

Esau & His Messianic Restoration

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Family affairs can sure be complicated and the complications of youth can last a life time. Sometimes they even last a whole lot longer than that.

Gen. 25:23 relates a strange prophecy about the birth of two brothers, later to be named Esau and Jacob. “Two nations are in your womb, and two kingdoms will separate from your innards, and one kingdom will become mightier than the other kingdom, and the elder will serve the younger.” From the out-set conflict was inevitable. Just like long ago G-d revealed to Avram that his children would be foreigners in a land not their own, so now too, destinies are foretold, even before birth.

We should ask some questions here. We accept that right from birth the two brothers Esau and Jacob are markedly different, and that conflict between the two of them would last a life time (and beyond). Knowing all and seeing all, why then did G-d ordain that these two apparently divergent and radically different souls come to Earth sharing a womb and a family? In other words, these two were twins in name only, why have their souls come to Earth born as physical twins, when spiritually there is absolutely nothing twin about them?

Now, no one can perceive the secrets of G-d or fathom Divine reasoning, but we can look at the facts and discover some amazing principles. First and foremost, Esau and Jacob are brothers. This cannot be denied. Esau by birthright is as much a grandson of Abraham as is Jacob. This right of birth grants him great privilege. Yet, as it becomes apparently clear over the continuing chapters in Genesis, although Esau is the first born son of the chosen Isaac, he takes after his Mommy's side of the family more than his Dad's. This is where all Esau's problems arose from.

Although Esau was the first born son of the promised son, a position that should have entitled him significant blessing and status, by the nature of his actions, his own personal choices, he made decisions that led to him losing almost everything that he could have had. This goes to show us that even one born “with a silver spoon in the mouth” does not necessarily get to eat with that silver spoon all one's life, unless one lives up to it, and works hard to maintain it.

As we know Esau lost his birthright and later was duped out of his paternal blessing. But should we look at him with pity, thinking him a poor dolt, intellectually incapable of standing up to the wiles of his younger brother? Was Esau really the victim here, or was there something in his personality, inherent within him from birth that led him, or maybe even compelling him to make the poor choices that he did and to reap the consequences of such behaviors?

Nowhere in G-d's prophecy to Rivka, Esau and Jacob's mother was there any reference to either of her future sons becoming wicked, evil men, or for that matter one being smarter or dumber than the other. The prophecy simply stated one would be greater and the other lesser. With the birth of twin sons, and the pecking order strictly embraced in those days, it was only natural and

expected that the two brothers would have developed a relationship of one being dominant and the other subservient.

The surprising thing about the prophecy was that the younger brother was to take dominance over the older brother. This was most unusual, but not unheard of, especially in the House of Avraham. After, all did not Isaac the younger brother receive all the blessings and household authority over his older brother Ishmael? One may argue that younger Isaac and older Ishmael had different mothers and that sealed their fates. Yet, in ancient times, such a concern was no concern at all.

Isaac's dominance over Ishmael was most unusual, so unusual in fact that it had to be Divinely ordained in order for it to be established. As it was with Issac and Ishmael, so too was it here with Jacob and Esau. It was by Divine design that the normally subservient younger would rise up and dominate the naturally dominant older brother. G-d sure has His ways to make day-to-day family life interesting! Yet, as Isaiah (55:8-9) so eloquently spoke G-d's Word centuries after these things saying, "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways," says the L-rd. As the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts [higher] than your thoughts."

What can anyone say about this? How can anyone respond? What is there to say? The answer is, nothing! We are dumbfounded into silence before the Wisdom of G-d and all we can do is to go along with the Divine plan to discover what it really is and then to go along it.

Between Esau and Jacob the revelation of the Divine plan was not long in unfolding. The first episode recorded of Esau's foolish choice was his selling of his birthright to his brother. We are all familiar with the Biblical story. Esau is out hunting, Jacob is at home cooking. Esau comes home famished and extremely hungry and asks his brother for some of what he is cooking. Jacob says he will give to Esau what he desires if only Esau would first sell Jacob his birthright. Esau agrees and sells his birthright for a bowl of soup. Unfortunately for us, we no longer understand the meaning of a birthright, nor do we understand its financial and spiritual value. We also seem to overlook the dynamics of brothers.

Esau was famished but he was not at death's door. He would not have died had he not eaten of his brother's food. I am surprised that after hearing Jacob's request that Esau did not overpower his weaker brother, punch him in the nose and take whatever soup he desired. If he was to be scolded by either his Mom or Dad, he could have easily told them what Jacob had demanded and it would have been Jacob who would have gotten in trouble for asking such a price, not Esau for denying it to him. But, as we know, this is not the way it happened.

A birthright by modern standards can be compared to being named as primary inheritor in a will as well as its executor. Esau was supposed to inherit the House of Isaac, just as Isaac inherited the House of Abraham. Judging from scripture, the financial value here must have been considerable.

Imagine this, you are named the inheritor of a large estate worth tens of millions of dollars. One day, a family member takes advantage of you in a moment of weakness and asks that you sign over your rights for a minor, paltry sum. How out of your mind will you have to be to agree to such an agreement? Yet, for whatever strange reason Esau thought so little of the future, of his family status, and of his own honor that he agreed to give away an inheritance of millions for next to nothing.

Scripture describes that Esau did not even put up a fight, he did not even object to the terms. This is a clear sign of a significant problem. A hungry strong young man could have easily punched

his brother in the nose for making such a request and then taken whatever he wanted. Knowing the animosity between these two, would we really be surprised if the two did come to blows earlier in their childhood in episodes not recorded by scripture? Why then should this be any different. But apparently Esau was not thinking “big time” and he made a legally binding contract giving away an inheritance of millions for next to nothing.

Although later scripture records that Esau blames his brother for deceiving him into this, the original narrative shows no such deception. The incident is clearly black and white. Esau knew what he was doing and did it consciously and willfully. Thus scripture says that he despised his birthright, and indeed he did. One must wonder what his Mom and Dad thought when either he or Jacob told them of the transfer. Scripture does not record it but we can guess that father Isaac must not have been too happy with either of his sons, not the crafty one and not the dumb one.

The issue of the paternal blessing however is another story. For when it was time to receive the family blessing, notwithstanding the issue of the sale of the birthright, father Isaac is about to bless his favorite son Esau. Scripture is clear that Jacob did not intervene to do anything about this. Rather it was mother Rivka who concocted the plan for Jacob to wear his brother's clothes and to masquerade as him. As we know, Jacob receives his brother's blessing, angering Esau to the point of wanting to kill him. Yet, how is it that the sale of the birthright was apparently overlooked by the family? Could not the reception of the family blessing equally be overlooked? Apparently not. The patriarchal blessing seemed to be irrevocable as was Esau's anger for losing it.

Another example of Esau's bad character is seen in his choice of wives. Unlike father Isaac and later brother Jacob, Esau saw no need to marry in the family, as was so important to grandfather Avraham. Esau chose local wives and scripture is clear that his mother Rivka most certainly did not like the women Esau chose. Now, in the days when matchmaking was the rule, how was it that Esau went and took for himself not one wife, but two, apparently without the approval of his parents?

Although Isaac's objections are not recorded, one would suspect that he would have agreed with his wife rather than with his son over the choices. Yet, scripture records only Rivka's objections, not Isaac's. Later, it is recorded that Esau tried to rectify the situation by taking for himself a third wife, this time, from within the extended family. He married a daughter of his uncle Ishmael. Yet, scripture is clear, he did not divorce the other two! Now Esau had three wives, and the impact of wife number three on the foreign ways of wives numbers one and two is not recorded in scripture. So, Esau despised his birthright, desired to kill his brother and took wives who did not follow in the family religion, thus making sure that neither would his sons.

Isaac however still loved his son Esau. There is never any mention of his ever having rejected Esau or banishing him for his bad ways as Abraham had parted from Lot. The next we hear about Esau is when after so many years and siring his own family Jacob is returning home from the House of Laban. Scripture records that Esau is living in the land of Seir, apparently not with his father Isaac anymore. There is no scriptural record to indicate that Isaac cast him out. Therefore we must assume that as with the taking of his wives, Esau acted on his own accord. It must have become apparent to Isaac long before this that Esau because of his poor choices was not fit and thus could be destined to carry on the family mission received by father Abraham at the Covenant Between The Pieces. While scripture makes this glaringly clear, still nowhere are these words or sentiments actually put into the mouth of father Isaac.

Isaac's relationship to Esau must have been strained by the events that occurred with Jacob. Still scripture never portrays Isaac as having rejected his son. Later, when Esau and Jacob reunite after

years of separation, on the surface everything seems to be all forgiven. Yet, although scripture may give this appearance, later Biblical record and numerous later Torah legends contradict this entirely. What most have never considered is that when Jacob returns from the House of Laban now with his own family and wealth, father Isaac was still alive. One can simply calculate this from the Biblical narrative to verify it. Esau would have never harmed his brother while his father was alive. Maybe this is why Jacob made sure to put good distance between himself and Esau, fearing the day of their father's death.

Esau's descendants are then said to have established kings and kingdoms prior to there being a King in Israel. The end of Genesis 36 enumerates their names. Yet, according to the secret traditions of the Torah, these scriptural verses contain a code that conceal within it spiritual wisdom about the origins and nature of evil itself. The study of the “fallen kings of Edom” is one of the deepest subjects of the philosophical Kabbalah. Not for naught has Esau come to represent the forces of evil in this world.

Esau has become the image of the “devil incarnate,” the eternal enemy of Jacob and his descendants the Jewish people. This image is reinforced by almost every later Biblical mention of Esau found in the later books of the Bible (the Neviim, Prophets). Esau is prophesied to face eternal destruction and devastation for the way he treated his brother Jacob. These prophecies of course speak about the descendants of Esau. Their fate is sealed.

Yet, one of the profound lessons taught about the “fallen kings of Edom” in the code underlying Genesis 36, is that even to Esau there is still some good left in him. The good in Esau is symbolized as his head. Torah legends relate that when Jacob died and was carried to Makhpelah Cave to be buried, a war broke out between the sons of Jacob and Esau and his sons. Esau refused to allow Jacob's burial in the family plot. In the conflict, Esau himself was said to be killed and as a compromise, his severed head was buried in the lap of his father Isaac as Jacob was buried along side. To this day if one is to visit the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron, Israel, one will find rooms in the location named for each of the Patriarchs (and Matriarchs) as well as a small side location called the Cave of the Head of Esau. Whether or not Esau's head is actually buried there, no one can verify. But it does go to show how old this legend is.

The meaning of this legend is what is important here. For although scripture portrays Esau as the arch-enemy of his brother Jacob, nevertheless, there is still good in Esau, his symbolic head, those souls who still cling to holiness through their father Isaac and therefore have merited a place in the Tomb of the Patriarchs alongside them. Although the historical man Esau made poor choices that caused him to become the epitome of evil, still he must have sired descendants who over the centuries clung to their brother Jacob and refused to follow in the way of the majority of the body of Esau.

Esau has come to represent the “world of the shattered vessels,” “the fallen kings” and misalignment of Divine Lights. Yet, his metaphorical head is still considered complete. Its rectification is said to be that it becomes bonded to the head of Israel, and the two heads merge together to serve as one, in almost an active/passive relationship. To the Kabbalists this is known as the Yihud of MAH and BEN, mystical terms used to describe the union between the rectified and the rectifier.

Scripture is clear. Malachi 1:2-3 sums it up when G-d Himself says, “I love Jacob and I hate Esau. Esau is prophesied to be destroyed, “his mountains desolate and his heritage into [a habitat for] the jackals of the desert.” Yet, the head of Esau is buried in the lap of Isaac. In the end there will be a grand sifting of Esau. For just as Jacob is made up of many souls, so too is Esau. Not all souls

of Esau are born into Esau, some are actually born into Jacob (Israel) and the opposite is also true. Some souls from Jacob are born into the bodies of the descendants of Esau.

G-d judges the souls of men. How they are born is of minor consequence. Esau was born into the most noble of families but chose to abandon his nobility to become something else much less. Yet, from his descendants, many of Esau's seed choose to reconnect to their noble heritage in Isaac and brotherhood with Jacob. These souls are our true brothers and everyone in Jacob should welcome them to our side.

There is however one last bit of “dirty laundry” to be dealt with. There are souls from Esau born into Jacob who, like Esau, choose to deny their nobility and to act with the denial and rejection of Torah that has come to be identified with Esau. They are symbolically referred to as “the souls of Amalek” and “the mixed multitude.” These wolves in sheep's clothing, these Esau souls in Jacob are exposed by how they live. They are the some of the worst secular, socialist, self-centered, religion mocking Jews who are a disgrace and embarrassment to not only the Jewish religion, but to the Jewish people as a whole. They are the ones who by their deplorable behavior are responsible for giving all Jews a bad name. These hypocritical Jews stoke the fires of antisemitism and are rightly called “Amalek,” the eternal enemy of G-d.

In the end, Jews who are Jews in name only will return to their rightful place, in Esau. They will finally be cast out of Jacob (Israel) so that the People of Promise can be complete. In G-d's eyes, Faithful Israel is defined as the community of like-minded souls, not limited to the “accidents” of birth. This realignment of righteous souls is what the Kabbalists call the Tikun, the unification of MAH and BEN, the restoration of the Fallen Kings, when BEN will be restored and again become SAG, fulfilling the prophecy recorded in Zechariah 14:9. Although this mystical language will be unfathomable to most readers unfamiliar with the deep Kabbalistic metaphors, those familiar should be made aware of the great shifts coming and the realignment of loyalties that is necessary for the coming of Mashiah.

Twin souls are funny things. G-d knew in the beginning that many Esau souls would be attracted to Jacob and that many Jacob souls would become attracted to Esau. Thus they were born here on Earth as twins because they were originally twin souls in Heaven. Earth was created to be the place where rectification of divisions can be accomplished. In Heaven, the twin souls were two halves of the same whole. Here on Earth a process of sifting and repair transpire over the entire history of the human race. Now, towards the end, the repair is almost complete. The souls above are uniting as are their bodies here below on Earth. The righteous are finally realizing that unity in spirit is a bond greater than that of body, flesh or blood. The purpose of Heaven is almost complete.

May G-d bless us that all righteous souls return to their homes and that the chaff finally be burned away and their ashes scattered into the wind. Long live the righteous. May Esau's head (BEN) rest in piece alongside his brother Jacob (MAH) in the lap of father Isaac. “On that day shall the L-rd be one, and His name one” (Zechariah 14:9).