

Esau Have I Hated!

Edom Through the Centuries of History

In part 1 of this study, we discussed some of the history between Jacob and Esau, the twin sons of Isaac. The Bible describes them as being very different from one another, even before they were born! Jacob, as we know, was the son of choice with respect to Yahweh's plan of salvation. This divinely chosen line, although it can certainly be traced back all the way to Seth and Adam, really commenced in a spiritual manner with Abraham, the one with whom the most significant covenant was made, and to whom the greatest promises were granted.

Esau, though first-born, proved to be a lesser man than his brother Jacob, selling his birthright for a bowl of red pottage when he was overcome with hunger, and with it the promises made to Abraham. He then proceeded to lose the blessing of his father Isaac, a blessing which was honored by the Almighty, when his younger brother stole it from him through cunning and collusion with their mother. In fact, Jacob's desire to obtain on his own what God wanted to give him set the tone for much of his early life. Clearly the man who would become the father of Israel had many hard lessons to learn on his journey into history.

From the very beginning, Jacob and Esau had problems. They were so totally different in their natures, as well as in their dedication to God and their parents. Once of age, Esau defied the wishes of all concerned by taking unto himself two wives of the Canaanites, the most despicable people on the face of the earth, a people so evil and so detrimental to the plan of salvation that Yahweh had already determined they would have to eventually be exterminated from the face of the earth!

These descendants of Canaan, the youngest son of Ham, were under

an ancient curse placed upon their father by God. It was in this particular lineage that the fallen angelic powers, so utterly opposed to the Eternal's plan for mankind, would seek to recreate the conditions throughout the world that resulted in the great Flood during the days of Noah. The crux of that story is found in the account of Genesis 6:1-4, when the *sons of God* or angels, as this term should be understood, left their heavenly principality, and had sexual relations with human women, producing a perverted offspring known as the *nephilim*, poorly rendered *giants* in the King James Version of the Bible.

The *nephilim* or *fallen ones*, as the Hebrew conveys, were imbued with supernatural powers and abilities. They were inherently evil and submitted themselves to their even more evil forebears, wreaking havoc upon the earth. Through them the pre-Flood was utterly twisted, as they introduced every form and facet of distorted, abnormal, deviant behavior of the most egregious kind, going far beyond what mere human beings could have ever even imagined was possible. Eventually, mankind was so totally warped and corrupt, God had no choice but to do the unthinkable—utterly destroy every man, woman, and child on the earth! It is unquestionably the most unprecedented event in all of human history.

Esau's marriage into the line of the fallen Canaan, marked the great decline into depravity for this man and his descendants. His lineage would become known generally as Edomites, and also by certain of their tribal or locality names as well, such as the Amalekites who descended from Amalek, and the Idumeans who lived in a geographic area known as Idumea. The Herodian kings were among the most infamous of the Idumeans, a nefarious group that we will investigate in the next section of this study.

It is perhaps difficult to appreciate the gravity of Esau's sinful nature, for it was not one simply of human carnality, something with which we all are born, but a rejection of the true God Yahweh, a rejection of His plan of salvation, a rejection of the birthright, which would have included the righteous line from whence the Messiah would be born, and an embracing of the enemies of God and their nefarious plans for perverting and thus thwarting the divine objective

in creating the human race in the first place! In this respect, Esau tracks back to Nimrod and Cain, God-hating, God-rejecting despots willing to sell their souls to gain control of the world! He made his decisions, he lived by his decisions, and he died by his decisions. It is even stated in the Bible that Esau sought repentance, but he could not find it. In other words, he regretted the result of his heinous sins, in that he and his people were shut out from God and disenfranchised, but he could not bring himself to turn toward the Almighty and genuinely change. And thus it is said of this man in the Scriptures:

“Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees...Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: looking diligently, lest any man fall from the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any FORNICATOR, or PROFANE PERSON, as ESAU, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For you know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found NO PLACE OF REPENTANCE (Gk. *no way to change his mind*), though he sought it carefully with tears” (Heb. 12:12-17).

From God’s perspective, Esau was considered a *fornicator*. What does this mean? First of all, it pertains to the fact that he married into the line of Canaan, and the family of Heth, father of the Hittites, in particular. This multiple marriage was far more than a sin of the flesh, although it was certainly that. Beyond this, however, is the fact that what Esau did was *spiritual fornication*—for he intermingled himself, not only with the flesh of Canaan, but also with the evil atrocities of this perverted society. His decision resulted in the ultimate rejection of Yahweh, and the embracing of the pagan Canaanite gods. *Seth* (not the son of Adam) was one of those deities, and the Amalekites (through Amalek, descendant of Esau) introduced *Seth* into the Egyptian pantheon. *Seth* was merely a form of the Canaanite god *Ba’al* or the Babylonian *Bel*. Interestingly, *Bel* is intimately associated with the family of Ham, from whom the Canaanites descended. Cush, his first-born son, became known and worshiped as *Bel*, the demi-god father of

Nimrod (*Ninus*).

Why do you suppose that Esau chose to marry the daughters of Heth? The true perverse nature of Esau is actually exposed in the commission of this act, although it might not appear so on the surface. To explain this fact, think back to the time when Esau sold his birthright to Jacob in what has to be considered one of the most incredible decisions anyone has ever made! Do you recall Esau's uttering even the slightest lament over doing something so sinful and so stupid? No, you do not, because he, caught up as he was with himself and his insatiable appetite, thoughtlessly, carelessly, and carnally despised his birthright and literally gave it away for a mere pittance. Here's what Esau actually said on that signal occasion:

“And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and WHAT PROFIT SHALL THIS BIRTHRIGHT DO TO ME? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus ESAU DESPISED HIS BIRTHRIGHT” (Gen. 25:32-34).

Esau was driven by his carnal appetites rather than by the Spirit of God. All he was interested in doing was filling his stomach with Jacob's red pottage. He preferred being satiated with physical food than inheriting eternal life and sonship with the Almighty. He treated the sacred birthright as though it were a worthless, meaningless thing. He was not concerned in the least at the gravity of his decision. The Bible says that he just ate, and drank, and rose up, and casually went his way.

The birthright he rejected contained the divine promise of the great Messiah—a spiritual blessing about which the earthy Esau cared nothing. On the other hand, however, he sang quite a different tune when his brother Jacob tricked him out of the blessing of the firstborn. Oh, how he cried, indeed sobbed in abject sorrow, over the loss of this special blessing. Why make such a to-do over losing this privilege, as opposed to having no reaction in giving away the

birthright? The answer is in perfect alignment with the true nature of Esau. You see, the birthright was primarily *spiritual* in its intent, but the blessing of the firstborn—now that was something else—that was great *physical* blessings, monetary increase, and oh how Esau lamented the loss of such a prize. He cried out to Isaac, saying, surely you must have a blessing for me too!

What, you might ask, does this have to do with Esau's marriage to the daughters of Heth? Just this—Heth was the father of the Hittites, and the Hittites were one of the most powerful of all the ancient societies. Renowned for their warring nature, the extent of their empire was at times enormous, ranging all the way from Egypt, through northern Mesopotamia, and into what is today Turkey. Their rise to power coincided almost precisely with the intermarriage into their line of Esau and his descendants, and they maintained this rule, despite various ups and downs, for nearly a thousand years!

Far less known than their infamous military prowess, the Hittites were the richest of all the Middle Eastern tribes, not only in terms of what they owned, but even more significantly in what they controlled. To put it in modern lingo, they were the powerful bankers of that historical era. They were the ancient world's version of *power brokers*. They regulated the flow of goods, services, and virtually all forms of monetary exchange. When Esau realized that he had lost the blessing of the firstborn, he immediately turned to the next best source of money and power he could find—the family of Heth—the infamous Hittites. With respect to Yahweh, a more critical mistake he could not possibly have made.

This association between the lines of Esau and Heth set the stage for the future direction of the Edomites in history. They would eventually become, under the influence of the Hittites, master creators, controllers, and manipulators of monetary wealth. This held true in ancient times, and it holds true in today's 21st century world. They learned well the evil Hittite tactics of deception and secrecy. They mastered the art of control—whenever proved difficult was first warned, then threatened, then defamed, then arrested on false charges, often

wrongly imprisoned, and if those attempts did not produce the desired results, they were summarily executed in cold blood. The ruthless willingness to murder one's enemies or anyone who disagrees with or who refuses to submit to one's authority, is the most powerful force for control in human society. It is why such institutions as the Vatican, the Mafia in its various forms, and the great banking cartels of the world, or any number of dictators from Cain and Nimrod to Genghis Khan, Adolph Hitler, Joseph Stalin, and Pol Pot, to individual political powers like Lyndon Johnson and Bill Clinton, have been successful throughout history in maintaining their power, whether corporate, political, religious, or personal in nature.

Esau's nickname was Edom, meaning **RED**. This word and this color are stamped indelibly upon his descendants. At this precise point in time, the most powerful financial empires on earth can be traced back to Edomite connections. To the extent that it has been possible, the facts in this case have been hidden from public view. Obviously, complete camouflage is impossible given the circumstances extant in the world today, a reality that works to our advantage, allowing us to glimpse beyond the veil into the world of real power and ultimate evil, something we will take up later in this study.

In part 1, we traced some of the early history of the Edomites, in particular their association with Egypt. A careful review of the best evidence available demonstrates that the notorious *shepherd-kings* of Egypt, known to history as the *Hyksos*, and cruel rulers of that great empire for several hundred years, were actually Edomites, and specifically Amalekites, who swept into Egypt just after the Exodus of Israel while the people were still reeling from the devastation poured out upon the whole land.

In addition, we looked into the significance of Esau's two marriages to the daughters of Heth, the son of Canaan, and father of the notorious Hittites, one of the most ruthless and feared of all the ancient tribes. We discussed the gravity of the sin of intermarriage between the lines of Abraham/Isaac and that of Canaan, the cursed son of

Ham, and the major reason why the particular sins of the Canaanites were so despicable and utterly despised by God. We uncovered the source of the Canaanite evil that caused the Almighty to pronounce a death sentence upon every man, woman, and child of that nation—a source that took us back to the pre-Flood world, and the realization that the heinous sin of the fallen angels that precipitated the great destruction of mankind was replicated after the Flood among the seed of Canaan.

In part 1, we also discussed Abraham, his background in Ur of the Chaldees, who he and his family really were in their days in the capital of ancient Mesopotamia. We discovered much about this great patriarch that does not immediately meet the eye upon first glance, how he was a man of consummate knowledge, understanding, and wisdom, highly respected, from a priestly line in Ur that went back for many generations, how he had been the recipient of the best education in the known world, was rich and powerful, complete with not only a retinue of servants, but also his own army.

With respect to Abraham, we read the testimony of early historians such as Berosus and Flavius Josephus, both of whom testified that Abraham taught mathematics and astronomy to the Egyptians. We looked into the enigmatic account of Genesis 14, a pivotal period in the history of the entire Transjordan area, not to mention the demise of southern Mesopotamia as a major power for many, many years. We learned that Abraham was no mere nomadic herdsman, but a highly skilled general, who led an army composed of his own men, and those of his Amorite confederates, some of whom were giants, in a successful battle against Ur-Nammu, the king of Abraham's own home city-state of Ur, and that Ur-Nammu may well have been none other than the infamous Nimrod himself! In fact, the sudden arrival of a huge Babylonian armed force in Canaan at the very same time as Abraham and his entourage came into the land was not simple happenstance, but rather indicative of an attempt on the part of Nimrod to destroy his nemesis Abraham. In the process, it is also quite possible that Nimrod met his death.

Finally, we delved into the possibility that the great patriarch Job, about which so little seems to be known, might well have been a descendant of Esau. While this contention may go against current conventional thinking, it certainly was the dominant understanding of the Jews at the time the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Scriptures was accomplished around 250 B.C., and for some time thereafter as well. Job, in fact, may actually be listed among the kings of Edom, for the record in Genesis 36 states that the

second monarch was named *Jobab*, which means *Father Job!*

The evil spirit of Esau continued to exist in his descendants long after his demise. Esau epitomizes the ultimate enemy of Yahweh and of the Messiah. He despised his birthright, part of which was the chosen line through which the Savior of the world would be born. In doing so, Esau established forever the attitude of the Edomites with respect to God and His purposes. That anti-Christ spirit can be easily seen in the life of a rather obscure Biblical character named Doeg the Edomite.

This wretched man lived during the days when David was fleeing from king Saul. Doeg was but a common soldier in the army of Israel, yet a man of unspeakable evil and boundless hatred for the young David. When he learned that the future king was being protected by the priests at Nob where the tabernacle was situated, he ratted him out to Saul.

Upon the arrival of the army, the king called out the high priest Ahimelech and demanded to know where David was hiding. The high priest refused to divulge anything about David, and Saul, in a fit of utter rage, commanded his footmen to slay all the priests of the Lord, an unprecedented request from a king of Israel. The guards, however, refused to go against the anointed priesthood, all that is, except Doeg the Edomite. This dog proceeded to murder in cold blood Ahimelech and 85 of his fellow priests at Nob.

What does this story recorded in II Samuel 22 tell us with regard to Edom? It reveals that there is special enmity between the

descendants of Esau and the house of David and the priesthood of God. As will be covered later in this study, we see this pattern repeated over and over again. Edom hates the line of David and the *Son of David*-Yahshua/Jesus. This evil spirit of Esau, who hated the chosen one Jacob and sought to kill him, also was directly involved in the first-century attempt to slay the newly-born Messiah; and this same wickedness will play itself out in the latter days, when Edom, the *anti-Christ*, shall once again oppose Yahshua, the true Christ, at His Second Coming. Did you catch the drift of this last statement? Just as the *true Messiah* or *anti-Christ* descended from the chosen line of Jacob, so will the *false Messiah* come from the rejected lineage of Esau. These two forces, one for good, the other evil, epitomize the great struggle of the ages.

In this second installment of our study, we will continue the pursuit of Esau's many descendants as they migrated into areas far away from their ancient homeland, and how their influence and impact has changed the course of history, even to this very day. We will hopefully come to see that the struggle which originally transpired between Esau and Jacob in the womb of their mother Rebekah, not only continues to this day, but will profoundly affect the future of this world until the return of Messiah and the end of the age!

EDOM & THE EXILED JEWS

Once the weakened Amalekite hordes had finally been expelled from Egypt, the first two kings of Israel, Saul and David, enjoyed military success against the descendants of Esau. During the period after the division of the United Monarchy, however, the Edomites became an increasingly persistent thorn in the side of the southern kingdom of Judah. As the Jewish state, through disobedience, lost more and more of its divine favor, the Edomites looked on with pleasure as they watched their despised cousins grow weaker and more vulnerable year by year.

Yahweh began to warn the Jews that they were going to bring upon themselves the kind of severe punishment the northern kingdom of Samaria had suffered. Prophet after prophet testified against their sinful conduct. There was revival during the righteous reigns of Hezekiah and later Josiah, but aside from these exceptional periods of recovery, destruction drew nigh.

In 612 B.C., Babylonian forces led by Crown Prince Nebuchadnezzar, proceeded up the Tigris River Valley and assaulted the Assyrian stronghold at Nineveh, emerging victorious and effectively ending the illustrious Assyrian Empire, the previous conquerors of Israel.

Once Nebuchadnezzar became king, he proved to be an adept ruler and superb field general. His armies either conquered or simply annexed much of the old Assyrian possessions. It wasn't long before he turned his eye toward the homeland of the Jews. Over a period of some 18 years, the Babylonians launched three military campaigns against the kingdom of Judah. The long predicted destroyer of the Jews had finally come on the scene. The concluding invasion in 586 B. C. culminated in the destruction of the Temple and the sacking of Jerusalem. The last contingent of Jews were taken captive and transported to Babylon, where they remained for the next nearly 50 years.

In October of 539 B.C., a combined force of Persians and Medes under the direction of Darius diverted the course of the Euphrates River that ran through the city of Babylon, rendering this heretofore impregnable fortress vulnerable to attack. Under cover of night, the Medo/Persian army made its way dryshod along the Euphrates riverbed, allowing them to literally enter the great city by traveling under the huge perimeter walls.

This particular night was the darkest in Babylonian history, for at the very moment the Persians were silently invading the city, the local regent, Belshazzar, was in the midst of a drunken orgy. It was on this occasion that he witnessed the famous *handwriting on the wall*,

recorded in the book of Daniel, spelling the doom of Babylon (and fulfilling the prediction of Jer. 25:12), and prophesying a 2,520 year period of demise upon this kingdom, after which time it would once again rise and emerge great on the world scene. This emergence at the time of the end is discussed in the book of Revelation. The Persians subsequently took the city of Babylon, as we might say today, *without even firing a shot!*

The Babylonian captivity of Judah was a horrifying experience for the Jewish people. During the years of Nebuchadnezzar's successive invasions, the neighboring Edomites, partly out of fear of the Babylonians, but mostly out of hatred for Israel, supported the king's designs on Judah, and especially on the Solomonic Temple treasures, which were summarily removed to Babylon. Note the following poignant passage from Psalms 137, where the perfidy of Edom against the Jews in Babylon is recorded:

“By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember you, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer Jerusalem above my chief joy. Remember, O Lord, the CHILDREN OF EDOM in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Raze it, raze it, even to the foundation thereof. O daughter of BABYLON, who are to be destroyed; happy shall He be, that rewards you as you have served us. Happy shall he be, that takes and dashes your little ones against the stones (Heb. *the rock*)” (Psa. 137).

Many Edomites already lived in Babylonian territory, and many others either moved there at or just after the Jewish captivity, or, in some instances, were captured along with the Jews. Thus Edomite influence among the Jewish people not only continued during their stay in Babylon, but actually increased greatly. When the Persians took over under Cyrus the Great, even more Edomites made Babylon

and its other cities their home.

It was this same Cyrus of whom Isaiah had prophesied over 100 years earlier that he would deliver the Jewish exiles and bring them back into their own land (Isa. 27-28). This he did, issuing a decree in 538 B.C., duly recorded in Hebrew in Ezra 1:2-4, and in Aramaic in Ezra 6:3-5. The initial contingent of Jews under the governorship of Zerubbabel removed from Persia to Judea in 536 B.C., and commenced to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem.

Trouble came quickly, however, in the form of Samaritans, the people whom the king of Assyria had over 200 years earlier transplanted into the northern realm of Israel. They harassed the Jewish workers, and eventually caused the reconstruction to cease. For nearly 15 years, no progress was made on the temple. God, therefore, raised up two prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, to arouse the people to finish His house, which indeed they did, completing work in 516-15 B.C.

The next great influx of Jews into Judea occurred some 60 years later after the decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus was made in 457 B.C. (Ezra 7). This particular order by the Persian monarch was the fulfillment of a specific prophecy recorded in Daniel 9:25, whereupon Ezra the scribe was commissioned to lead the Jewish exiles back to their homeland and beginning the process of rebuilding the city of Jerusalem. Ezra was followed by a Nehemiah-led group of exiles in 445 B.C.

In between the first two post-exilic returns to Judea, one of the most interesting and significant episodes in Jewish history transpired, and it is most pertinent to the subject of this study. It has been preserved for us in the book of Esther, and what a tale of intrigue and suspense, seeming defeat and ultimate victory, it truly is!

ESAU VS. JACOB **THE PATTERN CONTINUES**

Although the story itself is quite well-known by most Bible students, surprisingly few seem to realize that the antagonist of the book of Esther is not Jewish, although this is certainly a story about Jews, nor is he Persian, in spite of the fact that Persia is the locale in which the story transpires. No, the evil Haman was neither. Note carefully what is said of him in the following passage:

“After these things did king Ahasuerus (Xerxes I, king of Persia - 485-465 B.C., son of Darius the Great) promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the AGAGITE, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him” (Esther 3:1).

Haman, we are told, was an *Agagite*, but what, pray tell, is an *Agagite*? The name sounds more like some sort of rock, such as *anthracite*, *calcite*, or *aragonite*. The real answer, however, is given in I Samuel 15, and it probably shouldn't surprise us all that much, for we read:

“Thus says the Lord of hosts, I remember that which AMALEK did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, which he came up from Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not...And Saul smote the Amalekites...and he took AGAG, king of the Amalekites alive” (I Sam. 15:2-3, 7-8).

Note the name *Agag* in verse 8. It is from this word that we derive the term *Agagite*. *Agag* was the most infamous of the Amalekite kings, and remember that *Amalek* was a son of Eliphaz, and thus a grandson of Esau. Therefore, we can confidently conclude that Haman in the book of Ruth was a descendant of Esau—he was, in fact, an Amalekite, and in a more general way, an Edomite.

Knowing this information, it cannot be too shocking that Haman would oppose the Jews who were in Persia at the time of

Xerxes I. Noting the fact that the story of Esther, Mordecai, and Haman transpired between the first two returns of the Jewish exiles, one has to wonder to just what extent the later efforts of Ezra and Nehemiah would have really been successful had not the Jews in Persia gained the victory over Haman the Agagite. The story recorded in the short book of Esther, although often viewed as mere Jewish literature by many, actually describes one of the most significant occurrences in the history of God's people, literally preparing the way for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the re-establishment of Jewish society in the land, and the first great advent of the Messiah Yahshua/Jesus.

The descendants of Esau, as we can see in the person of Haman, continued to despise the children of Jacob, and cause them as much trouble as possible. In this instance, Haman was resolute in his determination to completely annihilate the Jews in Persia. His wicked plans, however, were overthrown by Yahweh through the remarkable efforts of Queen Esther and her heroic cousin, Mordecai. The annual Feast of Purim was established by Esther as a memorial to the great divine deliverance accomplished on behalf of the Jews (Esth. 9:26).

The story of Haman and the Jews in Persia is certainly a valuable and interesting part of the saga that had been playing out since the struggle of the original progenitors of their respective races, Esau and Jacob. One has to wonder, however, just how big a role this ancient event might play with respect to the future, indeed, to the end-time. Is there contained within the book of Esther a prophetic pattern for the latter days? It would appear that the answer is yes.

The reason behind such a conclusion is not only the fact that Haman was a descendant of Agag, king of the Amalekites, and thus of the line of Esau, but also the significance of Mordecai's lineage as well. In Esther 2:5, we read:

“Now in Shushan the palace there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of KISH, a BENJAMITE.”

Who was this Kish of the tribe of Benjamin? For the answer, we have to pay a return visit to the book of I Samuel and the time of Saul. Beginning in verse 1 of chapter 9, we read:

“Now there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was KISH, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, a BENJAMITE, a mighty man of power. And he had a son, whose name was SAUL, a choice young man, and goodly: and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he...Now the Lord had told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came, saying, Tomorrow about this time I will send you a man out of the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him to be captain over My people Israel, that he may save My people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon My people, because their cry is come unto Me. And when Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said unto him, Behold the man whom I spoke to you of! This same shall reign over My people” (I Sam. 9:1-2, 15-17).

Remember, as we read earlier in I Samuel 15, that king Saul was ordered by God to completely destroy the Amalekites, man, woman, child, and animal. No trace of them was to remain alive. This was a divine decree given by Yahweh to not only punish Amalek for their cruel opposition to Israel, but also to protect the Israelites from any future hardship that would surely result if these people were spared. Don't forget that Amalek, the Amalekites, and king Agag, were all descendants of Esau, and thus Edomites, the perpetual enemy of Israel.

Saul, of course, did as God commanded, and went into battle. He achieved a great victory, the first over the Amalekites in many, many years. It was a signal event, but it was marred by Saul's unwillingness to obey the instructions of Yahweh fully. Instead of slaying all living aspects of the Amalekite culture, he selfishly held back and spared some, including the king, Agag himself. The result was that the Amalekites were not utterly destroyed, and thus a descendant of Amalek rises up some 600+ years later in the days of Esther and Mordecai as the sworn opponent of the Jews in Persia, determined to exterminate these exiles of God.

My good friend, Joe Good, founder of Hatikva Ministries, has written a short book that is rich in revelation with regard to the book and story of Esther. He notes the following information that is most insightful, and which I think you will appreciate:

“Once again there is a battle between Saul and Agag. Instead of Saul, son of Kish, it is Mordecai, son of Kish. Haman the Agagite is the enemy instead of his ancestor, Agag. Saul had a partial victory over Agag, but due to his disobedience, the line of the Amalekites and the family of Agag survived to terrorize Israel in the days of the Persian empire. Mordecai, the son of Kish, succeeded and overcame the entire lineage of Agag, and was elevated to the highest position in the empire, second only to the king. Likewise, the Jewish people and all who joined with them became the favored sons of the kingdom.

“Indeed, in an even greater eschatological sense, Saul is a picture of Adam, the first man and ruler in the Garden of Eden. Yet Adam, and Saul, fell to sin. In this same light, Mordecai is a picture of the Messiah, the second Adam, who will succeed in overcoming all evil. Agag is a picture of Satan, and his descendant, Haman, is a picture of the False Messiah”
(Prophecies in the Book of Esther, pp. 19-20).

In other words, the conflict between Esau and Jacob, starting before they were even born, and continuing on throughout history, is the story of the Messiah and his arch-enemy, the False Messiah. Indeed, as Joe Good goes on to state:

“In fact, the *Midrash (Shocher Tov 9.10)* states that God proclaims that neither His name nor His throne can be complete until the seed of Amalek is wiped from the face of the earth”
(Ibid., p. 21).

In the story presented in the book of Esther, we have one of the ancient types of the end-time conflict that will culminate in the return of the Messiah and His glorious triumph over the enemies of

Israel and the opponents of the truth, purpose, and plan of God. This deserves some serious reflection by all believers today, for this can only mean that the ultimate conflict for world domination will be between the descendants of Esau and their leader, the False Messiah, and the descendants of Jacob and the true Messiah Yahshua. If this be the case, then our thinking with regard to the end-time prophetic scenario must take into consideration where precisely Esau and the Edomites fit into the eschatological picture, a subject that we will be investigating carefully in the remainder of this article and the installment to follow.

With regard to Agag and Amalek, there is a very interesting section of the Bible, where we read about the heathen seer Balaam, adept at divination and highly esteemed throughout ancient Mesopotamia, who was hired by Balak, king of Moab, to prophesy against Israel, because of their stunning victory over Sihon, king of the Amorites and Og, king of Bashan, both of whom were giants of the *Rephaim* class and fierce warriors. As it turned out, instead of prophesying against Israel, Balaam was literally compelled by Yahweh to speak positively concerning the nation in the following manner:

“How goodly are your tents, O Jacob, and your tabernacles, O Israel! As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river’s side...He shall pour the water out of his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters, and HIS KING shall be HIGHER THAN AGAG, and his kingdom shall be exalted...And now, behold, I go unto my people: come therefore, and I will advertise you what this people shall do to your people in the LATTER DAYS. And he took up his parable, and said, Balaam the son of Beor has said...who heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the Most High, who saw the vision of the Almighty...I shall see Him, but not now: I shall behold Him, but not nigh: there shall come a STAR out of Jacob, and a SCEPTER shall rise out of Israel...And EDOM shall be a possession, SEIR (the ancient home land of the Edomites) also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come He that shall have dominion...And when he looked on AMALEK, he took up his parable, and said, Amalek

was the FIRST OF THE NATIONS; but his latter end shall be that he perish forever” (Num. 24:5-7, 14-20).

Let's notice a couple of points in this passage. First of all, don't lose sight of the fact that what Balaam was given to predict with regard to Israel is for the *latter days*. This is critical to the proper understanding of what is said. In spite of Balak's demand that he curse the Israelites, Balaam prophesies of their ultimate victory over all their enemies. He states that their *king* shall be higher than *Agag*. Recall that Haman was an Agagite, or a descendant of the ancient king Agag, ruler of the evil Amalekites, and all of them children of Esau or, as they were termed, Edomites.

Who is this great king of Israel in Balaam's prediction? Who is the *Star* and the *Scepter* that shall arise out of Jacob, whose kingdom shall be exalted and have the dominion? It is, of course, none other than the returning Messiah, who indeed will be infinitely higher than Agag, and triumphant over all those who oppose Him. Agag, therefore, becomes once again a type, both of Satan, as the ultimate force of wickedness, and the False Messiah at the end of the age whom Yahshua/Jesus will overcome. How interesting that indeed a most unusual *star* was directly associated with the birth of Christ. The wise men who discussed this issue with Herod told the king that they had seen *His star* in the east! This is, in fact, one of the earlier of the specific Messianic predictions in the Scriptures.

In addition, Balaam speaks of the Amalekites with respect to Israel in the *latter days*, and note carefully that Amalek will have achieved great status on a worldwide basis in the end-time. In other words, we are being told that the line of Esau is still and will continue be as alive and well and firmly opposed to God and His people as they ever were—perhaps even more so, since there is so much more on the line at the end. This will not be some band of nomadic desert dwellers on camels and horses, and this last engagement will not be against a relatively small contingent of Israelites. This will be a battle for control of the entire world. It will be the ultimate, climactic confrontation between the forces of good and evil in this universe! Daniel writes that it will be like nothing ever previously experienced upon the earth,

and that it will never be equaled again in all of history—and Jacob and Esau will be the major human contestants, each fulfilling their destinies, according to the Word of Yahweh.

Do not, therefore, make the mistake that the Edomites are only a relic of ancient history. Indeed, if Israel makes that mistake, they may well lose out in the end, but God will see to it that they do not. As much an enemy as Esau has been to Jacob, his sin and that of his descendants have been against the Almighty, and it is He and He alone who will pour out His fury upon the last generation of Edomites in this world. The Biblical predictions are clear—Edom will be destroyed forever! On the other hand, God is merciful, and the dire prophecies against Esau and his descendants cannot be seen as precluding the possibility that such a curse would of course be removed upon genuine repentance and acceptance of the true Messiah, something which Esau could not bring himself to do.

Back to the story in the book of Esther. You will recall that after Haman was elevated in rank by king Xerxes, he demanded that everyone bow down to him (Esther 3:2-4), which indeed they did, but that Mordecai adamantly refused to do so. This is quite reminiscent of what the Babylonian monarch Nebuchadnezzar did, as recorded in the book of Daniel, except that he had a great image built in the plain of Shinar. When we think of this image, we cannot help but associate it with the infamous *image of the beast* that is discussed in Revelation 13. This episode is to transpire at the time of the end, and all people, the Bible states, will be required to bow down to this image, or forfeit their very lives! In fact, Nebuchadnezzar is a specific ancient type of the end-time evil ruler that is referred to as the *beast* (this term also applies to the political/military combine under his control as well), and the image he constructed is directly typical of the aforementioned *image of the beast*.

In the instance recorded in Daniel, the three young Jewish captives, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, better known by their Babylonian names, Shadrach, Meshech, and Abed-nego, openly defied Nebuchadnezzar's royal edict and refused to bow down to the golden *image*. For their withstanding of evil these men, without any trial

whatsoever, received the death penalty, and were summarily cast into the fiery furnace. In like manner, Mordecai, also a Jew, resisted Haman when he was commanded to do obeisance unto him, and this Amalekite madman flew into a rage and conspired to murder Mordecai and destroy all of the Jews in the kingdom as well. Again, according to Joe Good's research, Haman supposedly wore an **image** of a pagan idol attached to the belt around his waist. And in the latter days, when the command is given to worship the beast and his **image**, refusal to do so will be considered a capital crime, indeed a crime against the state, a crime against humanity, and will be punishable by excruciating death. The end-time circumstances that come upon this earth will call for many Shadrachs, Meshachs, and Abed-negos, many Mordecais, and indeed, many Esthers as well, men and women of true faith and obedience who will be girded about with the spiritual armor of God, and who will withstand to the face the evil decrees of the power elite of this world! This time is coming, my friends. In fact, it is almost here. Day-by-day, it encroaches upon us. Step-by-step, the nefarious plot systematically unfolds. The day of reckoning is rapidly approaching. This is not hype—it is **REALITY!!**

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The book of Esther continues on with this amazing story of faith, courage, and determination in the face of absolute evil and seemingly overwhelming odds. It is quite interesting that most of the signal events transpire around the Passover season. In fact, very specific dates are mentioned, such as the 13th, 14th, and 16th days of Nisan, the first month of the sacred year. The fast which Esther eventually proclaimed for the endangered Jews actually occurred over Passover itself, and her appearance before the king transpired on the 16th day of the first month, a very significant time in the annual calendar, for this is the precise day on which the Israelites offered the *wave sheaf*, and commenced their count to Pentecost (later, the Sadducees, a small and corrupt Jewish sect, introduced the notion of a different reckoning of Pentecost, but they were never successful in implementing it among the Jews).

In addition, Haman's conspiracy against Mordecai and the Jews backfired, and the gallows he had built upon which to hang Mordecai became his own means of execution. This evil Edomite died on the

17th day of Nisan, and once again we see how significant the timing of all the events in the story of Esther really is. What is significant about the 17th day of the first month? For starters, it is the exact date on which the ark came to rest atop the mountains of Ararat. This is not some mere happenstance or coincidence. This was divinely ordered, for the ark pertains directly to the Messiah Himself, the importance of which will be mentioned momentarily.

Many scholars and students of the Bible believe the best evidence demonstrates that ancient Israel crossed the Red Sea on this very date as well. If so, then the 17th day of the first month would not only mark the conclusion of the great Flood, which destroyed all abject sinners upon the earth, and gave new life in a new world to Noah and his family, but also the propitious occasion when the Pharaoh and all the Egyptian host were annihilated in the crashing waves of the Red Sea, while Israel came up out of the waters (of baptism!) cleansed and saved by the hand of the Almighty!

In like manner, the great restoration under King Hezekiah was concluded on the 16th of Nisan, and we read in II Chronicles 29 the following:

“Then Hezekiah the king rose early (on the 17th of Nisan), and gathered the rulers of the city, and went up to the house of the Lord...So the service of the house of the Lord was set in order. And Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing was done suddenly” (II Chron. 29:20, 35-36).

So the 17th day of the first month once again becomes the time when God’s people are renewed. Hezekiah was the most righteous king of the Jews since his ancestor David had sat on the throne in Jerusalem. His father Ahaz had done evil in the sight of God, and had allowed the temple to be desecrated. In this regard, he stands a type of Satan, and on this great day in history he was defeated and the proper worship of Yahweh was restored (*Ibid.*, pp. 63-65).

And, of course, this brings us to the most important 17th day of

the first month ever in the history of the human race—the day on which Yahshua/Jesus the Messiah rose from the dead! He was slain on the afternoon of the 14th day, precisely when the Passover lambs were being sacrificed according to the command of Exodus 12, buried late that afternoon, and spent 3 days and 3 nights (15th, 16th, 17th), arising from the dead late on the 17th day. And we are also told in Matthew 27:52-53 that many also arose from their graves after His resurrection, and appeared in the city of Jerusalem as a great testimony of that glorious point in time when the righteous saints shall be raised from the dead to join their risen Savior forever!

The significance of this day in history is so easily overlooked or simply unknown, but Scripture indeed reveals that the 17th day of the first month is the anniversary of a number of closely related, very important events in the past. And it may well have a great future application as well.

Sometimes in reading this well known story, Esther's part in the great drama may get a bit overshadowed by Mordecai's performance. This, however, should not be. Although Mordecai does stand as a type of the Messiah, returning in power and victory at the end of this age, Esther has a very significant role in this unfolding saga. Though a mere unknown Jewish captive, incredibly she becomes queen of the Persian empire, the wife of Xerxes I. The seeming unlikelihood that this could ever just naturally transpire leads us to see God divine hand in the matter.

Esther's given name is *Hadassah*, which means *myrtle*. The myrtle tree proves to be of significance in the Scriptures. In fact, it could be said to represent Jerusalem, and thus all of Israel. It is one of the *four species*, along with the etrog (citron fruit), palm, and willow, that is commanded as part of the celebration of *Sukkot*, the annual Feast of Tabernacles. The *four species* are understood to represent the *tetragrammaton* or four-letter name of the Almighty (*YHVH*), and thus are always held together at the Feast when they are waved. The myrtle tree symbolizes joy, hope, and a blessed future.

Like Esther, the myrtle tree is not nearly as impressive or showy as

other plants. It is not lifted up like the cedars of Lebanon, nor does it possess the strength of the oak. Rather it grows in low places, but because of this fact, it receives extra moisture, keeping it very green and strong. In fact, it withstands drought and remains green even after being cut, indicative of the resilience of Esther, Mordecai, and the Jews in the face of being taken captive to an alien land, and living in harm's way for many years. In that sense, we could easily say that they were indeed *cut down* and removed from their native soil, yet remained green. When the leaves of the myrtle tree are crushed (symbolic of great trial and suffering), they produce a fragrant perfume more potent than the rose, even as did the life of Queen Esther, Mordecai, and the faithful Jews of that era.

In the book of Zechariah, the prophet receives a vision, and a word from the Lord, saying:

“I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the MYRTLE TREES that were in the BOTTOM (*ravine*); and behind him were there red horses, speckled, and white. Then said I, O my Lord, what are these?...And the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These are they whom the Lord has sent to walk to and fro through the earth...Then the angel of the Lord answered and said, O Lord of hosts, how long will You not have mercy on JERUSALEM and on the cities of Judah?...And the Lord answered...Thus says the Lord of hosts; I am jealous for JERUSALEM and for ZION with a great jealousy. And I am very sore displeased with the heathen that are at east...Therefore...I am returned unto Jerusalem with mercies; My house shall be built in it...The Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem” (Zech. 1:7-17).

Zechariah's special calling to the prophetic office was, along with Haggai, for the purpose of stirring up the Jewish people to have faith and confidence in Yahweh, and to be courageous in rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem. The prophecy indeed had a fulfillment in that day, but it also has meaning for all time as well, since it identifies Jerusalem and Zion with the myrtle tree, with the Messiah standing in

the midst thereof!

The myrtle trees in this prophetic vision were situated in a *bottom* or *ravine*. This is almost surely a reference to the Kidron Valley on the east of Jerusalem between the Temple Mount and the Mount of Olives. In the book of Joel, this place is called the *valley of Jehoshaphat*, and notice its latter-day significance:

For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for My people and for My heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted My land...Let the heathen be wakened, and come up (the description of traveling to Jerusalem, no matter from what direction one is coming) to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put you in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision” (Joel 3:1-2, 12-15).

Zechariah’s prophecy indeed has end-time implications, as do the myrtle trees. They picture the returning Messiah triumphing over the enemies of Israel, and the great restoration that will transpire after this victory is achieved. This theme is expanded upon in the 14th chapter of Revelation as follows:

“And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud voice to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in you sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great WINEPRESS of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden OUTSIDE THE CITY, and BLOOD came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a

thousand and six hundred furlongs” (Rev. 14:17-20).

Note the key underlined words in the passage above, and how they correspond perfectly to the description in the book of Joel, chapter 3. The *winepress* is in a specific location. Where is that place? **OUTSIDE THE CITY**. The city is Jerusalem, and *outside the city* is a definitive reference to that special locale on the east of Jerusalem called the Mount of Olives, upon whose slopes is situated the Garden of Gethsemane. *Gethsemane* means *winepress* or *oilpress*, and it was here that the *wine (blood)* of the Messiah was pressed or squeezed out of Him for the sake of all mankind. It was here that Hebrews 13:10-14 declare that our Savior suffered, and indeed the place to which we must go spiritually in we are to take up our cross and follow Him. And it will be here in the Kidron Valley, on the east side of Jerusalem, between the city and the Mount of Olives, where the returning Yahshua will triumph over His enemies upon the earth, for **“His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east...and you shall flee to the valley of the mountains...and the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there one Lord, and His name one...And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbor, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor. And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together” (Zech. 14:4-5, 9, 12-14).**

In this respect, Esther’s Hebrew name, *Hadassah*, is rife with much significance, seeing that the entire episode with she, Mordecai, and Haman, pictures in type this very latter-day occurrence, which will culminate in the *marriage of the Lamb* and the onset of the *Messianic Kingdom*!

In addition, with regard to the manner in which she is so

carefully prepared and groomed by Mordecai to be introduced to the king, we cannot help but see in Esther a picture of the Bride of Messiah, for it is said of her in Revelation 19:

“Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife has MADE HERSELF READY” (Rev. 19:7).

This passage reminds us of a similar one written by the apostle Paul in his letter to the Ephesians, where he states:

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church (Gk. *Ekklesia*), and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing: but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives...This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church” (Eph. 5:25-28, 32).

And perhaps all such description of the Bride of Messiah goes back to the graphic description of Israel in her youth when Yahweh is said to have found her polluted in her own blood. He raised her up, cleansed her, anointed her with oil, and showered her with the finest in apparel and jewelry, saying:

“Now when I passed by you, and looked upon you, behold, your time was the time of love; and I spread My skirt over you, and covered your nakedness: yea, I swore unto you, and entered into a (marriage) covenant with you, says the Lord God, and YOU BECAME MINE” (Ezek. 16:8).

Furthermore, we have the striking portion of the story when Esther goes before the king to make known the petition on behalf of her people. Under existing Persian law, no one could approach the emperor, including even his own wife, unless that person were specifically bidden by the king—to do otherwise was to invite death—unless the king personally extended his scepter to the individual

approaching him. In that case, he would be extending **GRACE** to the person involved, which is precisely what occurred, for we read:

“Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king’s house, over against the king’s house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house. And it was so, when she saw Esther the queen standing in the court, that she obtained FAVOR in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden SCEPTER that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the scepter” (Esth. 5:1-2).

Esther, therefore, came under the favor or *grace* of the king, even as the Bride of Christ is granted divine favor. We too are now given permission by the king to appear before His throne, for it is said of us:

“For we have not a great High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all point tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the THRONE of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find GRACE to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:15-16).

The *scepter* is a Biblical type of Yahshua/Jesus as the ultimate ruler of the world. Remember that we read in Balaam’s prophecy that **“there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a SCEPTER shall rise out of Israel” (Num. 24:17)**. This *Scepter* is the Messiah.

Esther’s careful and courteous approach to Xerxes typifies perfectly how the Bride of Christ should come before the king. In response, the great ruler not only extends the scepter to her, but spontaneously promises to give her anything she desires, even to half the kingdom (Esth. 5:3)! Remember that we are told in Romans 8:

“The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then HEIRS of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be

also glorified together” (Rom. 8:17).

Indeed, even as Esther was received by the king and grace was extended, so are we saved by grace, which is the gift of God. And in like manner, just as Esther was offered up to half the kingdom by the emperor, we who believe are granted to be co-heirs with Yahshua/Jesus of far more, for we are told by Paul:

“What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also FREELY GIVE US ALL THINGS” (Rom. 8:31-32).

Did you catch that incredible promise? God the Father first gives His very best in the person of Christ, who then becomes our guarantee that we shall freely receive, not just a blessing, not just some things, but **ALL THINGS!** What a remarkable statement, and how beautiful the manner in which the Almighty has done these things. He secures our reception of all things by first giving us His Son. In other words, He is saying to us, **“Since I have already given you My best, be assured you will therefore receive the rest!”** And if you have ever wondered just what it is that you will inherit, take a long look up at the vast, incomprehensible universe spread out like a great celestial curtain, of which we are the merest speck!

And let the critical circumstances facing Esther, Mordecai, and the Jews not be lost on us today. They were in big trouble! Their very fate hung in the balance. The situation was crucial, deadly serious, and very difficult, and yet the very best possible resolution was affected by Yahweh on their behalf. Does this not point up to us the profound truth of yet another passage from Romans 8 which says:

“And we know that ALL THINGS work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose” (Rom. 8:28).

When the Bible states that **ALL THINGS** work together for good to them that love God, it means precisely what it says. All things

means all things—the good, the bad, and the ugly!! In the case of Esther and the Jews, the conditions were bad, and in the case of Haman the Agagite, circumstances were ugly indeed; but the pure truth of this Scripture is clearly proven out. What about us? The worse things get for you and me, as long as we love God, meaning that we are devoted to Him and His ways, and are called according to His purpose, the more certain we can be that things will work out for good. Why? Because the almighty Yahweh is on our side, and **“Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world!”** AMEN! Does not the Word of the Almighty state:

“Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifies. Who is he that condemns (as does Satan, and as did Haman!)? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?...No, in all these things we are MORE THAN CONQUERORS through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus (Messiah Yahshua) our Lord” (Rom. 8:33-39).

Let us, therefore, believe and say that, like Mordecai, Esther, and the faithful Jews in Persia:

“If God be for us, who can be against us?” (Rom. 8:31).

There are certainly many other aspects of the book of Esther that have significant spiritual overtones and meaning to them. This story is one that deserves a far more careful reading than is typically customary, and that is something I would urge each of us to do. There is, however, a final point I would like to make before moving on in our own discussion.

In the concluding portion of Esther, after Haman has been

hanged, we read about his sons (Esth. 5:11). Remember that Haman is an Agagite, a descendant of the greatest of the Amalekite kings, and thus has Esau the Edomite as his ancient ancestor. What then is the importance of his sons? Just this. First of all, there were precisely ten in number (Esth. 9:10), and ten has great significance with regard to the end-time and the evil *beast* power that is predicted to rise in that era, for there are exactly **TEN KINGS OR KINGDOMS** directly associated with this great anti-Christ war machine (Rev. 17:12)..

Secondly, they were all Edomites, and this may very well also have end-time implications, for the seed of Esau is still alive and well in this world today! Just as the ten sons were under the authority of their father, so the ten kings or kingdoms in the latter-days will give their power over to the beast, according to Revelation 13:12-13. This combination is going to literally war against the returning Messiah and His army of angels and resurrected saints. Will the beast power in some way be connected to Edom? The answer is almost certainly yes, and if you are in doubt about this conclusion right now, you should be convinced by the time you finish reading this article.

The struggle between Jacob and Esau is decidedly **NOT OVER YET!** The end-time scenario of the Bible reveals that only at this great culmination of Satan's desperate attempt to thwart forever the plan of God will this great contest be resolved, and I can guarantee that it will not be in favor of Esau and the Edomites. Will they be fighting against Israel in the latter days? You bet they will, for it is written in the 83rd Psalm:

“Keep not You silent, O God: hold not Your peace, and be not still, O God. For, lo, Your enemies make a tumult: and they that hate You have lifted up the HEAD. They have taken CRAFTY COUNSEL (that's CONSPIRACY, whether anyone likes it or agrees with it!), and consulted against Your hidden ones. They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. For they have consulted together with ONE CONSENT (remember that the ten kings are of one mind, merging their power to oppose the

Messiah): they are confederate against You: the tabernacles of EDOM, and the ISHMAELITES; of Moab, and the Hagarenes; Gebal and Ammon, and AMALEK; the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre; Assur also is joined with them: they have helped the children of Lot...Fill their faces with shame...Let them be confounded and troubled forever; yea, let them be put to shame, and perish: that men may know that You, whose name alone is YHWH, are the Most High over all the earth” (Psa. 83).

Take note that the first of the enemy nations listed is EDOM, and the second is ISHMAEL—the two rejected sons of the Abrahamic line, the two peoples who have withstood the purposes of Yahweh and His Son since their origins upon the earth—merged together as the end-time leaders of the opposition against Israel and against the Almighty, as they have been since the days of their notorious, rejected ancestors! The blessing given to Ishmael and Esau were not enough. They want what they missed out on! They want precisely what Israel has and will have forever, and they are willing to risk everything to obtain it, including fighting against the Messiah Himself!

Finally, of course, the ten sons of Haman, along with many other of their henchmen, were slain by the Jews under the leadership of Mordecai, who was promoted to high rank within the empire. It was a glorious victory, a strong type of the coming triumph of the Messiah over the enemies of Israel at His Second Advent. The feast of Purim was created and dedicated at this time to commemorate this great event in Jewish history. Purim pictures, however, far more than the celebration of an ancient Jewish victory over Haman and his ten sons. In a far greater sense, it represents that time in the future when the world will witness the most awesome conquest of all time, handing Satan and his human minions the most crushing defeat ever inflicted upon created beings! Then the world will finally be cleansed and have peace, and the rejoicing in that day will outstrip every other celebration in the history of man. No longer will the reign of terror plague this earth. No longer will the conniving conspirators, the deceptive politicians, the wretched Satan-worshipping manipulators of the human race, the power brokers, the financial barons, and the lying religious leaders of this world exist any longer! Their rotting corpses will cover the land, and the smoke of their torment shall rise forever!!

When the ancient Amalekites were pushing west toward a decimated Egypt, they encountered the liberated Israelites on their march across Sinai. Amalek, true to the nature of Esau, attacked the Israelites, but the Almighty gave them the victory. Afterward, the people encamped at the Mount and received the Torah from the hand of Yahweh.

In like manner, nearly a thousand years later, the descendant of Amalek, Haman the Agagite, sought to destroy the people of Israel once again, but his plan was uncovered, and he was exposed for the evil plotter that he was. Mordecai's victory over Haman also marked a great return unto the Torah by the Jews of that era.

And finally, at the end of this age, when once again the corrupt, perverse, deceitful Edomite-led beast power will seek to pull off its most diabolical scheme against the Israel of God, they will be utterly routed by Yahshua/Jesus and His heavenly army. When that great day arrives, then will be fulfilled the words of the Scripture, which say:

“But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up the mountain of the Lord, and to house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for the LAW (Heb. *Torah*) shall go forth from Zion, and the WORD of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore...For all the people will walk every one in the name of his God, and we will walk in the name of the Lord (*YHWH*) our God forever and ever!” (Micah 4:1-5).

What an incredible time this will be. This time, however, will be different than when Israel defeated Amalek (of Esau) at Rephidim, or when Mordecai and the Jews destroyed Haman the Agagite (of

Esau) and his ten sons. For it will not be just a part of a nation or even an entire nation that return unto Yahweh and the Torah of God—rather it will be all the nations of the world. This is when the Eternal will pour out His Spirit upon all flesh (Joel 2:28), and when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, even as the waters cover the seas (Isa. 11:9)!

The book of Esther concludes with king Xerxes I speaking and acting in favor of Mordecai. In the final chapter, we read:

“And the king Ahasuerus laid a tribute upon the land, and upon the isles of the sea. And all the acts of his power and of his might, and the declaration of the greatness of Mordecai, whereunto the king advanced him (Heb. *made him great*), are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia? For Mordecai the Jew was next unto the king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed” (Esther 10:1-3).

Here we see king Xerxes as a type of God the Father, and Mordecai as representative of the Messiah. Imagine that the great exploits of Mordecai were actually recorded in the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia, as well as the holy Scriptures. Mordecai, as you can see, was elevated above all his brethren, and indeed above all in the entire empire, next only to the king himself, even as it is said of Yahshua/Jesus in Philippians 2, where we read:

“Wherefore God also has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus (Yahshua) every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in the earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ (Yahshua Messiah) is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:9-11).

EDOM & PALESTINE

The name *Edom*, given to Esau on the occasion of his selling the birthright to Jacob for a bowl of red pottage, is the same Hebrew word as the first human being *Adam*, and means *red, earthy, fleshly*. The kingdom of Edom, therefore, represents the realm of the physical, the carnal, the earthy. Indeed, the Edomites were considered to be very wise in the ways of the world. In describing the great wisdom of Solomon, the Scriptures state that he was wiser than even the sages of Edom.

In addition, Esau himself was a very physically-oriented man. He loved the hunt, and was skilled with the bow and the sword. He became an excellent horseman, and his Edomite descendants were known for their superb use of the horse in battle. He was a man of great fleshly appetites. The fact that he valued a mere bowl of pottage when he was overcome with hunger, above his own birthright privileges, is quite telling in this regard.

The Edomite empire developed much more quickly than did Israel. The Bible tells us clearly in two separate places that Edom had kings long before the Israelites were ever a nation (Gen. 36:31-43; I Chron. 1:43-54). They also had a great deal of national pride. They were warriors and conquerors, and like their father Esau, they were experts in the field, superb hunters and excellent equestrians. Their cities were fortresses, known for being virtually impregnable, often carved deep into the craggy rocks and mountains in and around the Dead Sea. It appears that the famous rose-red city of Sela or Petra was at one time under Edomite dominion, until they were displaced by the Nabateans in the 7th century B.C.

Esau's descendants, like Jacob's, were divided into numerous families or clans. Unlike Israel, however, they did not always stay together. In fact, the migratory habits of the various Edomite tribes caused them to become widely dispersed in numerous directions and in many geographic areas of the world. As a result, the local

Edomites who continued to occupy the old home territory, Idumeans as they were called, began to lose their power. During the period of Jewish exile in Babylon, many of the Idumeans drifted into the area of southern Judea and intermingled with the remnant there. The ancient city of Hebron, to the southwest of Jerusalem, and the former stronghold of the Rephaim giants, became their local capital.

The Edomites, of course, remained the enemies of Israel. They had applauded the Babylonian captivity of the Jews under Nebuchadnezzar, and had even aided the foreigners in their military campaigns. They specialized in persecuting those Jews who escaped the long arm of the Chaldeans, raiding their villages and taking spoils.

During the Persian era of their exile, which we previously discussed concerning Esther and Mordecai, the Jewish people fared well. The Persian empire, as vast as it once was, eventually fell to the persistent war waged by Alexander the Great, son of Philip, king of Macedon, their final defeat being suffered at the battle of Arbella in 331 B.C.

After the death of Alexander in 323 B.C., the Greek empire was ultimately divided among four of his leading generals, namely, Seleucus Nicator, Cassander, Ptolemy Soter, and Laomaedon, with two principle players emerging, Seleucus Nicator and Ptolemy Soter, rulers of the Babylonian/Syrian and Egyptian divisions of the kingdom respectively. For many years war raged between the Seleucid and Ptolemaic empires, with Palestine being caught in the middle of the struggle. Many of the various machinations of that protracted war are recorded in the 11th chapter of Daniel. Eventually the northern or Seleucid realm became dominant.

Under the Seleucids, a vigorous program of Hellenization was undertaken, increasing in intensity as time passed. Of course, the Jews had by this time rebuilt the temple, along with the city of Jerusalem. Their triumphant return from exile was a high spiritual water mark for the Jews, leading to numerous reforms instituted primarily by Ezra and the Great Synagogue. With the onset of the

Seleucid effort to Hellenize the empire, Jewish resistance began to substantially increase.

Things changed for the worse after 175 B.C. Prior to that time, Judea had been first under Babylonian, then Persian, and finally Greek, hegemony. When Antiochus IV of the Seleucid empire came to power, in order to further stabilize the realm, he stepped up the process of hellenization, including the forced worship of himself in the form of the Olympian Zeus. Opposition among the Jews began to stiffen greatly, leading to the Seleucid invasion of Judea in 168 B.C.. In order to bring the Jews into submission quickly, Antiochus sought to exterminate their religion which was the great binding force among these people. He desecrated the temple, brought the sacrificial system to a halt, forbade Sabbath-worship, as well as the observation of the annual festivals, prohibited the circumcision of male children, and even had all copies of the Torah destroyed. Perhaps most abominable of all, he made the Jews eat the flesh of swine, something utterly anathema to this race, and sacrificed pig's blood on the temple altar. In many respects, Antiochus IV (Epiphanes) fulfilled the typical role of the infamous *king of the north* in the prophecy of Daniel 11. He became the most despicable and detested enemy the Jews ever had.

The horrific treatment of the Jews at the hands of this Seleucid madman led to an uprising known as the Maccabean Revolt, named after Judas Maccabee, the leader, along with his brothers, of the rebellion. On 25 Chislev, 164 B.C., the Maccabean forces defeated Lysias, marched into Jerusalem, and reclaimed the temple. It was perhaps the most celebrated victory ever experienced by the Jews. On the occasion of this triumph, the Temple was cleansed and rededicated. According to Jewish tradition, the war with Antiochus had created a shortage of the appropriate oil for the Temple lamps. Only enough for one day remained. The lamps were lighted, but burned, not for just one day, but rather for 8 consecutive days, until a new supply could be obtained. The Jews perceived this to be a miracle from God, and subsequently instituted an annual festival called the *Feast of the Dedication*, in reference to the renewed Temple. It later became known by its now far more familiar name, *Hanukkah*, and indeed it is observed by faithful Jews for 8 days during

the month of December. It is recorded in John 10:22 that the Messiah was in Jerusalem during the *Feast of the Dedication*. There should be no difficulty in realizing that, as a fully Torah-observant Jew of the first century, Yahshua/Jesus would have undoubtedly participated in this annual celebration, since it in no way conflicts with the Torah, and indeed credit and worship toward Yahweh for the great deliverance is clearly acknowledged.

Unfortunately, the successors to the Maccabee brothers became corrupt. John Hyrcanus I took the reins of power in 135 B.C. He quickly turned his anger toward the Edomites, whom he conquered in battle. He then, however made a critical mistake by forcing them to convert to Judaism. In this one act an evil seed was sown, one that would soon change the course of Jewish history, and, to a great extent, that of the entire world! Within the next several generations, there was a great intermingling of the Jews and Idumeans. Indeed, it was often difficult to discern between the two races. Herein lay the groundwork for the unthinkable—the coming of Edomite rule in the provinces of Palestine themselves!

Although the history of the Hellenistic period is interesting and varied, suffice it to say that, for purposes of our discussion, Antipater II, the leader of the Idumeans, began to insinuate himself into Jewish affairs during the troubled reign of Hyrcanus II (69-40 B.C.). He had befriended Julius Caesar by fighting on his side in the victorious campaign in Egypt in 48 B.C.. Once the defeat of the Roman general Pompey was achieved, Antipater's friendship with the new leader of the empire made it possible for him to be named as procurator of Judea, thus opening the way for the infamous Herodian dynasty that would exercise control over Palestine for the next 100 years. Antipater II's son became king Herod the Great.

The installation of the Herodian monarchy in Palestine did not come easily. The period leading up to its advent was a time of great unrest in the Roman world. Cassius, Brutus, and their followers successfully plotted and carried out the assassination of Julius Caesar in 44 B.C. They were immediately opposed by Octavian and Mark Antony, whose combined forces defeated the army of Cassius in 42

B.C. Many of the Jewish leaders felt that Herod had usurped the power of government, leaving Hyrcanus II with merely titular honors. In the fall of 41 B.C., he was brought to trial, but surprisingly, Hyrcanus came to his aid, testifying on Herod's behalf!

What could possibly have brought about such a defense of Herod on the part of the high priest and Jewish ruler Hyrcanus II? The answer lies in the cunning nature of the Idumean Herod. Even though he was already married with children, for purely political purposes he became betrothed to Mariamne, whose mother was Hyrcanus II's daughter, and whose father was Aristobulus II's other son, Alexander, and thus a niece to Antigonus, the rival of Herod. This move served to strengthen his political base in Judea. At the conclusion of the trial, Mark Antony appointed Herod as tetrarch of Judea.

John Hyrcanus II succeeded to the priesthood in 78 B.C., and to the throne in 69 B.C. He was, however, very dependent upon Rome. When, in 37 B.C., the emperor appointed the Edomite/Idumean Herod the Great to be king of Judea, Hyrcanus lost virtually all of his powers. He was later taken prisoner, maimed and thus disqualified for the priesthood, and exiled to Babylon. Upon his return to Jerusalem, he was charged by Herod with treason, and summarily executed in 30 B.C. This event marked the official changing of the guard in Judea, with a son of Esau, the perpetual enemy of Israel, deposing a son of David, and a member of the Maccabean dynasty.

By the first century A. D. and the advent of Yahshua/Jesus on the scene, many of the Judeans or occupants of Palestine/Judea, were actually of Edomite extraction. Indeed, much of the trouble the Jews experienced during this turbulent era, was directly due to Edomite influence in Palestine. Assuming the identity of being Jewish, many of these interlopers migrated into Spain, France, Italy, Macedonia, the Balkans, Portugal, Germany, and into central and eastern Europe as well. We will pick up their trail in a later portion of this study, as it has altogether to do with the current state of world affairs.

With the coming of Herodian rule in Palestine, the Jewish people came under three distinct levels of government. At the top was, of course, the Roman empire. In the days of the Messiah, Caesar Augustus (Octavian) was the emperor at the time of His birth (Lk. 2:1), and Tiberius at the onset of His ministry (Lk. 3:1). Rome installed a procurator to administer their hegemony over Judea, the most well-known of whom was undoubtedly Pontius Pilate, so famous for presiding over the trial of Yahshua/Jesus, and summarily washing his hands of the so-termed *Jewish* problem.

In addition, there were the Herodian kings, who were essentially appointed by Rome. Herod the Great was the first and certainly the most prominent of this group. He is the ruler responsible for greatly enlarging and embellishing the temple in Jerusalem, to the point that it actually became known as the Herodian temple, a designation that it has retained until this day. During Yahshua's lifetime, this was the major locale of Jewish worship. The Herods were an especially cruel lot, persecuting the Jews on many occasions, although still permitting them to retain their religion and some semblance of local autonomy.

The third level of governmental control was the Sanhedrin, which met regularly to debate local issues and make decisions with regard to the day-to-day affairs of the Jewish people. They made and enforced the *halakah* or Jewish civil law. Although they hated their Roman oppressors, their links to the Herods, however, cannot be denied, nor can the corrupting influence of that illicit relationship upon the Jews be summarily dismissed. The decision to force Judaism upon the Idumeans years earlier was one of the great mistakes ever committed by any race of people, for it tainted the entire society.

Many people are not aware that the Herods, of which there were a number, were not Jews by race, but Edomites, descendants of Esau, the enemy of Israel. This is perhaps not all that surprising when we realize that the Edomites early on developed a certain penchant for concealing their identity. This was true anciently, as in the case of their Egyptian experience which we covered in Part 1, and it has been

just as true all through history, even to this day. And certainly this characteristic applies to the Edomites in their historical, as well as their current, relationship to the Jews.

Under Herodian rule, the Jewish power factions were further corrupted. The Sadducees had previously sided with Hyrcanus II, who began to appoint them to the high priesthood, not according to the Torah teaching, but rather for political purposes. This policy continued under Herod the Great, but the price of being high priest escalated considerably, thus commencing the practice of selling the position to the highest bidder. The Sadducees, though always a small and usually ineffective party, were able to draw heavily upon the more affluent members of Jewish society, and thus had the means to purchase for themselves a certain measure of power via the high priest's office. The Sadducees, therefore, developed a much closer working relationship with the Herodian overlords than did the ruling Jewish party, the Pharisees.

This group, originally of a purer pedigree than the Sadducees, suffered under the Herods as well, their purity becoming more and more tainted. Perceived as having derived their position among the people from the time and spirit of Ezra, and later, as champions of the Maccabean reforms, they enjoyed great support among the common people, and thus were generally able to maintain authority in the Sanhedrin, in spite of the frequent presence of a Sadducean high priest. The earlier establishment of the synagogue system, an almost solely Pharisaic institution, also contributed to the power base of the Pharisees, for they became a strong religious and social link for the average Jew of that day.

Corruption abounded during the first century, the time of Yahshua/Jesus. The Messiah clearly recognized the authority of the Pharisees, stating in Matthew 23:

“The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not you after their works: for they say, and do not” (Matt. 23:2).

They, however, just as clearly came under greater condemnation

than did their rival factions. The reason for this is not that they were worse than the Sadducees, for indeed they were not, but that they were by far the most dominant party, and thus attracted much more of Yeshua's attention and criticism. You will note that in the entire New Testament there is only one occasion where the Sadducees are even addressed as an entity on their own, and that instance is recorded in Matthew 22 (companion references in Mark 12 and Luke 20), and indeed even it is most uncomplimentary.

The fact is that under Edomite rule, intermarriage, and influence, much damage was done in ancient Judea, and the perversion and corruption of the Jewish ruling class was among the most inimical aspects of this crucial time period. Combined with the Babylonian and Persian influence garnered from their exile, much of the purity of the religion of the Hebrew Scriptures was either lost, discarded, overlooked, excused, and/or simply mixed in with ever-increasing Jewish additions to the Torah of God. By the time Yahshua/Jesus came on the scene in first-century Judea, circumstances were critical. He observed the religious leaders of His day and roundly criticized them, saying, in the most dire terms:

“Woe unto you, scribes, and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for you neither go in yourselves, neither suffer you them that are entering to go in...for you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayer: therefore you shall receive the greater damnation...for you compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, you make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. Woe unto you, you blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! You fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifies the gold? And, whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever swears by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty. You fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifies the gift...for you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier

matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith...Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchers of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore you be witnesses unto yourselves, that you are the children of them that which killed the prophets. Fill you up then the measure of your fathers. You serpents, you generations of vipers, how can you escape the damnation of hell? Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them you shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall you scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zechariah son of Berechiah, whom you slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, **All these things shall come upon this generation” (Matt. 23).**

These words and others spoken by the Messiah stand as some of the most condemnatory and imprecatory ever issued against any people in the history of the world! On another occasion, Yahshua/Jesus encountered these same individuals, who indignantly ask of Him:

“Why do Your disciples transgress the TRADITION OF THE ELDERS? For they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But He answered and said unto them, Why do you transgress the commandment of God by YOUR TRADITION?...You hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, This people draws near unto Me with their mouth, and honors Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me. But in vain do they worship Me, TEACHING FOR DOCTRINE THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN” (Matt. 15:2-3, 7-9).

When Yahweh gave His Law to Israel, He did not add any so-called *traditions of the elders*. When He gave His Law to Israel, it contained no *commandments of men*! When some one thousand years later Ezra and Nehemiah led the second wave of Jewish exiles back to their homeland, they did not sanction any additions to the Law

of God, but rather forcefully taught the people to carefully abide by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of the Almighty!

The deterioration of the Jewish political and religious leadership had been set in motion centuries earlier. Bad spiritual seed planted in the Jewish experience in Babylon and Persia began to reap a rotten harvest in Judea after the righteous Ezra and Nehemiah passed from the scene. The combination of pagan Babylonian, Persian, and, perhaps most especially, Edomite/Hittite, influence during and after the exile spoiled and perverted many of the Jews. This situation was then greatly exacerbated by the action taken against the Idumeans by John Hyrcanus I, as mentioned earlier, when he attacked, defeated, and then forced the Edomites to accept the Jewish religion.

And then, of course, the final straw—the advent of those evil sons of Esau—the Herods. The Edomite Herodian dynasty was one of the most despicable and adulterating influences upon the Jewish people in their entire history. During this critical period, many distinctions between Edomites and Jews were blurred. Numerous Edomites intermarried into the Jewish society. Many others were either assumed to be Jews, or, in fact, passed themselves off as Jews to achieve political, monetary, or religious advantage. It was, in fact, most probably from this very time span that the basis for the statements of Revelation 2:9 and 3:9 developed, which say respectively:

“I know your works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but you are rich) and I know the BLASPHEMY of them which SAY THEY ARE JEWS, AND ARE NOT, but are of the SYNAGOGUE OF SATAN” (Rev. 2:9).

“Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which SAY THEY ARE JEWS, AND ARE NOT, but DO LIE; behold, I will make them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you (Rev. 3:9)”

These passages may have other applications as well, but in

the physical realm, the Idumeans who merged themselves with the Jews under the Herods, undoubtedly set things in motion for Revelation 2:9 and 3:9 to even be comprehensible to later generations of believers. It was during this period of time when certain descendants of Esau began to claim that they were Jews, a deception that has continued to be foisted off on an unsuspecting world ever since, and one that has had, and continues to have, an overwhelmingly negative effect upon, and dire implications for, the entire human race!

By the first century A.D., the Jewish religion was no longer pure, as it had been during the great revival in the days of Ezra and the early returnees from Babylon. By the time of the Messiah, the Jewish rabbis taught an admixture of the Torah, along with innumerable traditions of men that had developed through the intervening 500 years. It was this twisted set of religious circumstances that Yahshua/Jesus faced during His first advent upon the earth.

As stated earlier, the Messiah was definitely in conflict with the scribes and Pharisees. These were the religious leaders who were in charge and exerted by far the most influence upon the nation. Although this may be controversial among some who read this article, it would certainly appear that one of the major reasons for the continual dispute between Yahshua/Jesus and at least some, if not all, of the Pharisees had to do with their insistence upon merging the Hebrew Scriptures with the so-called *traditions of the elders*. In fact, many of these various *traditions* eventually became a part, indeed a major part, of the Talmud, which itself then became the foundation and highest authority of Judaism.

Most people should be quite aware that the Judaism of today, and indeed as it has developed over the last nearly 2,000 years, is emphatically **not** the religion of the Hebrew Scriptures. Many would be astonished to learn that the *Talmud*, along with its valuable information, also contains numerous statements and teachings that are utterly contrary to the Word of God, in fact, the diametric opposite

of what the Almighty commands. The Jews err greatly in verbally honoring the Torah, but insist on viewing it through the lens of the *Talmud*. When the opinions of Jewish rabbis are held in equal or higher esteem than the Scriptures themselves, something is terribly wrong with such a religion. This is decidedly *not* anti-Jewish sentiment at all, since the Jewish scholars themselves both know and admit that this contention is absolutely true. For instance, note the following quotation from Rabbi Ben Zion Bokser:

“Judaism is NOT the religion of the Bible” (*Judaism and the Christian Predicament*, p. 159).

Writing in his book, *A History of the Jews*, Solomon Grayzel states:

“The Talmud is to this day the circulating heart’s blood of the Jewish religion. Whatever laws, customs, or ceremonies we observe—whether we are orthodox, Conservative, Reform, or merely spasmodic sentimentalists—WE FOLLOW THE TALMUD. It is our common law” (p. 41).

Please note also the following quotation from the late Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, former Chief Rabbi of the United States:

“The return from Babylon, and the adoption of the Babylonian Talmud, marks the end of Hebrewism, and the beginning of Judaism,”

The Edomite/Babylonian influence during and after the Jewish exile contributed greatly to the formulation and adoption of rabbinic Judaism. The rabbinical view of history is that the *Jews* were chosen by God, as a biological race and because of their genetic superiority, to bring about an earthly Jewish kingdom in which Gentiles adhere to the so-called *Noahide laws*, but are subject to rabbinic authority. The fact is, however, that such a teaching is not to be found in the pages of the Bible. Furthermore, while it is certainly correct that some of the Jewish religious figures, especially of the Pharisees, did accept

Yahshua/Jesus as the Messiah, for the most part, as you well know, the ecclesiastical and political leaders of the nation openly and knowingly rejected Him. The *Talmud* contains some of the most despicable, blasphemous, and damnable statements of any document in human history. In many parts, it is far worse than the writings of almost any other religion on the face of the earth, the Messiah Himself being thoroughly trashed in its pages as a blasphemous heretic and sorcerer. The average believer today could hardly bear to read many portions of these *Jewish* writings.

There is no doubt that the scribes and Pharisees clearly recognized the Law of Moses. In many respects, they technically adhered to much of the instruction given by God, and most of them were reasonably capable teachers of the Law. Remember that it was the Messiah Himself who told the people:

“The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat: ALL therefore WHATSOEVER THEY BID YOU OBSERVE AND DO, THAT IS WHAT YOU SHOULD OBSERVE AND DO; but do not you after their works: for they say, and do not” (Matt. 23:2-3).

Now I realize that there are any number of teachers in the Sabbath-keeping community today who try their hardest to explain away this rather clear and forthright statement, but it is to no avail. Yahshua/Jesus incontestably recognized the authority of the scribes and Pharisees with respect to the Law of Moses, and insisted that the people of His day understand this fact, and that in ***all whatsoever*** they instructed the Jews to observe and do, in that they should be obedient. There is really no good reason to argue or debate Christ’s plain statement in this regard. Some who have been raised on the notion that the Sadducees were the ones in charge, or that they were held in higher esteem, or that they possessed more legal or moral authority, are unequivocally in error. Those who are so disposed have almost always come into this understanding through dogmatic organizational church teaching wherein the particular leadership sides with the Sadducees in regard to either the timing of Passover observance or possibly the reckoning of

Pentecost. Differences between the Pharisees and Sadducees on these two points, however, should not be permitted to cloud the issue of which group the Messiah recognized as being in authority. To do so is to practice a kind of revisionist history of the first century A.D., something a number of Sabbath-observing churches have done over the years.

That being said, however, there were significant problems with the scribes and Pharisees of that era, and a good deal of the responsibility can be laid squarely at the door of Edomite influence in the affairs of first-century Judea. For instance, Josephus, himself a Pharisee, writes:

“What I would now explain is this, that the Pharisees have delivered to the people a great many observances by succession from their fathers, which are not written in the laws of Moses” (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Bk. 13:10:6, p. 355).

That there was an oral law and tradition among the ancient Israelites, there can hardly be any doubt whatsoever. This fact, however, is not the real issue, for the true oral law did not contradict, add to, or detract from, the written Torah. The problem arose when the Jews, particularly after their return from Babylon, began to add to the so-called oral law or at least the *traditions of the elders*, to the point that by the first century A.D., the various opinions, interpretations, practices, approaches, and commentary of the Jewish scribes and rabbis often was deferred to more regularly than the Scriptures themselves, and this practice only escalated during the next several hundred years. We can easily see in the gospel accounts some of these many traditions of the Jews becoming issues of controversy between the Pharisees especially and the Messiah.

Also, in any discussion of the first-century Jewish religious/political parties, we must be acutely aware that among the Pharisees there existed two very distinct sub-groups, namely, the schools of *Hillel* and *Shammai*, and that there were over 300 key points of difference between them in their interpretation and teaching of the Torah. This is not an insignificant point, and, in fact, can often

be the determining factor with respect to the disagreement Yahshua/Jesus had with the Pharisees. The differences in these two great rabbis were rather sharp, Shammai being known for the strictness of his views and possessor of a dour, quick-tempered, and impatient personality. In contrast, Hillel was more highly respected, and was known for his gentleness, kindness, and concern for humanity. Naturally, the disciples of two such eminent teachers would form two very different and indeed often opposing schools of thought. Much, if not most, of the criticism directed toward the Pharisees by the Messiah undoubtedly was the result of Shammai's teaching on the Torah and his attitude toward the people.

Yahshua/Jesus Himself was a strict Torah-observant person, meaning that He rigorously obeyed the written Law. He was also a Jew, and undoubtedly was minutely aware of the oral law and the traditions of the elders. On the occasions when the traditions were not in conflict with the written law, there would be no good reason for Him not to have been in compliance. He, however, was obviously not bound by all of the oral teachings, and, in fact, was vigorously opposed to many of them.

There is an unbelievable amount of anti-Semitism in this world, although this is, of course, nothing new. It has been this way through centuries of history. While no race of people is by any means perfect, the Jews have suffered unbearably, not only for their own sins, as have we all, but also because of the heinous sins of others—and very specific and particular others at that! One of the major causes of this anti-Jewish bias has everything whatever to do with the very issue we are now discussing. Nothing, and I mean nothing, has cast more aspersions on the true Jewish people than the wretched Edomites, intermingling with and cloaking themselves outwardly as Jews, and who were anciently, and indeed continue to be, an integral part of the world order that will bring the realm of man's rule upon this earth crashing to ruin at the hand of the returning Messiah—may that great day be hastened! And the tragic part is that so few people in this world are even remotely aware of this reprehensible group of people, condemned by Almighty God from old time, still alive and well and

seeking to slay Jacob, as surely as did Esau over 3600 years ago! No wonder the Bible prophecies concerning Edom are so utterly dogmatic and final. These people are so evil God long ago determined that they would be annihilated from the face of the earth. His plan will not go forward to completeness until they are destroyed forever! We will go into some of those dire prophecies later in this study, and we will also come to appreciate even more precisely why Yahweh feels the way He does about Esau and Edom. Note the following quotations, every one of them from traditional, established, and trustworthy Jewish sources:

“In the days of John Hyrcanus...the Edomites became a section of the Jewish people” (*Encyclopedia Juaica*, vol. 6, p. 378).

“They (the Edomites) were then incorporated with the Jewish nation” (*The Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. V, p. 41).

“From then on they (Edomites) constituted a part of the Jewish people, Herod being one of their descendants” (*The New Standard Jewish Encyclopedia*, p. 589).

“They (the Edomites) were hereafter no other than Jews” (Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book XIII, p. 279).

“Strictly speaking, it is incorrect to call an ancient Israelite a Jew, or to call a contemporary Jew an *Israelite* or a Hebrew” (*The Jewish Almanac*, ed. Richard Siegel & Carl Rheins, p. 3).

While this may seem like I am belaboring the point, the fact is that what the Edomites did in this regard simply cannot be overstated, since many of them have used the Jews, Judaism, and things Jewish, as a cover or camouflage for their illegal and immoral acts against Israel and, when properly understood, indeed all of humanity. If this is not yet clear to you, bear with me and I assure you that it will become so.

In fact, with respect to the Edomite connection, notice the following quotation from *The Jewish Encyclopedia*:

“Edom is in modern Jewry...Some anthropologists are inclined to associate the racial origins of the Jews, not with Semites, whose language they adopted, but with the Armenians and Hittites of Mesopotamia, whose broad skulls and curved noses they appear to have inherited” (*The Jewish Encyclopedia*, 1905 ed., Vol. X, p. 284).

This represents quite a remarkable statement coming, as it does, from such a respectable reference work. The above citation is clearly based upon some of the descendants of Esau/Hittites intermingling among the Jewish people, both in terms of marriage, as well as socially and otherwise.

Joseph Jacobs, writing in the same *Jewish Encyclopedia* under the article entitled *Purity of Race*, makes the following statement:

“The question whether the Jews of today are in the main descended from the Jews of Bible times, and from them alone, is still UNDECIDED” (*Ibid.*, Vol. X, p. 283).

Another quite powerful quotation from one of the most authoritative Jewish sources, again indicating the impurity created among the Jewish people by the intrusion of Edomite influence. This began to occur in Babylon, and continued unabated in Judea afterward. Dr. David Davidson writes:

“Indeed the Edomites later became completely absorbed in Jewry, and under their aggressive intrusion the JEWS became racially the MEDIUM of expression for the EDOMITE IDEAL (*this is a reference to Esau, his character, his evil nature, his despising of the birthright, and his insatiable desire to regain what Jacob was given by any and all means possible, including especially deception, lying, camouflage, stealing, etc!* In fact, control and rulership of the entire world is really what is at stake!) for which Herod the Great had first given political

formation...Even the fact that the EDOMITES have at length BECOME JEWS was soon completely FORGOTTEN by the exponents of Jewish tradition” (*Encyclopedia Biblica*, Vol. 2, Col. 1187).

These Edomite Jewish pretenders are alive and well and in full operation in all parts of the world today, especially in London and New York, but also in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Rest assured, as we will soon discuss, the Scriptures emphatically state that the final battle for the control of this world will directly involve latter-day Edom. I will name names later.

With respect to the Esau/Jacob conflict, it is endless as long as Esau’s descendants are alive and well on the earth. Under the Herodian domination, not only were the Jews themselves greatly persecuted and corrupted, but we must not forget that Herod the Great, who died shortly after the birth of the Messiah, is the monarch spoken of in the gospel accounts who enquires of the wise men from the east about the birth of a great emancipator among the Jews in Judea. Convening a caucus of the chief priests and scribes, the king demands to know precisely what the Scriptures have to say with regard to this prophesied king. They advise him that indeed it is recorded in the scroll of the *minor prophets* a prediction by Micah which states:

“And you, Bethlehem Ephratah, though you be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting...and He shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord His God; and they shall abide: for now shall He be great unto the ends of the earth...Your hand shall be lifted up upon Your adversaries, and all Your enemies shall be cut off...and I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard” (Micah 5:2, 4, 9, 15).

Upon receiving this information, Herod, utilizing the typical Edomite approach, seeks to deceive the magi, hoping to elicit the exact time they first saw the star that led them to Jerusalem. His attempt to

mislead the wise men into believing that he desired to worship this newly born king of the Jews was revealed to the sages in a dream, and thus they departed the city by another route, escaping Herod's predictable fury.

When the king discovered that he was the one who had been fooled, he angrily made one of the most egregious decisions ever by decreeing that all Jewish babies of the age of two years and younger should be slain. Of course, as you know, like Moses, some 1500 years earlier, Yahshua/Jesus was spared this horrible infanticide, in this instance by way of a dream given to Joseph, instructing him to take Mary and the child into Egypt until after the death of Herod.

The main point with regard to our discussion is that during the first century A.D., we have the absolutely incredible situation in which a descendant of Esau sits as king reigning over the descendants of Jacob, and seeks to murder the very Messiah Himself, not to mention who knows how many innocent Jewish babies who perished in the bloodbath that transpired as a result of this royal command! Not only did Esau despise the birthright, which included the promise of Messiah, but his descendants, some 1700 years later, insinuate themselves into the affairs of Judea, and seek to kill that very Messiah, Yahshua/Jesus Himself, when He comes on the scene in the first century A.D.!

After the death of Herod the Great, the subsequent Herodian rulers continued down the trail blazed by their notorious predecessor, spreading corruption throughout the realm, and persecuting the Jewish people, at times unmercifully. Remember that it was Herod Antipas who had John the Baptist imprisoned and later beheaded, and indeed Acts 12 informs us that it was under Herod Agrippa I, at the time of Passover in 44 A.D., that the apostle James was put to death, and Peter imprisoned. Agrippa I was, in fact, one of the greatest tormentors of the early Church.

The forced conversion of the Idumeans to Judaism by

Hyrchanus I, the later amalgamation of Idumean blood with that of the Jews, the close political association of the Edomites with Palestine, and especially the corrupt rule of the Herodian dynasty in Judea, all served to weaken the Jewish state and the Jewish people. To a great extent, the reign of the Herods contributed to the fall of Judea to the Romans in 70 A.D. under the Roman general Titus. This crushing war culminated in the destruction of the temple and the sacking of Jerusalem. An interesting historical footnote to the Romano-Jewish War is that the final contingent of Jewish resistors barricaded themselves in, of all places, the summer palace of Herod the Great which had been erected on the prominent rocky plateau rising from the western shore of the Dead Sea known as Masada. It was from this fortress that the remaining Zealots made their final stand against the Roman invaders.

The story is a famous and most gripping one, superbly told by the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus in his *Wars of the Jews*. When it finally became apparent that the Roman army under General Silva would breach the wall, the Jewish leader Eleazar, made a great speech urging the 960 defendants to commit suicide rather than capitulating to the Roman forces. This they did, and on the 15th of Xanthicus (May 2nd), 73 A.D., Masada fell, and the last of the Jewish resistance was broken.

The Edomite influence in Judea, from the time of John Hyrcanus on through the war with Rome, was something of a turning point for the house of Esau. Many times they had attempted to overcome their Israelite cousins, and indeed came perilously close to doing so on certain occasions. It was, however, during the Herodian era, more than any other single time period, that we see the Edomites conniving their way into the fabric of Jewish life, setting the stage for the future direction the descendants of Esau would take, a pathway that would bring them squarely into the center of the modern world of the 21st century, as we shall soon see!

What really emerges out of this crucial time-span is, at it were, two Zions—a true Zion people genuinely descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and a false, **COUNTERFEIT ZION** people of Esau's lineage. The Edomites, in this instance, are pretenders. They did not

inherit the birthright, nor did they receive the blessing of the firstborn. These all went to Jacob and his children. They must, therefore, in some way, get their hands on what Israel has, because they feel cheated—cheated by Jacob and cheated by God! Do not forget that Esau and his descendants are determined to retrieve for themselves what was lost to Jacob. And above all things, this is true with regard to **money**, and it is true with respect to **power** and **control**. Keep these facts squarely in mind as we continue in our study. Remember that Esau and Jacob were **TWINS**, and that from them would come two different manner of people. In most respects, the descendants of these two brothers seem to be the same people in appearance—it is their nature, however, that is so different.

That Edom would eventually inhabit the Promised Land and interpose itself in the affairs of God's true people, was specifically predicted by the prophet Ezekiel. Note these words, many of which have already come to pass, and indeed which are extant at this very time in history:

“You mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord...Because the enemy has said against you, Aha, even the ancient high places are ours in possession...Because they have made you desolate, and swallowed you up on every side...and you are taken up in the lips of talkers, and are an infamy of the people...Therefore thus says the Lord God; Surely in the fire of My jealousy have I spoken against the residue of the heathen, and against ALL IDUMEA (EDOM), which have APPOINTED MY LAND INTO THEIR POSSESSION with the joy of all their heart, with despiteful minds, to cast it out for a prey...But you, O mountains of Israel, you shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to My people Israel; for they are at hand to come. For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and you shall be tilled and sown...and I will settle you in your old estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings: and you shall know that I am the Lord (YHWH)” (Ezek. 36:1-3, 5, 8-9, 11).

Precisely as prophesied, the descendants of Esau did indeed,

over a period of time, insinuate themselves into the land of Israel, and they are there today. In many instances, the very leaders of the modern Jewish nation have been Edomites, or at least of Edomite extraction, and no one personifies this kind of evil character more than Shimon Peres, a man who has sought for years to sell Israel down the river! These intruders and pretenders continue to be the enemies of the true Jewish people of Yahweh, working at times openly, but more often behind the scenes, to impose political, economic, and religious control upon Israel, including all the twelve tribes of Jacob throughout the world!

EDOM & TURKEY

Many students of Bible prophecy will be familiar with Edom and the nation of Turkey being connected. In a number of conservative Bible prophecy-oriented churches, this is the reigning interpretation, and yet, in reality, it is only one of various manifestations of Esau's descendants in the world, but indeed a valid one.

That a major line of Edomites migrated into the area now known as Turkey is beyond any real doubt. Even certain of the names involved are quite evocative of those historically related to Turkey. In fact, Edomites were directly involved in one of the greatest civilizations ever known to man—the Byzantine. The Turkey connection also provides the lead-in to yet another major role played by the descendants of Esau, one that we will investigate in the final section of this study.

As we have already seen with regard to the Amalekites, the descendants of Esau were a strong, physical, warring kind of people, and a people that often were on the move, not only in fighting or hunting, but also in migrating to other areas. It would appear that the Edomite connection to Turkey comes through the most prominent of Esau's grandsons, Teman, the son of the first-born Eliphaz, whose mother was Adah the Hittite. Thus at least part of the Turkish people

and culture have a Canaanite element to them, and this sort of thing is never unimportant, so please keep it in mind. The name *Teman* and its numerous variants are to be found throughout the geographical area comprising northern Persia and Asia Minor. The descendants of Teman took on the name of their progenitor, and were known as *Temani*. It does not take all that much research to determine that historians clearly recognize the aforementioned areas of northern Persia and Turkestan or Asia Minor were known anciently as the *land of Temani*.

In the Temani king-list, one of the rulers was *Husham* (*Hushan* or *Hushang* of secular history), a provable historical character, whose descendant *Alphidun* had two sons, one of whom was named *Tur*. Many scholars now believe that this is probably the origin of the terms *Turk*, *Turkestan*, and *Turkey*. If this is correct, then a verifiable link between the ancient Edomites and the ancestors of the Turks has been established, and indeed the best current evidence bears out this conclusion.

Alphidun's second son was Ingre, whose son Manouger was surnamed *Phirouz*, the *Perses* of Greek legend, and very possibly the person after whom the land of *Persia* was named. There is no doubt whatever that the Temani branch of Edomites were early settlers in the territory of what became northern Persia, so this is not an insignificant association.

Traditionally, the Turks have been a fierce people, very much like the Edomites of old, expert archers and superb horsemen, skilled in quickly killing their opponents, often brutal in their treatment of the enemy, and able to achieve quick and decisive military victories. Remember that Isaac prophesied of Esau, saying, “**by your sword shall you live**” (**Gen. 27:40**).

The fact that Edomite people are associated with the Turks should not come as any great surprise, and the reason is that the area now known as the nation of Turkey comprises a large part of an even greater region known anciently as Anatolia, and from around 1900-1800 B.C. onward, the greatest influence in Anatolia was of Hittite

origin. Remember that Esau's first two marriages were to daughters of Heth, and that Heth, a son of Canaan, was the father of the Hittites. By the time of Esau's intermarriage into this evil lineage, the Hittites were reaching powerful empire status in the ancient world, and would continue to exert strong influence, both militarily, as well as economically, on the entire Middle East and Asia Minor. The region we now call Turkey was settled and controlled during a nearly 1000 year period by the Hittite empire.

The geographic area of Turkey is, as you well know, rich in history. Not only did it constitute a major portion of the vast Hittite empire for over a 1000 years, but even earlier, it was on the mountains of Ararat that the ark came to rest after great Flood. The Ararat massive is located in eastern Turkey. Noah and his descendants spread out

from this point and populated the whole of Anatolia.

When Abraham fled Ur of the Chaldees, we are told that he and his large entourage journeyed to Haran, a key city in the ancient world, positioned as it was on the main trade route from southern Mesopotamia northwest to the borders of Anatolia, and from there southwest to Damascus, Palestine, and Egypt. Haran is also where Rachel's uncle, Laban, lived, and the place to which Jacob fled when Esau threatened his life.

The area that we know today as Turkey is still a very important part of the world, in many ways a critical part, in fact. Throughout history from the Flood until today, this area has played a crucial role. After the decline of the Hittites, Anatolia came under Persian, Greek, and Roman hegemony respectively. By the first century A.D., it was a major center of activity, ranging from commerce to travel to great religious and political significance.

We must not forget that the apostle Paul was from Tarsus, a city that would today be considered a part of Turkey, and that a large majority of his ministry was centered in this same part of the

world. When we read about the churches of Galatia, we are reading about people and settlements located in Anatolia. In Revelation 2 and 3 we find the letters to the seven churches of Asia Minor. Asia Minor is really an earlier term for the region we now call Turkey. The famous seven churches of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, were all to be found in the area of modern-day Turkey. Interestingly, the well-known passages regarding those who call themselves Jews, but who in fact are liars, are taken from these very letters in Revelation 2:9 and 3:9. It is only fitting that the people to whom these verses apply, namely certain Edomites who use Judaism, Jews, and Jewishness as a cover for their nefarious agenda, should also be associated with and, indeed even located in, the very geographical area to which these letters were originally directed!

In addition, it was during Roman times that the area of modern Turkey came into its greatest prominence, for this was the cradle of the famous Byzantine empire, and the high culture that developed and spread throughout Europe and the world over many hundreds of years. Remember that the Roman emperor Constantine actually ruled, not from Rome, as might be assumed, but from Byzantium, an ancient city on the Bosphorus that became the capital of the Roman empire in 330 A.D. The city rebuilt on this site was named Constantinople in honor of the emperor, and is today known as Istanbul.

There exists a very intriguing connection between Edom, Babylon, and Rome, an association that was perpetuated and developed even further at the time when the Roman empire rose to great power in the world. Indeed, Rome has been related to Babylon in the minds of many people since the time of Julius Caesar, or at least since the era of Constantine, for it was under his authority that the encroaching Babylonian mystery religion was adopted and given a *Christian* facade with the formation of the Roman Catholic Church.

In addition, the Jewish rabbinic scholars, both before and after the time of Messiah, associated Edom with Rome and things Roman. In one sense of the word, Edom was considered the *first*

Rome, and thus Byzantium or Constantinople in what we today call Turkey became the *second Rome*. In fact, Constantinople and the Byzantine empire was literally called *Nova Roma*, or *New Rome*. Indeed, in 451 A.D., the Council of Chalcedon gave *New Rome* and its Patriarch equal ecclesiastical status with *Old Rome*.

Earlier we read Psalms 137, which contains the lament of the Jewish exiles in Babylonian captivity, and their petition to the Almighty for revenge upon both Babylon and Edom. One has to wonder, however, if there is not also an association with Rome implied in this passage. Let's look at the pertinent portion once again:

“Remember, O Lord, the children of EDOM in the day of Jerusalem; who said, RAZE IT, RAZE IT, even to the foundation thereof. O DAUGHTER OF BABYLON, who are to be destroyed; happy shall he be, that rewards you as you have served us” (Psa. 137:7-8).

Now clearly we understand that the initial level of interpreting this passage has to do with the first destruction of Jerusalem by the actual nation of Babylon, and includes the integral part played in that devastation by the Edomites, calling upon Yahweh to avenge these enemies of His people. We must also remember, however, that Jerusalem was destroyed not once, but twice, the second time by the Roman armies of General Titus. Yahshua/Jesus predicted of that time, saying:

“See you not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down” (Matt. 24:2).

Note again how the Edomites are characterized as speaking against Jerusalem—they cry for its utter destruction, saying, **“Raze it, raze it!”** To *raze* means to *utterly level to the ground, scrape bare*. See how they say, **“Raze it, raze it, even UNTO THE FOUNDATION THEREOF.”** In other words, just as the Messiah predicted, **“There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be THRONE DOWN.”**

And finally, notice to whom the Edomites are charged with directing their evil words—“**the DAUGHTER OF BABYLON.**” One has to wonder if indeed the *daughter* of Babylon is mentioned in this instance to give us a hint that the prophecy is dual in nature, applying both to the destruction by ancient Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar, and that of later Babylon under Rome! This would, in fact, seem to be precisely the reasoning behind such a wording.

In both cases, Edom is guilty of being involved, of instigating trouble, and in the manner at which they had become notorious masters—that of working behind the scenes, using others to do their dirty deeds, to prevail against their enemies, while they reap the rewards.

This leads us to a pertinent question—Is it possible that some of the Roman emperors were not actually Roman at all, but rather of Edomite extraction—especially the emperor Constantine? This may not be able to be proved outright, but it is a serious consideration. Some of the Jewish rabbis indeed did think that this was true, and it remains an intriguing, and indeed even a likely, possibility, as we will shall see.

If all of these various connections are correct, and there is every reason to believe that certainly most of them are, then Edom, Babylon, Rome, and organized Christianity in the initial form of the Catholic Church are all related, and, at times, synonymous. In order to solidify his political position, Constantine, near the end of his life, professed to be a believer in Christ, and indeed made it the official state religion of the Roman Empire. It was not, however, the pure religion of the Scriptures, nor was the true Messiah the object of worship. The emperor first encouraged, then enforced, the amalgamation of the Babylonian mystery religion into his newly adopted *Christianity*. The ancient Pantheon became a church. The statutes of the gods and demi-gods were retained and became objects of worship within the Roman system. The true day of Godly worship was changed from the seventh to the first day—the *day of the*

venerable sun, for Constantine had indeed been a sun-worshiper before his supposed conversion. The annual feast days inaugurated by Yahweh were replaced by all the old pagan festivals (Jan. 1- the *New Year*, Feb. 14 - *Valentine's Day*, *Easter*, *Hallowe'en*, Dec. 25- *Christmas (the mass of Christ)*, etc.). Thus Edom, Rome, and Roman *Christianity* actually are cloaks, hiding their true Babylonian origins and content, which, from that time until the end of the age, is a mystical union that has come to dominate the entire world. The Jewish scholar, Rabbi David Kimchi (1160-1235 A.D.), makes an interesting statement in his commentary on the following passage of Scripture in Joel 3:19:

“Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for their violence against the children of Judah.”

“The prophet mentions Egypt and Edom; Egypt on account of the TURKS, and Edom on account of the ROMAN EMPIRE; and these two have now had the dominion for a long time, and will continue until the redemption. This is the fourth beast in the vision of Daniel. And this is said because the majority is composed of EDOMITES. For although many other nations are mixed among them, as is also the case with the Turkish Empire, they are called from their root.”

In like manner, Maimonides, the great Jewish commentator of the 12 century, makes the following statement concerning this subject:

“The Edomites are idolaters, and Sunday, the first day of the week, is the day of their festival, therefore it is forbidden to have commerce with them in the land of Israel.”

The fact of the matter is that the early emperors of the Roman Empire were not really Roman at all. In fact, none of them were even from Italy, but rather from the Balkans, an area closely associated with certain branches of the house of Esau, or Phoenicia and the kingdom

ruled by Tyre, which Jewish records indicate was also descended from Edom. The chief god of the Phoenicians was, believe it or not, one *Ousoos*, or none other than *Esau*! As Dr. Ernest Martin comments,

“The truth is, Rome by this time (Constantine) in history had become a SEMITIC (Edomite) EMPIRE for all practical purposes. The Jewish historians and scholars saw these things happening in front of their eyes, and they called attention to them in various ways in their later writings.”

According to *The Historians' History of the World*:
“Diocletian permanently introduced eastern forms of government. Until his time the outward appearance of the emperor had only a passing air of easternism, but with Diocletian this character of government was established for all time to come. From Diocletian the white bandeau or diadem, borrowed from the east, became the distinctive sign of the ruler, while formerly the purple raiment had been the sole sign. Diocletian and his successor Constantine introduced the remaining eastern regal ornaments. The emperor Aurelian had indeed set them the example here” (Dr. H. W. Williams, Vol. 6, p. 435).

By the time Constantine moved the capital of the empire from Rome to Constantinople, the whole court was essentially Babylonian/Edomite in its structure, ornaments, trappings, and religion. Note the following quotation by Adam Clark in his *Commentary* on the prophecy of Isaiah 34, which we will investigate a little later:

“Now the major part of the ROMANS are EDOMITES, who *profess* [falsely] the law of Jesus. The Emperor Caesar CONSTANTINE was an EDOMITE, and so were ALL the EMPERORS AFTER HIM. The destruction of the TURKISH EMPIRE is also comprehended in this prophecy” (Adam Clarke Commentary, Book of Isaiah, p. 237).

The *spirit* of Esau is a lust for *power and money*, even as the *spirit* of Ishmael is the desire for *pleasure*. These two rejected sons from the Abrahamic lineage, anciently joined together through marriage, have spread their evil throughout the world. We see it coming to great influence in the Hellenistic culture foisted off on the nations by Alexander the Great. Beginning with Constantine and the Roman empire centered in the east (Turkey), the spirit of Edom is even more prominently demonstrated, complete with ecclesiastical authority.

The *second Rome*, headquartered in Constantinople, did not suffer the defeat that the *first Rome* experienced. After the fall of Rome in Italy to the barbaric hordes of Huns, Visigoths, and Ostrogoths in the fifth century A.D. that swept in like waves crashing on the shore, Justinian restored the empire to glory in the east. The Eastern Orthodox Church came to view itself as the bastion of true apostolic authority and purity, whereas the Roman Church, though ultimately stronger, was considered paganized and by some even apostate. The Eastern church, however, was also subject to corruption, and in this part of the world many heresies flourished. Arianism, Nestorianism, and Monophysitism all drew on the rich Greek metaphysical tradition and clashed with the emerging Roman Catholic Church. The Greek Orthodox Church of the eastern Roman (Byzantine) empire that was established during this critical period from 330-518 A.D. would bridge Asia and Europe for centuries, and set the stage for what history now views as the *third Rome*, a subject we will take up in the 3rd installment of this study.

The Byzantine civilization endured a little over a thousand years, from 395 A.D. to about 1453 A.D. Its influence spread throughout Europe and beyond. During this long period, however, things began to change in the Middle East. In the seventh century A.D., the religion known as Islam arose in the Arabian Peninsula. It was ruled by an Arab-speaking elite who instructed its followers to ensure that the world was under the political control of the faithful, no matter what measures were required, including especially that of war.

Islam exploded out of Arabia and took control of the Middle

East. Persia, exhausted from fighting with Byzantium, was completely absorbed by the Muslim hordes. The Middle Eastern armies of the Christian Byzantine Empire suffered a crushing defeat in 636 A.D., and Jerusalem fell two years later in 638 A.D.

In 1040 a new threat appeared on the scene. The Arabs were displaced as leaders of the Islamic world by the Seljuk Turks, a nomadic people from the Steppes of Central Asia. This invasion led inexorably to severe treatment of Christians by the war-like Turks, and pilgrims to the holy land began arming themselves and traveling in large contingents, ostensibly for protection, but now thought by some to have been nothing more than rehearsals for what was about to transpire in Palestine.

Skirmishes began to break out on the border between Byzantium and the Turks, and it soon became evident that these two great powers were on a collision course that would lead to the destruction of one or both. The Byzantine armies suffered a massive defeat at the Battle of Manzikert in eastern Turkey, and the result of this event precipitated an urgent call by Byzantine emperor Alexius I to Pope Urban II for help in reclaiming the lands captured by the Turks, including Palestine and Jerusalem in particular, and in making the highways and byways into the holy land safe for Christian pilgrims to that area. What followed were the infamous Crusades, a series of major disruptive and destructive wars fought between the Christianized European forces and the Turks.

The fact is that the younger sons of European nobility, under the western concept of *primogeniture*, had no substantive hope of ever ruling their family lands. This led to great unrest as they sought to somehow establish themselves. Their unruly conduct, including the killing of one another, led to the Roman Church's desire to remove them from Europe. In 1096, the Catholic Church issued a call to free the holy city of Jerusalem, and promised indulgences and rewards to the young knights in return for their enlistment into the seemingly righteous cause. The plot worked almost miraculously. Even the common folk took up the challenge.

The European army set out from France, led by Robert of Normandy, Baldwin of Flanders, and the hero of the First Crusade, Godfroi de Bouillon. Antioch fell on June 3, 1098, and then on July 15, 1099, Jerusalem was captured. It was at this time that the Knights Templar were formed, sponsored by their highly secret parent organization, the Priory of Sion. There is far too much detailed intrigue associated with these two groups and their origins during the First Crusade than can possibly be covered in this article. You may, however, request material on this subject from us at your convenience, and, of course, there is documented material from a number of other sources as well. Suffice it to say that the Priory of Sion, the Knights Templar, and their northern European counterparts, the Teutonic Knights, literally changed the course of history with respect to Europe, and indeed the entire world, even to this very day. In fact, Edomite influence even plays a significant part in the past history of the Templars, who eventually became some of the great bankers of Europe. In fact, it is observed that the Knights Templar were the first to introduce the idea of writing a *check* for money with respect to financial transactions. They are reputed to have looted what remained of the Temple treasure in Jerusalem at the time of their victory in the First Crusade. They also, through intermarriage, had come into possession of much of the Visigoth wealth, obtained at the time Rome was sacked. So wealthy did the Templars become that they were able to function as bankers for much of the European royalty. The Knights Templar, though eventually banned and ejected from Europe and England, did find a home in Scotland and certain other locales, and some believe that order has indeed been preserved through the centuries. They have been intimately connected with Scottish Freemasonry, the upper echelon of which continues to exert strong influence and control in the world today.

Over the next 200 years, successive Crusades were fought with varying degrees of success and failure. In the long run, they proved to be mistakes on the part of Christian Europe. Of course, there were advantages gained in the conduct of these wars, but it accrued to only certain powerful interests. Untold thousands perished, and for little or no good reason. This entire ugly, tragic episode,

however, is but yet another example of the clash between Esau and Jacob that began thousands of years ago, and is, as we are seeing, being consistently perpetuated through the ages of history.

Constantinople finally fell to the Ottoman (*O Teman* - Obadiah 9) Turks in 1453, transforming that great city into the capital of Islam and essentially ending the Byzantine Empire, but that event did not spell the end of the Edom/Rome axis of evil. In the next section of our study, we will discuss the possibility and significance of a *third Rome*, indeed a *Red Rome*, and what such a concept actually means for today's world and beyond.