

Genesis 26:34 And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite:

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

Genesis 36:2 Esau took his wives of the daughters of Canaan; Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite;

Genesis 36:3 And Bashemath Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebajoth.

1. Judith..... of Beeri the Hittite
2. Bashemath.... of Elon the Hittite
3. Adah..... of Elon the Hittite
4. Aholibamah... of Anah (whose grandfather is Zibeon the Hivite)
5. Mahalath..... of Ishmael – sister of Nebajoth
6. Bashemath.... of Ishmael – sister of Nebajoth

QUESTION: is Bashemath of Ishmael & Mahalath of Ishmael one and the same woman or are they different people – did Esau marry sisters or is this another "unfortunate scribal error" as the liberal scholars insist? Several answers are possible.

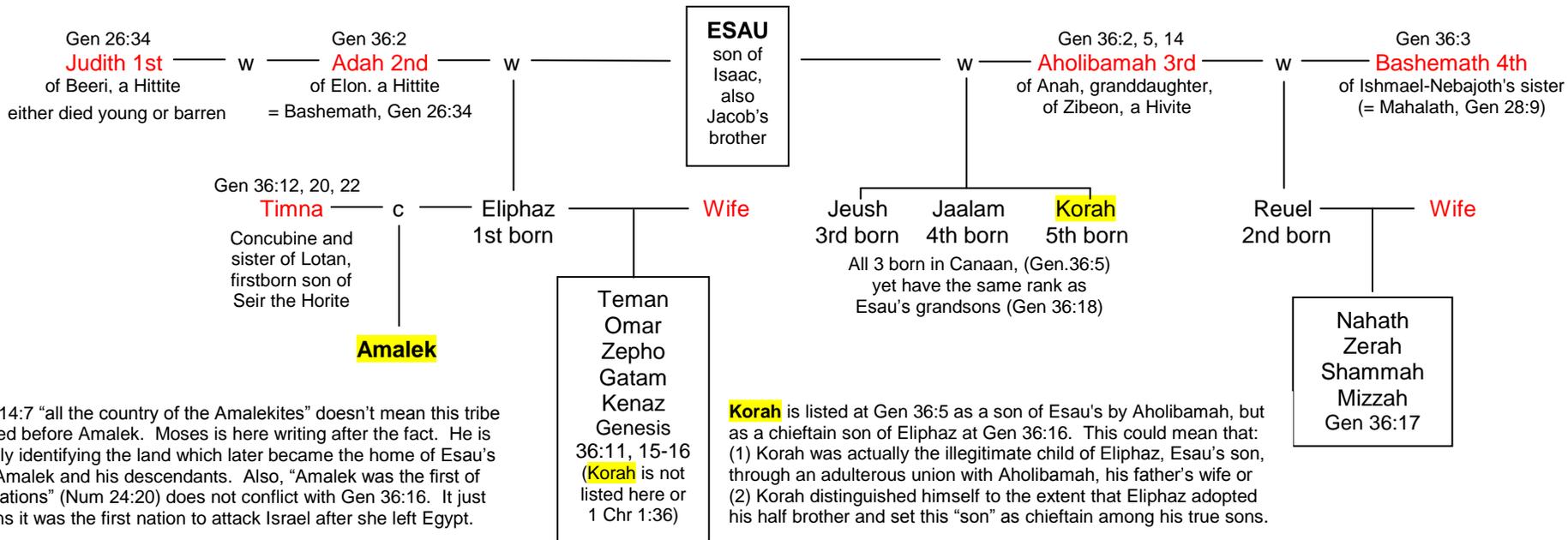
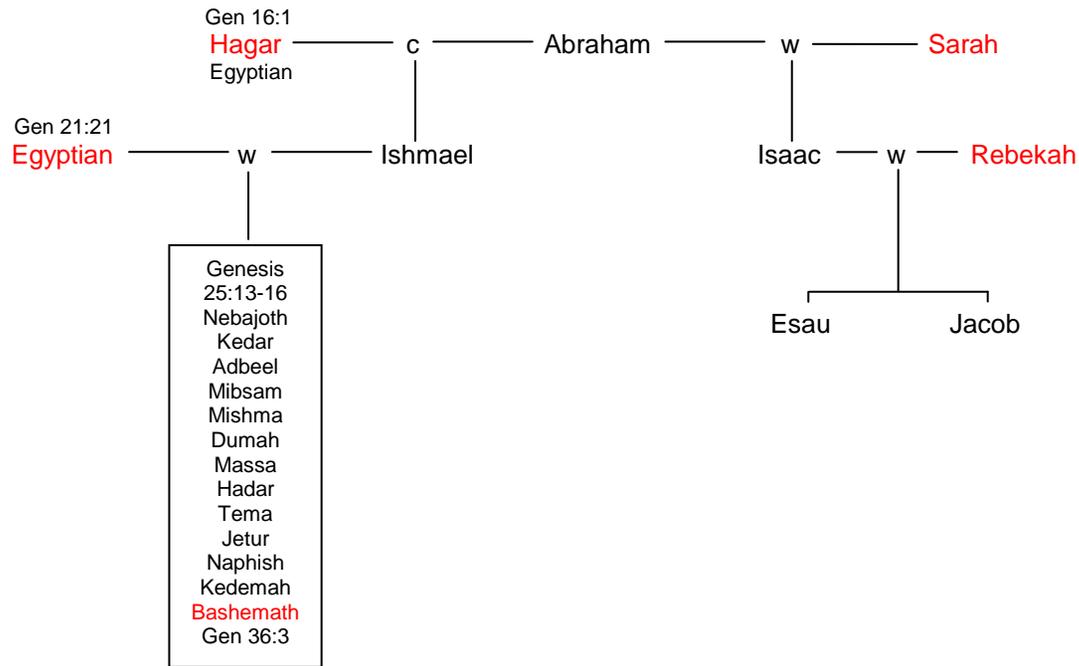
1. As two of Esau's wives were both named Bashemath (Gen.26:34; cp.36:2c), He gave each of them a "nick" name or name of endearment (Adah means beauty or ornament, Mahalath means mild, or to dance or to sing) in order to avoid the confusion. Thus, Bashemath of Ishmael & Mahalath are the same person & Adah of Elon is the same as Bashemath of Elon (i.e., Esau had "only" 4 wives).
2. or he had 6 wives and married 2 sets of sisters (e.g., Jacob married sisters, Rachel & Leah, Gen.29).
3. or Bashemath & Mahalath of Ishmael are different names for the same person, and Adah & Bashemath (both of Elon) are sisters - thus Esau had 5 wives.

OBSERVATIONS: Genesis 36 gives only Adah (v.4), Aholibamah (v.5) and Bashemath of Ishmael (vs.13 & 17) the sister of Nebajoth (Ishmael's firstborn son - Gen.25:13 - by an Egyptian wife, Gen.21:21) as having had sons.

Scenario [1] would leave only Judith as barren, sonless or she died young before she had any sons. [2] leaves three such wives (i.e., 1, 2, & 5). Although this is not decisive, it is less likely. Case [3] is a viable alternative, but it results in 2 of the 5 wives being childless (1 & 2). Thus, *best* is scenario [1] with the result that Esau had 4 wives:

1. Judith.....of Beeri the Hittite (Gen. 26:34)
2. Adah.....of Elon the Hittite (Gen. 36:2 = Bashemath of Elon a Hivite: Gen. 26:34)
3. Aholibamah....of Anah (grandfather is Zibeon the Hivite: Gen. 36:2, 5, 14 & 18)
4. Bashemath.....of Ishmael & sister of Nebajoth (Gen. 36:3 = Mahalath: Gen. 28:9).

Esau's Wives and Sons
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Gen 14:7 "all the country of the Amalekites" doesn't mean this tribe existed before Amalek. Moses is here writing after the fact. He is merely identifying the land which later became the home of Esau's son Amalek and his descendants. Also, "Amalek was the first of the nations" (Num 24:20) does not conflict with Gen 36:16. It just means it was the first nation to attack Israel after she left Egypt.

Korah is listed at Gen 36:5 as a son of Esau's by Aholibamah, but as a chieftain son of Eliphaz at Gen 36:16. This could mean that: (1) Korah was actually the illegitimate child of Eliphaz, Esau's son, through an adulterous union with Aholibamah, his father's wife or (2) Korah distinguished himself to the extent that Eliphaz adopted his half brother and set this "son" as chieftain among his true sons.

Esau Moves to Mount Seir – His and Seir’s Descendants – GEN 36:1-30

Genesis 36:1 Now these are the generations of Esau, who is Edom.

Esau’s Wives

2 Esau took his wives of the daughters of Canaan; Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and **Aholibamah** the daughter of Anah the daughter of **Zibeon the Hivite**;

3 And Bashemath Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebajoth.

4 And Adah bare to Esau Eliphaz; and Bashemath bare Reuel;

5 And **Aholibamah** bare Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah: these are the sons of Esau, which were **born unto him in the land of Canaan**.

6 And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the persons of his house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his substance, which he had got in the land of Canaan; and went into the country from the face of his brother Jacob.

7 For their riches were more than that they might dwell together; and the land wherein they were strangers could not bear them because of their cattle.

8 Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir: Esau is Edom.

Descendants of Esau, Elder Son of Jacob

9 And these are the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in mount Seir:

10 These are the names of Esau's sons; Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, Reuel the son of Bashemath the wife of Esau.

11 And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, and Gatam, and Kenaz.

12 And Timna was concubine to Eliphaz Esau's son; and she bare to Eliphaz Amalek: these were the sons of Adah Esau's wife.

13 And these are the sons of Reuel; Nahath, and Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah: these were the sons of Bashemath Esau's wife.

14 And these were the sons of **Aholibamah**, the daughter of Anah the daughter of **Zibeon, Esau's wife**: and she bare to Esau Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah.

15 These were dukes of the sons of Esau: the sons of Eliphaz the firstborn son of Esau; duke Teman, duke Omar, duke Zepho, duke Kenaz,

16 Duke Korah, duke Gatam, and duke Amalek: these are the dukes that came of Eliphaz in the land of Edom; these were the sons of Adah.

17 And these are the sons of Reuel Esau's son; duke Nahath, duke Zerah, duke Shammah, duke Mizzah: these are the dukes that came of Reuel in the land of Edom; these are the sons of Bashemath Esau's wife.

18 And these are the sons of **Aholibamah** Esau's wife; duke Jeush, duke Jaalam, duke Korah: these were the dukes that came of **Aholibamah the daughter of Anah, Esau's wife**.

19 These are the sons of Esau, who is Edom, and these are their dukes.

Descendants of Seir the Horite

20 These are **the sons of Seir the Horite**, who inhabited the land; **Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, and Anah, 21 And Dishon, and Ezer, and Dishan**: these are **the dukes of the Horites, the children of Seir** in the land of Edom.

22 And **the children of Lotan were Hori and Hemam; and Lotan's sister was Timna**.

23 And the children of Shobal were these; Alvan, and Manahath, and Ebal, Shepho, and Onam.

24 And these are the children of **Zibeon**; both **Ajah, and Anah**: this was **that Anah that found the mules in the wilderness**, as he fed the asses of Zibeon his father. (to discern him from vs 25)

25 And **the children of Anah** were these; Dishon, and **Aholibamah the daughter of Anah**.

26 And these are the children of Dishon; Hemdan, and Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran.

27 The children of Ezer are these; Bilhan, and Zaavan, and Akan.

28 The children of Dishan are these; Uz, and Aran.

29 **These are the dukes that came of the Horites**; duke **Lotan**, duke Shobal, duke **Zibeon**, duke **Anah**,

30 Duke Dishon, duke Ezer, duke Dishan: **these are the dukes that came of Hori**, among their dukes in the land of Seir.

Family Tree of Seir the Horite

The Aholibamah (the daughter of Anah and granddaughter of Zibeon the Hivite in Genesis 36:2, 5, 14 & 18) that wed Esau is *not* the same Aholibamah (daughter of Anah and sister of Dishon) in Genesis 36:22, for the latter Aholibamah is a Horite, not a Hivite. Indeed, her grandfather was Seir the Horite (Gen. 36:20-21) whose descendants are given from Genesis 36:20 through verse 30.

A confusion exists here because, like Zibeon the Hivite, Seir the Horite also had a son named Zibeon who likewise had a son called Anah. However, in addition to this grandson forenamed Anah, Seir also had a *son* by the same name, and it was this Anah that fathered Dishon and his sister – Aholibamah! (see above and cp. Gen. 36:24 & 25) Clearly, the only logical reason for the mule incident to be recorded in verse 24 is to help the reader distinguish between the “Anah” there from the father of Aholibamah in 36:25 and thereby correctly place her in the genealogy.

Now this Aholibamah’s grandfather was Seir the Horite, not Zibeon the Hivite. Moreover, the Zibeon of Gen. 36:24 is not only a Horite, he has *no granddaughter* listed. Further, it is Anah the *son* of Seir that had a daughter named Aholibamah, not Anah the son of Zibeon the Horite and *grandson* of Seir. Obviously, at this time period and in this region, Anah was a common name much as John, Tom, or Robert is today.

Thus, there are two different Aholibamah’s given in Genesis 36, both having fathers with the name Anah but different grandfathers. One Aholibamah is a Hivite who married Esau the son of Jacob, the other a Horite – and Hivites are not Horites!