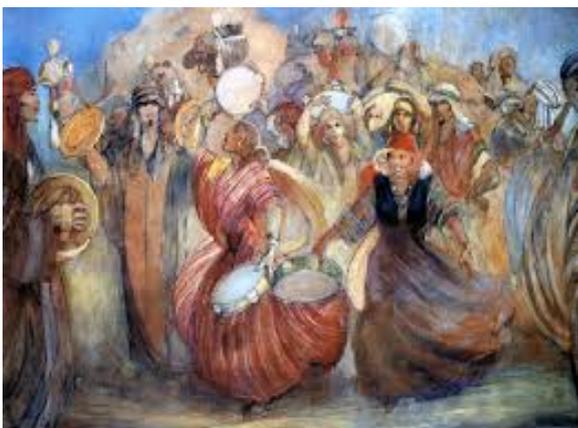# Esau Married the Daughter of Ishmael, in Addition to the Wives He Already Had
28: 6-9

Esau married the daughter of Ishmael, in addition to the wives he already had DIG: Upon hearing of his father's preferences for a suitable mate, what does Esau do here? Do two wrong wives make a third one right? What does the Bible continue to point out about Esav and his decisions? What does this tell us about the relationship between Ishmael and Isaac?

REFLECT: Do you renounce sin in your life when you find it? Or do you pacify it with symbolic gestures? How can you restore a relationship with a family member that was once strained?

Esau now makes another attempt to regain the blessing. **Now Esav learned that Isaac had blessed Jacob and had sent him to Padan Aram to take a wife from there, and that when he blessed him he commanded him not to marry a Canaanite woman, and that Jacob had obeyed his father and mother and had gone to Padan Aram (28:6-7).**

Esau then realized how displeasing the Canaanite women were to his father Isaac (28:8). He consequently thought that by not marrying another **Canaanite woman,** he would win back **his father's** favor and possibly the

blessing. So he went to Ishmael, the **son of Abraham, and married his daughter Mahalath, the sister of Nebaioth, in addition to the wives he already had (28:9).** This is the classic case of closing the barn door after the horse is gone. **Although Esau did not marry any more women of Canaan, he was not willing to send away those he already had, in spite of their unsuitability and wickedness.** Basically, **he** married **his** cousin because **he** thought it would please **his father Isaac. She** was a descendant of **Avraham** through **Ishmael**. But this just magnifies **Esau's** lack of spiritual perception. The Ishmaelites were just as rejected as the Canaanites or the Philistines. Ironically, the rejected son of **Isaac** married into the rejected line of **Ishmael**. At any rate, **he** failed to impress **his** parents and the marriage goes unnoticed by **his father and mother**.

But however clueless **Esau** might have been about **his** birthright, it is interesting to note what this says to us about the relationship between **Ishmael** and **Isaac**. Marriages at that time only took place with the consent of both fathers. If the father was incapable or dead, the oldest son took his place. **Ishmael** had died at least fifteen years before **Esau** approached **his** family. Had **Ishmael's** son **Nebaioth** been resentful about the fact that **Isaac** was the full heir, even though **his father** had been the firstborn, then **he** would not have given **his sister** to **Esau.** Instead, **he** trusted **her** completely to **his** cousin. It seems that **Ishmael** had experienced healing through the blessing of **his** twelve sons (**to see link click Gi – The Twelve Sons of Ishmael**).

All this only furnished further proof that **Esav** had absolutely no understanding of the blessing and what it meant. Once again, **he** was proven unfit to receive it. **He** tried to act godly in the futile hope that somehow or other it would be pleasing to **ADONAI**. There are many like that today. They will not do exactly what **God** requires, but something like it. They will not give up the world entirely and put **the LORD** first in their life, but merely rearrange the deck furniture on the Titanic! They will not renounce sin, but pacify it with symbolic gestures.

While **Esau** was occupied with the "honey-do's" of **his** three **wives, Jacob** was off to **Paddan Aram** in search of a bride.

Haftarah Tol'dot: Mal'akhi (Malachi) 1:1-2:7
(see my commentary on Deuteronomy, **to see link click Af –**

Parashah)

Priests were charged with the calling to **honor the name of ADONAI (Malachi 2:1-2)**. But **Malachi** tells us that **they turned away from the path, caused many to fail in the Torah, and corrupted the covenant of Levi (Malachi 1:8)**, offering blemished sacrifices **(Malachi 1:13; Leviticus 22:18-20)**. **YHVH** was so repulsed by this that **He cursed** the priestly privilege of bestowing the blessings of life and peace to **the people (Malachi 2:2)**. **The curse** would affect **the seed** of the coming generations of **Levi (Malachi 2:3)**. In fact, **the covenant** with **Levi** may not pass from this generation. High standards are required of **priests (Malachi 2:4)**. Godly priests walk in **awe of ADONAI-Tzva'ot (Malachi 2:5-6)**. **They** were supposed to be teachers and guardians of moral life, warning **the people** to live uprightly as messengers of **righteousness (Malach 2:7)**. Omitted from the Haftarah reading are the next two verses, which judge that generation and threaten to halt the passing of **the covenant** to **the sons of Levi (Malachi 2:8-9).**

B'rit Chadashah suggested readings for Parashah Tol'dot: Romans 9:6-16; Messianic Jews (Hebrews) 11:20 and 12:14-17

Again, **ADONAI** uses a man's name for **his** descendants. Tol'dot describes *generations that follow*. In the Toarh, **Isaac's generations** are **Jacob** (who will live through **his sons**). In the Haftarah, **Levi's covenant** describes **the priests** to come. Here Rabbi Sha'ul reviews that his **countrymen** according to **the flesh**, gave birth to **Messiah** according to **the flesh (Romans 9:3** and **5)**. **Not all of Abraham's descendants**, however, will inherit **the seed of promise (Romans 9:7-8)**. Rather, **Jacob** is **chosen** – not on the basis of works (for **he** had not yet done good or evil), but solely on the basis of **calling (Romans 9:11)**. **God's choice** was made while **the twins** were in the womb! **God** called **Jacob** prior to **his** being born. The principle that **the older shall serve the younger (Romans 9:12)** sets the stage for **YHVH's** plan of redemption. **Isaac** will pass on **his** birthright to **Isra'el (Jacob)**, father of **a nation**. **The Jewish people** are the beneficiaries of this everlasting inheritance.