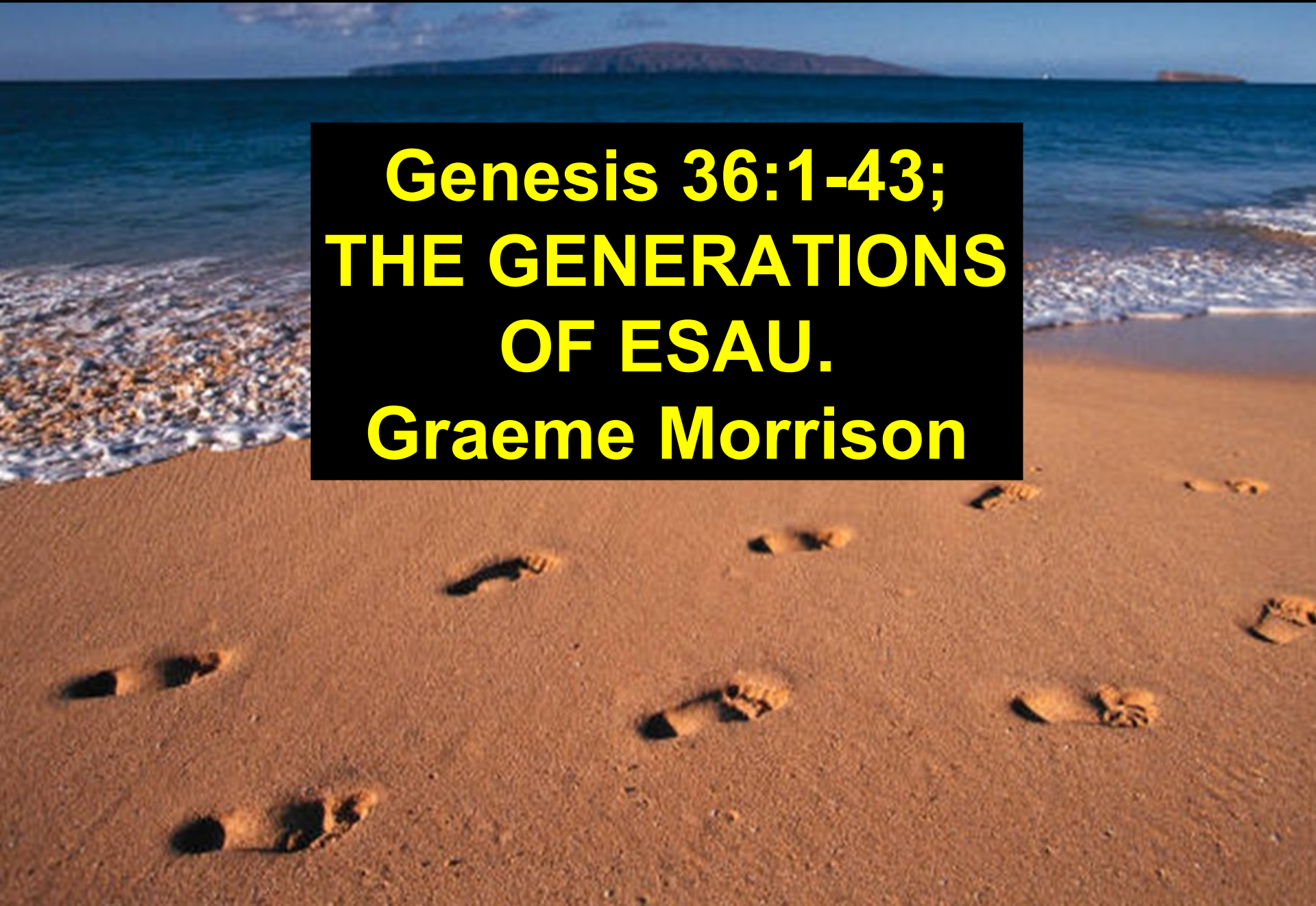
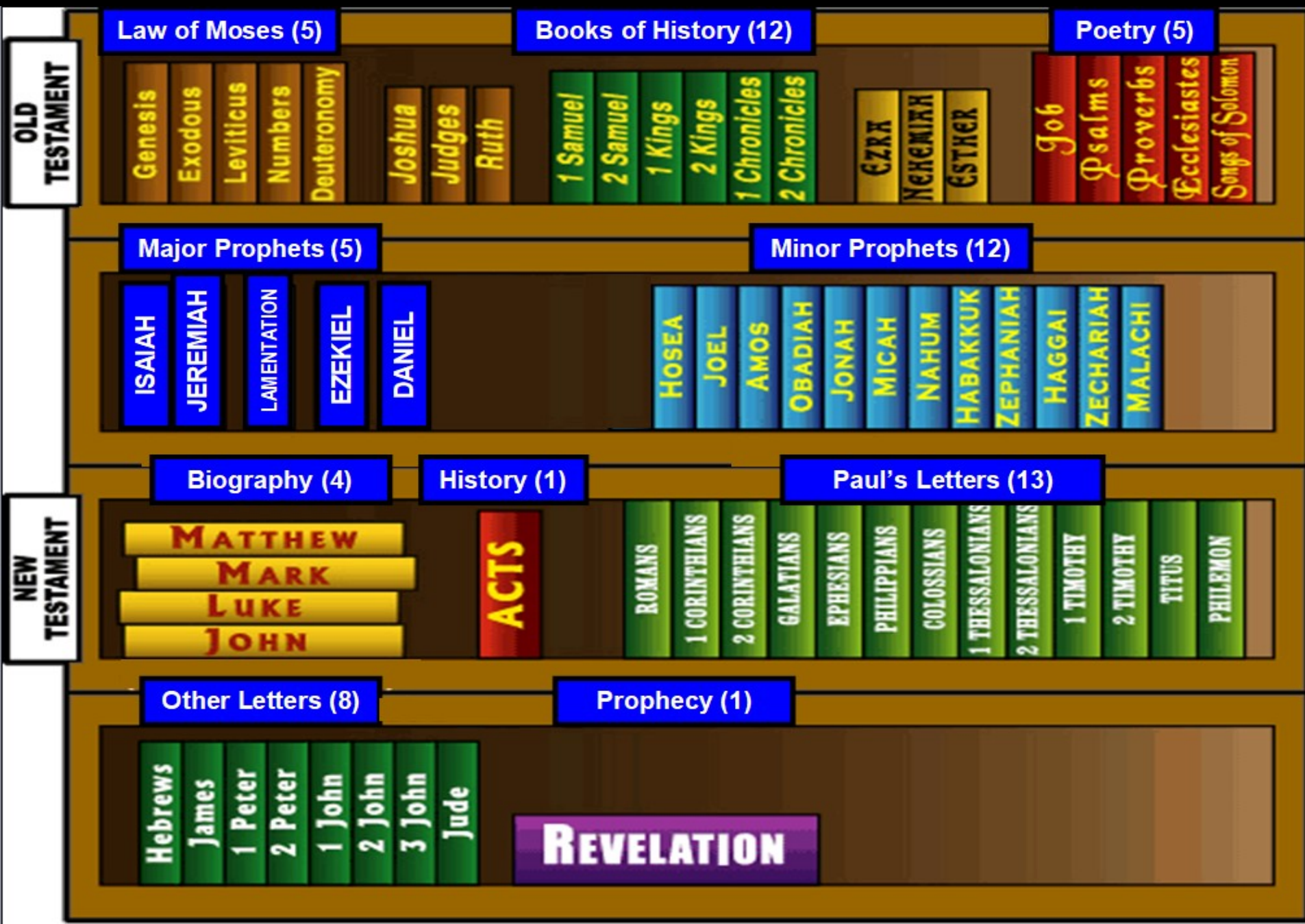


Patriarchal Age – The Patriarchs.

**Genesis 36:1-43;
THE GENERATIONS
OF ESAU.
Graeme Morrison**



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THE GENERATIONS OF ESAU. Gen 36:1-43;

The book of Genesis has been outlined in a number of different ways.

One way that is often overlooked is to see it divided into **the ten places** where we see the formula: **“These are the generations...”** used as a refrain.

It is **a formula** that takes place throughout the entire book. **In the 2nd chapter we read of the generations of the heaven and earth.**

After that, we read of **the generations of** Adam, of Noah, of Shem, of Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac.

THE GENERATIONS OF ESAU. Gen 36:1-43;

Now we come to still another generation.
It is the record of the generations of Esau.

Gen 36:1; “Now these are the records
of the generations of Esau. (that is, Edom.)”

As we read through this chapter,
we are confronted with **a very long list of names
and places** that are unfamiliar to us.

If the truth were told, we are usually **inclined**
to **skip this section** and to precede on
to the next chapter. In doing so,
we would miss some hidden treasures
that lie waiting for us to discover.

THE GENERATIONS OF ESAU. Gen 36:1-43;

When we hear this reference to **generations**, it should **serve as a reminder** to us of something that we have been seeing all throughout the book of Genesis. **It is a promise of two seeds.**

You will recall **the setting** in which **this promise** was made. **It was the Garden of Eden.**

The **first man** and the **first woman** had **eaten of the forbidden fruit.**

This brought about a terrible change.

Whereas before the Garden had been **a place of love**, now this love was **replaced by a bitter enmity.**

THE GENERATIONS OF ESAU. Gen 36:1-43;

**This verse provides the theme
of the rest of Genesis.**

This will be a book about two seeds:-

On the one hand will be the seed of the woman.

**Every person who has ever been born has
been a descendant of Adam and Eve by default.**

They are the progenitors of the human race.

**But there is something more that is taking place
in this passage than a natural uneasiness
in the presence of snakes.**

Seed of the Serpent

Seed of the Woman

Cain

Abel & Seth

Lamech

Enoch

Noah

Ham

Shem

Canaan

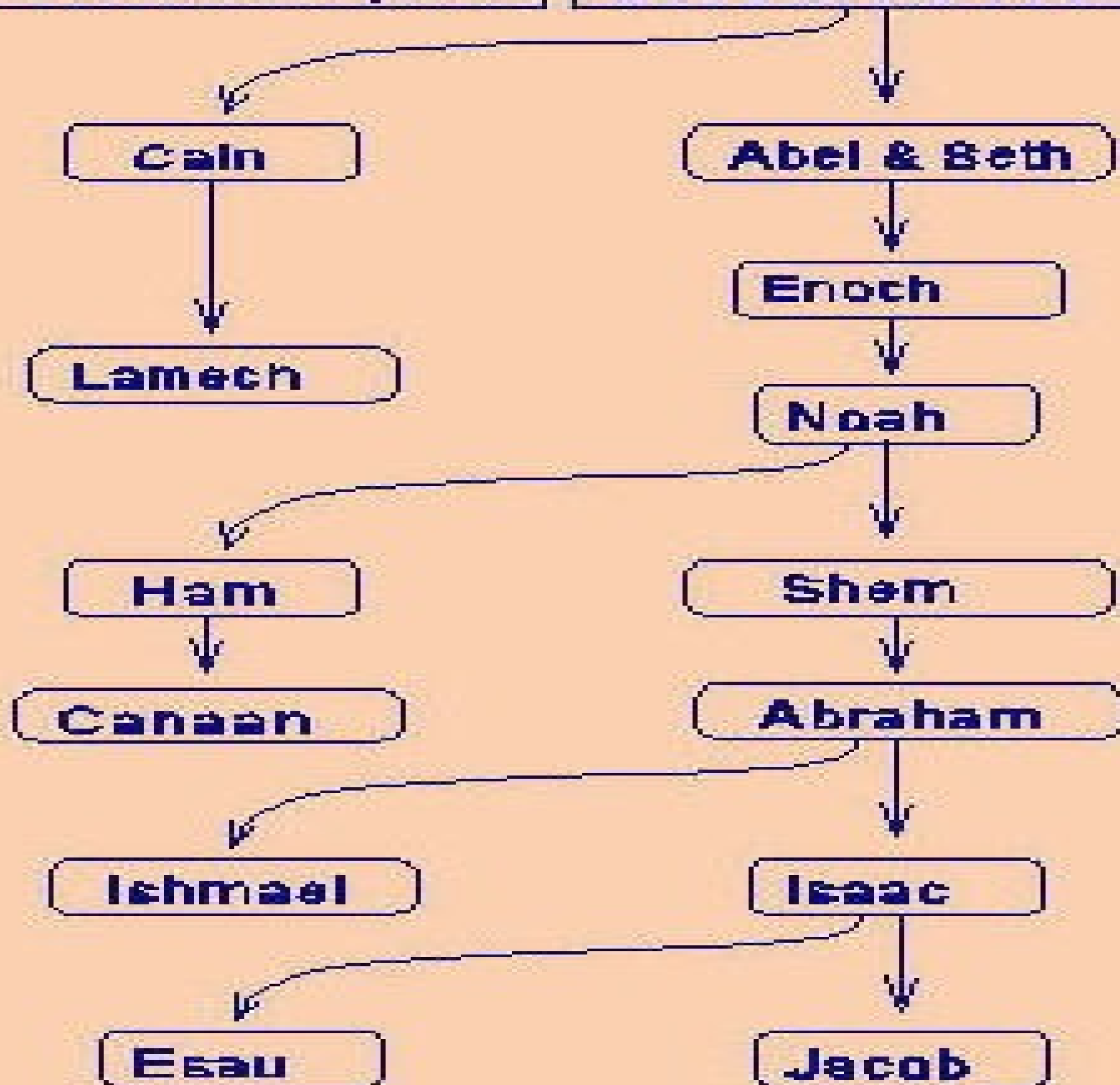
Abraham

Ishmael

Isaac

Esau

Jacob



THE GENERATIONS OF ESAU. Gen 36:1-43;

The seed of the woman is ultimately Jesus Christ.

**He was born of a virgin
and without the contribution of a man.**

**In a very real sense, He can be called
“the seed of the woman.”**

He is seen in contrast to the seed of the serpent.

The serpent is a reference to the person of Satan.

**In Revelation 12 we see
Satan described as “that old serpent.”**

**There are two promised seeds
and they are not merely the physical seeds. They
are the spiritual descendants of Christ and Satan.**

THE GENERATIONS OF ESAU. Gen 36:1-43;

God initially created all life to reproduce after its kind. But man rebelled and sinned against God.

And so, a promise was given.

It was a promise of TWO SEEDS.

The promise is found in Genesis 3:15;

The first seed was to be the seed of the serpent. It was the seed of rebellion. It was the seed of sin.

It was made up of all who walked in the way of Adam in disobedience and in turning against God.

THE GENERATIONS OF ESAU. Gen 36:1-43;

But there is also a second seed promised.

It is the seed of the woman.

This second seed is set over against the first seed.

The two seeds are at war with one another.

**God has decreed that the second seed
shall ultimately win.**

**From our vantage point, we know that this
second seed is ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ**

**The One who was bruised for our iniquities
as He crushed underfoot the Serpent's Head.**

THE GENERATIONS OF ESAU. Gen 36:1-43;

The rest of Genesis is the story of these two seeds.

First we read of Cain and Abel.

**Although they are brothers descended
from the same father and mother,**

**Cain shows himself to be of the spiritual seed
of the serpent by murdering his brother.**

But God replaces murdered Abel with Seth.

THE GENERATIONS OF ESAU. Gen 36:1-43;

We see the genealogy of each.

Cain's seed leads us to Lamech:- a man who is willing not only to murder a man, but to compose a song in which he boasts of his deed.

Seth's seed leads us to Enoch who walks with God,
and from there to
Noah who is spared the destruction of the Flood.

But the story does not stop there.

Noah has three sons. One of them performs an evil deed which demonstrates that **he is of the spiritual seed of the serpent.**

THE GENERATIONS OF ESAU. Gen 36:1-43;

He and his descendants through Canaan are cursed (the impact of this was not missed on the Israelites to whom Moses wrote Genesis.)

**Noah's other son, Shem,
is given the promise of blessing.**

The **Babel Rebellion** is an account of men **trying to make a SHEM** for themselves. (Shem is the Hebrew word for **“name.”**) **They are dispersed among the nations.**

THE GENERATIONS OF ESAU. Gen 36:1-43;

**But one is called out to be
a blessing to the nations.**

His name is Abraham.

**He has two sons. One is seen to be
the seed of the serpent. (he is cast out.)
The other is of the spiritual seed of God.
He is Isaac.**

**Isaac also has two sons. They are twins.
The one is Jacob while the other is the person
who is the subject of this particular chapter.**

**He is Esau. He has already given some indication
of whose seed he is. He has shown
no particular interest in the birthright of God.**

THE GENERATIONS OF ESAU. Gen 36:1-43;

**He was willing to trade his spiritual birthright
for a bowl of stew. By that action,
Esau was showing something about himself.**

He was showing his spiritual heritage.

**He was showing that
he was spiritually of the seed of the serpent.**

**This is not said in order that you might
point to the Edomites
or to Esau and say, “Shame on you!”**

THE GENERATIONS OF ESAU. Gen 36:1-43;

It is said in order that we might ask the question,

“Whose seed am I?

**Am I following the Lord, or have I been following
in the footsteps of the serpent?”**

**If you have come to trust in Jesus Christ as your
Lord and Saviour, and you have been born again.**

**There is a new seed. You have been born again
not of seed which is perishable but imperishable,
that is, through the living and abiding word of God.**

(1 Peter 1:23;)

A Few Observations. Gen 36:1-43;

Having said this, there are another two avenues of consideration for us.

First, We are impressed with the fact that Esau was a very gracious man.

While he had in the heat of anger threatened to kill his brother for his deception, he received him warmly. (33:4ff;)

When prosperity necessitated it, he moved out of his brother's way:-

A Few Observations. Gen 36:1-43;

If God elected for service one or the other
of these twins **on the basis of likeability**
He would probably have chosen Esau.

At least that is who I would have chosen.
While Esau had no regard for spiritual things.
(Genesis 25:34; Hebrews 12:16-17;),
Yet he had many fine qualities.

In 36:6-8; it was **Esau who moved out**
of Jacob's way just as Abraham gave way to Lot.
(13:5ff;)

God's choices for service are not necessarily
more likeable people, nor are they
any more gracious and kind. Rom 9:10-13;)

A Few Observations. Gen 36:1-43;

**2nd, while Esau was rejected on a spiritual plane,
Yet he was nonetheless
a recipient of the common grace of God.**

**Abraham begged God to bless his son by Hagar,
Ishmael, which He did. (Genesis 17:18-20; 25:16;)**

**Apart from any recorded request
by Isaac on Esau's behalf,
God greatly blessed and prospered Esau.**

**This even extended to God's command to Israel
not to attack the Edomites
nor to take any of their territory.
(Deuteronomy 2:1-7; 23:7; Numbers 20:14ff;)**

ESAU'S CANAANITE WIVES. Gen 36:2-5;

“Esau took his wives from the daughters of Canaan:
Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite,
and Oholibamah the daughter of Anah
and the granddaughter of Zibeon the Hivite;”

“also Basemath, Ishmael's daughter,
the sister of Nebaioth. And Adah bore Eliphaz
to Esau, and Basemath bore Reuel,”

“and Oholibamah bore Jeush
and Jalam and Korah.”

**“These are the sons of Esau
who were born to him in the land of Canaan.”**

ESAU'S CANAANITE WIVES. Gen 36:2-5;

Marriages in the ancient world were often arranged by the parents.

It was for this reason that Abraham had made his servant Eliakim swear an oath.

“That he would **NOT choose a wife** for Isaac from among **the daughters of the Canaanites**. (Genesis 24:3;)

In the same way, Jacob had been sent by his father to Haran with explicit instructions that **he NOT take a wife** from **the daughters of Canaan**. (Genesis 28:1;)

What was wrong with the Canaanites?
They were **idolaters**. They **worshipped false gods** and they would **infect** the people of God with those **same false systems of worship**.

ESAU'S CANAANITE WIVES. Gen 36:2-5;

There is an **old saying** that goes:

“The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.”

There is a **lot of truth** to that statement.

**Women have a tremendous ability
to influence their children.**

There is a sense in which **the continuation
of Christianity** is always dependent upon
the evangelization of the next generation
and **this ministry lies primarily
in the hands of Christian mothers.**

ESAU'S CANAANITE WIVES. Gen 36:2-5;

Esau took a number of wives.

And to make matters worse,

all of these wives were from among the Canaanites.

**They brought their false gods
into the marriage with them.**

**There is no more important decision that a man
or woman can make than in the matter of marriage.**

The Bible advice is very specific:-

**Believers are advised not to marry unbelievers.
Because God knows the trouble that it can cause.**

ESAU'S CANAANITE WIVES. Gen 36:2-5;

**“Do not be bound together with unbelievers;
for what partnership
have righteousness and lawlessness,
or what fellowship has light with darkness?
Or what harmony has Christ with Belial,
or what has a believer
in common with an unbeliever?”
(2 Cor 6:14-15;)**

THE LAND OF EDOM. Gen 36:6-8;

“Then Esau took his wives and his sons and his daughters and all his household, and his livestock and all his cattle and all his goods which he had acquired in the land of Canaan, and went to another land away from his brother Jacob.”

“For their property had become too great for them to live together, and the land where they sojourned could not sustain them because of their livestock.”

“So Esau lived in the hill country of Seir; Esau is Edom.”

THE LAND OF EDOM. Gen 36:6-8;

There came a time when **Esau and his family** made a decision **to depart from the Promised Land.**

They **moved southward** to the area to the **south of the Dead Sea** and settled here.

As Moses writes the book of Genesis, the children of Israel are in the wilderness.

THE LAND OF EDOM. Gen 36:6-8;

**They will eventually
be heading for the Promised Land,
but to go there,
they will have to make a detour.**

**The detour will be around
the land of Edom. It will be
a detour around the descendants of Esau.**

THE LAND OF EDOM. Gen 36:6-8;

The primary purpose of this chapter has already been realized.

**The first readers of this chapter were the Israelites who were about to cross over the River Jordan to possess the land of Canaan and to annihilate the Canaanites.
(Deut 1:8; 20:16-18;)**

There were, however, some people who were not to be attacked or annihilated, among whom were the Edomites, the descendants of Esau:

THE LAND OF EDOM. Gen 36:6-8;

**“The LORD spoke to me, saying,
“You have circled this mountain long enough.”**

**“Now turn north, and command the people,
saying, ‘You will pass through the territory
of your brothers the sons of Esau
who live in Seir; and they will be afraid of you.’”**

**“So be very careful; do not provoke them,
for I will not give you any of their land,
even as little as a footstep because I have given
Mount Seir to Esau as a possession.””**

(Deuteronomy 2:2-5;)

THE LAND OF EDOM. Gen 36:6-8;

**Lest this command be violated,
it was most essential for those Israelites of Moses'
day to know who the Edomites were
and to have a carefully documented record
of the generations of Esau.**

**That record is the substance of chapter 36.
It was indispensable
for the first readers of this account.**

THE FAMILY OF ESAU. Gen 36:9-29;

**This listing of Esau's descendants
is given with very little
in the way of additional material.**

**That is not to say that
these people never did anything.**

Gen 36:23; mentions a person named **Anah**
who found the hot springs in the wilderness
when he was pasturing
the donkeys of his father Zibeon.

THE FAMILY OF ESAU. Gen 36:9-29;

**This is a clue that there were a great many events
that took place in the lives of these people
who worked and who played
and who married and who raised children.**

But almost nothing of it is recorded here.

There is a lesson that we can learn from this.

**It is possible for you to have your life
full of all sorts of details of living
and yet to still be spiritually empty.**

THE FAMILY OF ESAU. Gen 36:9-29;

**What will be said about our life
at the end of our days?**

Was it a life of trivia?

**Or will it have been a life that was spent
in the service of the King of kings?**

**Or will it have been a life that was spent
in the service of the King of kings?**

THE KINGS OF EDOM. Gen 36:31-39;

**“Now these are the kings who reigned
in the land of Edom
before any king reigned over the sons of Israel.”**

**This paragraph sets forth a listing of the kings
who reigned over the land of Edom.**

**We are specifically told that these kings reigned
in the land of Edom before any king
reigned over the sons of Israel. (36:31;)**

This presents us with a problem.

THE KINGS OF EDOM. Gen 36:31-39;

If we read that this was **before any king reigned** over the sons of Israel, then it would seem to **presuppose** that **the author** is **aware of a time when there would be kings** who reigned over the sons of Israel.

This statement has been used by **Critics of the Bible** to insist that **Moses** could not have been the author of Genesis.

What shall we say to such a criticism?

THE KINGS OF EDOM. Gen 36:31-39;

There are **two possible solutions** that have been proposed:-

1. Richard Pratt, professor of Old Testament at Reformed Theological Seminary, notes that “**Moses was the author of the major part of the Pentateuch without necessarily being the final editor of each portion of the text.**”

Therefore Pratt would reason that such a passage as is found here **could well have been added by a later editor** and need not be attributed to Moses.

Dr. Pratt's solution is within the bounds of Christian Orthodoxy and that he continues to hold to such doctrines as inerrancy and the inspiration of the Scriptures.

THE KINGS OF EDOM. Gen 36:31-39;

But Perhaps there may be an alternate solution.

**Moses is also called a prophet and demonstrates
a prophetic understanding**

**That the future of Israel will see a time
when it shall be governed by kings.**

**Deuteronomy 17:14; is specific to say
“that there shall come a time when
the Israelites shall seek to be led by a king.”**

THE KINGS OF EDOM. Gen 36:31-39;

**Moses wishes to state for the record
that Edom has already embarked
upon a policy of being ruled by kings.**

Why is this particularly significant?

**It is significant because the desire for a king
was not necessarily a good thing.**

It came from a desire to be like other nations.

**How many of us have heard
the plaintive cry from our children?**

“But all of the other kids are doing it!”

**That usually came when they wanted
to do something that we thought
might not be in their best interest.**

THE KINGS OF EDOM. Gen 36:31-39;

The Israelites would eventually do the same thing in their desire to be led by a king.

They would ask the Lord for a king and then, much later, they would ask the Lord to take him back.

The descendants of Edom are seen here and they are already following in the ways of the world.

They appoint for themselves a king merely because “everyone else is doing it.”

THE CONCLUSION. Gen 36:40-43;

**“Now these are the names of the chiefs
Descended from Esau, according to their families
and their localities, by their names: chief Timna,
chief Alvah, chief Jetheth,”**

**“chief Oholibamah, chief Elah, chief Pinon,
chief Kenaz, chief Teman, chief Mibzar,
chief Magdiel, chief Iram.”**

**“These are the chiefs of Edom
(that is, Esau, the father of the Edomites),
according to their habitations
in the land of their possession.”**

THE CONCLUSION. Gen 36:40-43;

**This chapter closes with
a listing of some of the chieftains.**

**These were the leaders of some of the tribes
who made up the Edomites.**

**As our chapter closes,
they are seen carrying on the legacy of Esau.**

**It is a legacy that holds the spiritual birthright
in low esteem. It is a legacy of the secular.**

THE CONCLUSION. Gen 36:40-43;

The rest of the story?

It is found in the **last book** of the Old Testament.

**It is found in the words of the Lord
in the book of Malachi.**

“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.”**

**“Though Edom says, “We have been beaten down,
but we will return and build up the ruins;”**

THE CONCLUSION. Gen 36:40-43;

**“thus says the LORD of hosts,
“They may build, but I will tear down;
and men will call them the wicked territory,
and the people toward whom
the LORD is indignant forever.”
(Malachi 1:2-4;)**

**The Lord eventually brought a desolation
and a destruction upon the land of Edom.**

**This was due, in part, to the fact that
Edom set itself up against the people of God
when the Babylonians came to destroy Jerusalem.**

THE CONCLUSION. Gen 36:40-43;

When Nebuchadnezzar went to destroy the Temple of God, the people of Edom lined up to cheer and to make a profit at Judah's expense.

Obadiah 1:13; speaks of how the Edomites gloated over Judah in the day of her disaster and how they looted their wealth in the day of their distress.

THE CONCLUSION. Gen 36:40-43;

**Yet even after this, Edom
was given a second opportunity.**

**Many years after the words of Malachi,
a king came to power from the land of Edom.
His name was Herod the Great.**

**It was under his reign that Jesus was born.
The Lord actually sent magi from the east
To tell Herod about this wonderful event.**

THE CONCLUSION. Gen 36:40-43;

What was his reaction? Did he seek to come and worship Jesus? His pretence was exactly that. But it was only a pretence and a sham.

In reality, he sought to murder the baby Jesus. In doing so, he was demonstrating the continuing legacy of Esau.

It was a legacy of kings who set themselves up in place of God. It was the legacy of the secular.

It was the legacy of those who had no interest in the things of the Lord and who were willing to trade away a spiritual heritage for a cup of stew.

THE CONCLUSION. Gen 36:40-43;

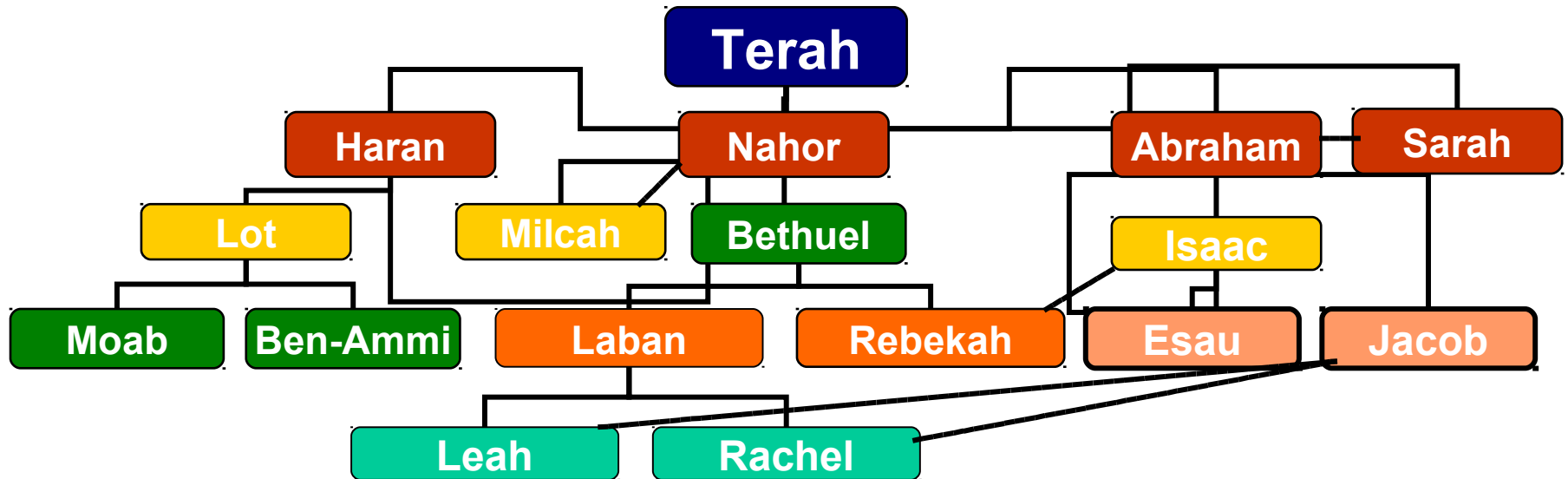
How about us?

Are spiritual things our “cup of tea?”

**Or as they would say in Edom,
“Are they our cup of stew?”**

**We are being given an invitation today.
It is an invitation
to come and to worship the King of kings.**

Terah's Family Tree



Genesis 36:1-43; THE GENERATIONS OF ESAU.

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**Next in the series:-
Genesis 37:1-43;**