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Assis' " Identity in conflict: The struggle between Esau and Jacob, Edom and Israel" (Book Review)

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Lyon, C., & Matlock, M. (2012). *Ideas for parents: A collection of tips, insights, and activities for real-world parenting*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. 364 pp. \$12.99. ISBN 9780310677673

Any parent looking for a biblical way to approach the ever-changing emotions and situations encountered with children, *Ideas for Parents* is the book to grab. The authors received contributions from individuals in various fields of expertise and compiled it into this book. They focus on three overarching parts: relationships and feelings, daily life, and spiritual shepherding. Underneath these are topics such as family, fear, success, money, prayer and many more. The “idea” portion of the book comes from the information given for each topic that includes questions to spark conversation, words of wisdom from other Christians and “try this” activities for each situation.

The ideas captured in this book give parents and caregivers ideas that could potentially produce fruitful changes in the relationships between the adult and children. The scriptures inserted into every section have the power to encourage the reader and reiterate the truth on the inside of every believer that there is a solution to all of life’s predicaments within the pages of the Bible. For example, in the “talk about” section of Redefining Success, the author references 1 Peter 4:1-11 to share that success is not only to “accomplish meaningful things,” but also “to be mocked and lonely” when standing for Jesus (p. 169).

One word of advice is to read this book with the intention of reflecting and applying the information. Because of the lengthiness of the book, the reader should devise a plan of attack before diving in. Be prepared to fold pages, highlight, and make notes within the margins. Whether reading for a specific topic or a well-rounded view, the authors produced a great resource of guidelines for parents to refer to no matter the stage of life their children are in.

Reviewer

Cynorra R. Jackson, Friends University

Assis, E. (2016). *Identity in conflict: The struggle between Esau and Jacob, Edom and Israel*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns. 214 pp. ISBN 9781575064178.

Dr. Elie Assis, Old Testament Bible scholar and professor at Bar-Ilan University in Israel, has written a thorough and insightful exegesis of the story of Isaac’s twin sons Esau and Jacob in Genesis and beyond. Their relationship and rivalry extended throughout the Old Testament with profound influence on their descendants, the nations of Edom and Israel. Just as Jacob experienced identity crisis so did

his descendants, the nation of Israel. Esau was perceived as a threat to Jacob just as his descendants, Edom, were considered a threat to Israel. Many nations could have threatened Israel, but only Edom threatened Israel's very sense of identity as God's chosen people. The struggle between Edom and Israel was not a struggle like any other, but a tension between brother nations profoundly connected to Israel's sense of self-identity. Extending beyond biblical times to the Roman Empire and to Christianity as threats to Israel's identity as God's chosen people, the representation of Edom persists. Dr. Assis ably guides the reader into understanding the theology and ideology that stands behind the expansive repercussions of this Bible story, exposing its key messages, which are as relevant today as they were in antiquity. His exegesis is based on both Jewish and Christian scholarship and is extensively cited, as befits a scholarly text. It would be helpful for the reader to have some understanding of Hebrew, Hebrew poetics, and documentary hypothesis to get the most from this extraordinary scholarly work.

Reviewer

Tami Echavarria Robinson, Whitworth University.

Bellinger, C.K. (2016). *Jesus v. abortion: They know not what they do*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books. 340pp. \$66.00. ISBN 9781498235051

Reason can be a spiritual weapon. Charles Bellinger has delivered a magisterial philosophic exposition for the pro-life worldview. He offers a big picture approach with big ideas. The text is erudite; and it is not for the casual or popular reader. His intellectual audience is threefold: pro-choice advocates, the people in the "muddled middle" who do not think clearly about abortion, and the pro-lifers who he does not have to convince, but who can be helped by his thorough analysis.

The text is divided into four sections, each section with four to eight essays, and each essay addressing an anthropological, philosophic, linguistic, or theological issue, often centered on major thinkers like Kierkegaard, Richard Weaver, or Eric Vogelin, no lightweights. Part 1 deals with violence in the human condition and the employment of human rights language. Part 2 touches upon general intellectual arguments. Part 3 rehearses the intellectual and legal elements of abortion. Part 4 suggests a proposal for a humane Christian strategy for seeking converts toward the rejection of abortive violence.