game would have been.

This word is only used here and in **Proverbs 23:3 and 6** - “Be not desirous of his dainties for they are deceitful meat. ... Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats...” (Apparently, Esau ruined game as a delicacy forever).

Genesis 27:34 - “And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said to his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father.”

According to the Vulgate Latin version, Esau roared like a lion.

Genesis 27:35 - “And he said, Your brother came with subtlety, and has taken away your blessing.”

The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan interpret “with subtlety” as “with wisdom,” seeing the deceit as resulting in God’s design being fulfilled.

Genesis 27:36 - “And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? “

“Supplanted” is “`aqab” a possible root for the name “Jacob”

Genesis 27:38 - “And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.”

See **Hebrews 12:17** - "For ye know how that afterward, when he (Esau) would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."

The "repentance" mentioned here is not Esau's own repentance, but refers to Esau's attempt to get Isaac to "repent" and reverse himself and bless Esau instead of Jacob. There was no "place" or ground or basis for doing so that moved Isaac. Probably like Ahasuerus' decree in Esther 8:10-14, it could not be reversed, only supplemented by an additional decree or, in Esau's case, another blessing by Isaac.

Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated

Romans 9:10-13 - "And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."

Malachi 1:2-3 - "'I have loved you," says the LORD. But you say, 'How have You loved us?' 'Was not Esau Jacob's brother?' declares the LORD. 'Yet I have loved Jacob; but I have hated Esau, and I have made his mountains a desolation and appointed his inheritance for the jackals of the wilderness.'"

Thus -

Genesis 27:39 - "Behold, your dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above;"

Probably meaning "away from" or "without" the fatness of the earth. The Heb. preposition (מִן mîy), "from," is ambiguous. The preposition is the same as in the blessing of Jacob. But there, after a verb of giving, it had a partitive sense; here, after a noun of place, it denotes distance or separation.

The land of Edom was a dry desert country. And spiritually, Esau (as the doctrine of righteousness through human effort) is bereft of heavenly "dew" or anointing.

Genesis 27:40 - "And by your sword shall you live, and shall serve your brother; and it shall come to pass when you shall have the dominion, that you shall break his yoke from off your neck."

The historical relation of Edom to Israel assumed the form of a constant reiteration of servitude, revolt, and reconquest. Saul was victorious over Idumæa (Edom) - 1 Samuel 14:47. Edom was for ages a mere dependency upon Judah; but in the days of Joram, and then of Ahaz ((2 Kings 16:6), it revolted, and recovered its freedom. It was again conquered by John Hyrcanus, the nephew of Judas Maccabæus, about b.c. 129, and he compelled them to submit to circumcision, and incorporated in the Jewish state (Josephus, Ant. xiii. 9, 1, xv. 7, 9). At a still later period, through Antipater and Herod,

they established an Idumaeen dynasty over Judea, which lasted till the complete dissolution of the Jewish state.

Genesis 27:41 - "The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob."

That which reconciled Isaac and Ishmael (Genesis 25:9), the death of a father, is here mentioned as the event which would decisively and finally part Esau and Jacob. - Pulpit Commentary

"Hypocrites only abstain from doing evil for fear of men." - Geneva Bible

Josephus describes the Idumaeen people as "a tumultuous and disorderly nation, always on the watch on every motion, delighting in mutations"

Rebekah, Jacob, Isaac and Esau reap what they sow

Genesis 27:43-44 - "Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; arise, flee you to Laban my brother to Haran, And tarry with him a few days, until your brother's fury turn away"

- **Rebekah** was obliged to send her pet son into a foreign land, away from his father's house, and in an utterly destitute condition. She did not see him for 20 years, even if she lived till his return, and possibly never saw him again. No more mention is made of Rebekah.

- **Jacob** had to atone for his sin against both brother and father by a long and painful exile, in the midst of privation, anxiety, fraud, and want.

- **Isaac** was punished for retaining his preference for Esau, in opposition to the revealed will of Jehovah, by the success of Jacob's stratagem;

- **and Esau** for his contempt of the birthright, by the loss of the blessing of the first-born.

In this way a higher hand prevailed above the acts of sinful men, bringing the counsel and will of God to eventual triumph, in opposition to human thought and will.

But first, more deceit:

Genesis 27:46 - "And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these which are of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?"

Esau's wives

<https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/esau-wives-of-midrash-and-aggadah>

Esau married his first two wives, who were from among the daughters of Heth, against his parents' wishes. According to the Rabbis, these women spent all their days in adultery and idolatry. Adah adorned herself with jewelry for harlotry, from which her name Adah is derived, with the meaning of the wearing [adayat] of jewelry (Gen.

Rabbati, Vayishlah, p. 160). Adah's other name was Basemath (based on the exchange of names between Gen. 26:34 and 36:2). This name also attests to her deeds, for she would perfume herself (mevasemet) for harlotry. Esau's second wife, Judith the daughter of Beerli the Hittite, was an illegitimate child resulting from an adulterous union (Tanhuma, Vayeshev 1). Judith was also named Oholibamah, a name she was given because she built places for idolatry (bamot). She dwelled in Esau's tent, but "performed her needs elsewhere" (that is, she engaged in extramarital relations). In taking two wives, Esau acted the same as the men of the Flood generation, who also took two spouses: one to provide them with offspring, and the other to provide them with sexual pleasure (see Adah, the wife of Lamech).

After Esau saw that his father Isaac had ordered Jacob not to take a wife from the daughters of Canaan, he abandoned his evil ways and married Mahalath, the daughter of his uncle Ishmael. By merit of this marriage, the Holy One, blessed be He, forgave Esau all his sins (JT Bikkurim 3:3, 65c–d). Mahalath's name indicates that God pardoned (mahal) Esau. However, according to another view, Esau did not mend his ways and Mahalath was as evil as his first two wives (Midrash Aggadah, ed. Buber, Gen. 28:9). This later marriage was also the result of negative motives: Esau plotted together with Ishmael to kill Isaac and Jacob, to marry the daughter of Ishmael, and to inherit both families. Accordingly, his marriage to Mahalath was ke-mahalath (as an affliction) and only increased the pain his parents had suffered upon his first marriages (Gen. Rabbah 67:8, 13).

Genesis 28:1-2 - "And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said to him, You shall not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Padanaram, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father; and take you a wife from there of the daughters of Laban your mother's brother."

Jacob blessed again

Genesis 28:3 - "And God Almighty bless you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, that you may be a multitude of people; And give you the blessing of Abraham, to you, and to your seed with you; that you may inherit the land wherein you are a stranger, which God gave to Abraham." (See Genesis 17:8)

Esau sort of wises up

Genesis 28:6 - "When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padan-aram, to take him a wife from there; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, You shall not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan;"

Genesis 28:9 - "Then went Esau to Ishmael, and took to the wives which he had Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife."

(But, see Esau's Wives above).