

Separate Ways

Scripture Reading — Genesis 36:1-8

Esau took his wives and sons and daughters . . . and moved to a land some distance from his brother Jacob. — Genesis 36:6-7

We live in an increasingly mobile world today. Brothers and sisters, parents and children -often live in very different -places. This can happen because we settle in a place after attending college there. Or perhaps we move to start a new job. But sometimes families go in different directions because of hurt and heartache.

Esau and Jacob had had a rocky relationship. At one point, Esau had wanted to kill his younger brother (Genesis 27:41). Although they had reconciled and joined together in grief over their father's death (Genesis 33:4-5; 35:29), the Bible's portrayal of the rivalry between their descendants (see Numbers 20:14-21) suggests that the brothers' relationship remained somewhat strained. So it's not surprising that they would go separate ways.

Settling in different places allowed both Jacob and Esau to enjoy material prosperity. But Esau moved away from his brother in another, more crucial way. By taking his wives "from the women of Canaan," Esau signaled his ambivalence toward Jacob's God. The real tragedy of Esau's move is not the distance from his brother but his distance from *God*.

Our mobile society offers challenges to maintaining family relationships. But even more important is the need to help one another seek God's saving grace in Jesus Christ. May we encourage one another never to move away from that blessing.

Prayer

Faithful God, you bless us in so many ways. Help us to remain close to one another—and especially to you. In Christ, Amen.

Devotion topics: [Bible](#), [Books of the Bible](#), [Genesis](#), [Bible Characters](#), [Jacob](#), [Life](#), [Family & Relationships](#)

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