

# Why Did God Hate Esau?

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## Part 2

Malachi 1:2-4

Well it has been some time since I last preached on this small series I titled ‘Why did God hate Esau?’ this will now be the second sermon on the topic. In that first message, I covered point number 1 in answering the question if God hated Esau because of election.

And when I started with that question I had to first define what type or what kind of election am I talking about, as different views of God’s election will greatly change how scripture is understood and interpreted. And how we understand and interpret scripture will then influence how such questions are answered and ultimately shape our view of the bible and our view of God.

I concluded with the answer that biblical election when God chooses those who hear His voice and through repentance and faith choose Him, these then become God’s elect. Those who hear His voice and heed His call in salvation are His elect ones. Esau heard the call but he didn’t heed the call. That was the basis of the first message. The point of this second message will be of the choices he did make, and answer the question ‘did God hate Esau because of the man?’

## II. Because of the Man (Esau)?

Now when I ask the question did God hate Esau because of the man, I'm asking the question in light of Esau's life, and more along the lines of the choices and actions he did make. We know he ignored the call of God we looked at that in the first message. And so today, we will look at the question; did God hate Esau because of the choices he did make in his life, did God hate Esau because of what he did with his life as a man who did not choose God.

To start us off we want to look at Genesis 25 and read verses 19-28. And you can turn to that section in you bible. In this chapter, we have the first introduction to Esau and his brother Jacob, Genesis chapter 25 starting in verse 19:

19 ¶ This is the genealogy of Isaac, Abraham's son. Abraham begot Isaac.

20 Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah as wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan Aram, the sister of Laban the Syrian.

21 Now Isaac pleaded with the LORD for his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD granted his plea, and Rebekah his wife conceived.

22 But the children struggled together within her; and she said, "If *all is well, why am I like this?*" So she went to inquire of the LORD.

23 And the LORD said to her: "Two nations *are* in your womb, Two peoples shall be separated from your body; *One* people shall be stronger than the other, And the older shall serve the younger."

24 So when her days were fulfilled *for her* to give birth, indeed *there were* twins in her womb.

25 And the first came out red. *He was* like a hairy garment all over; so they called his name Esau.

26 Afterward his brother came out, and his hand took hold of Esau's heel; so his name was called Jacob. Isaac *was* sixty years old when she bore them.

27 So the boys grew. And Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was a mild man, dwelling in tents.

28 And Isaac loved Esau because he ate *of his* game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

Initially, from the start of their lives there appears to be nothing out of the ordinary of these two brothers. As fraternal twins from birth all that we are told of their childhood is from verse 27 and 28 saying; the boys grew and Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was a mild man, dwelling in tents. And that Isaac loved Esau because he ate *of his* game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

Isaac and Rebekah had one son who was an outdoorsman, which was Esau, one who loved to hunt and be outside and the bible calls him ‘a man of the field’. However, Jacob, as the NKJV says, was a mild man, the KJV calls him plain, and we may often think of this as being weak or inferior type of man but the Online Bible Greek Lexicon defines this word ‘mild’ as

1) perfect, complete

1a1) one who lacks nothing in physical strength, beauty,

1b1) an ordinary, quiet sort of person

Now there is nothing from the onset of their lives that gives us any reason to believe that there is any proof of some pre creational decree that God loved one and hated the other. We are told that Isaac, loved Esau, and ate of his game and Rebekah loved Jacob.

I'm sure, as I noted in the first message, that Isaac taught Esau the ways that were pleasing to the Lord, in the ways he should walk before the Lord, and the way he should live before the Lord.

If you Remember in Genesis chapter 18 starting again in verse 17 the Lord said;

~~17 And the LORD said,~~ "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing,

18 "since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

19 "For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him."

Now was Esau a problem child? We are not told. Was Esau rebellious as a teenager? We don't know. Did Esau reject some of the teaching of Isaac his father and the direction he wanted him to go? Well now we have some indications from scripture that reveal this to us. In Genesis chapter 26 that we begin to see difficulties within his life and within the family, in chapter 26 verses 34 and 35 we read of the wives he took and how they were not pleasing to Isaac and Rebekah it says;

34 When Esau was forty years old, he took as wives Judith the daughter of Be-eri the Hittite, and Bas-emath the daughter of Elon the Hittite.

35 And they were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah.

So now we know they had in-law troubles, as many people in this world do. And troubles with in-laws usually don't come out of nowhere, No, they usually come from some break down in relationship in one party or the other. And the problem we have of Esau's first two wives is described in this passage, it says that the two wives Judith and Bas-emath had such a broken relationship with Isaac and Rebekah, that it says they were a grief of mind to them. We are not told in scripture exactly what it was that grieved the parents however we are given a small indication of maybe why it did in Genesis chapter 27 verse 46, where Rebekah says that;

'if Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth, like these who are the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?'

She calls them 'daughters of the land,' they are daughters from people around them, they are daughters of a foreign people who probably did not worship the Lord God as their God.

Turn to the book of Deuteronomy chapter 7, this is now about 300 years later and it is Moses instructions to Israel in regards to marrying foreign women, he says in verses 1 through 4;

1 ¶ "When the LORD your God brings you into the land which you go to possess, and has cast out many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you,

2 "and when the LORD your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer them *and* utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them.

3 "Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son.

4 "For they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods; so the anger of the LORD will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly.

Now turn also to 1 Kings chapter 11 this is now almost 1000 years after the time of Jacob and Esau, reading again verses 1 through 4 it says;

1 ¶ But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, *and* Hittites—

2 from the nations of whom the LORD had said to the children of Israel, "You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods." Solomon clung to these in love.

3 And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart.

4 For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as *was* the heart of his father David.

Now if we go back to Isaac and Rebekah, what did Rebekah know? As a woman, what did Rebekah understand about the power women can have over a man or a wife over her husband, and where she may lead him? What did Abraham command his children when it came to marriage within or to the nations around them? We are not told but it is interesting that this concern of Rebekah in taking foreign wives is repeated in the commands of Moses and then portrayed and live out a thousand years later in the life of King Solomon, of how foreign women had the power in destroying the wisest man on earth.

Going back to Genesis chapter 27, and back to Esau, after Jacob steals Esau's blessing which we will look at in a moment, Esau become enraged with his brother and vows to kill him once their father has passed. When Rebekah hears of this, she forms a plan to send Jacob away, away from Esau and the wrath he promises execute on his brother.

As verse 46 reads;

46 And Rebekah said to Isaac, "I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth; if Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth, like these *who are* the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?"

Rebekah was either having such serious daughter-in-law problems to the point of her own life existence. Or perhaps she believe that if Jacob also took a wife from the Canaanites, form the people around them that such a wife could also be the destruction and end of the promises given by her father-in-law Abraham? In that neither son would be walking for the Lord because of influence of their wives. It happened to Solomon. And so Rebekah devised a plot get her husband Isaac to cooperate with her in sending Jacob away, away from Esau and away form the women of the land, but that is the rest of Jacob's story.

But going back to Esau, we know that there was not a good mother to daughter-in-law relationship nor a future outlook depicted within the wives he chose.

The only other information we have of Esau's choice in wives is in Genesis chapter 28 verses 8 and 9 after Jacob is sent away, is that we read;

~~8~~ Also Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan did not please his father Isaac.

9 So Esau went to Ishmael and took Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife in addition to the wives he had.

Now what we can take out of such verses are a couple of things. One of them is the choice of wives Esau chose to marry. In the past when Abraham was seeking a wife for Isaac, he sent his servant back to his family to find a wife from his homeland and from among his own people and his own family, he was strictly ordered not to take a wife from among the daughters of the Canaanites with whom Abraham dwelt. Isaac then did the same with Jacob with a little help from Rebekah.

Esau (who is still the official first born at this point) took two wives from the daughters of the Hittites, an act we know Abraham did not want Isaac to do and then Isaac and Rebekah did not want Jacob to do this as well. We are not told if these marriages were against the will of Isaac and Rebekah, but we know that they were Hittites from the land of Canaan, and they were a grief of mind to the parents.

Is it that Esau did not listen to His father Isaac or the handed down instructions from Abraham when it came to choosing wives for himself? Did he disobey the instruction from his father and grandfather when it came to the people they were to marry? Which then raises the question were there other things that Esau did contrary to his father Isaac's will or instruction other than these wives?

In chapter 28 when Esau comes to the realization that his wives did not please his father, then he goes and marries his cousin in taking a third wife, hoping to please his father.

And we must begin to think and ask the question is this the pattern of Esau's life? That is, not heeding the call of anyone including God and only living for self until it is too late and the consequences are upon him. And that even then he tries to correct it, not with repentance, but with his own selfish worldly ways and worldly wisdom.

Pastor Phil has often talked about when we have wronged someone, our natural man wants to do nice things for the other person be friendly and kind in making it all go away, but we know that is not repentance, that does not fix the wrong I have done.

It is only repentance when I confessing the wrong and asking for forgiveness that true repentance has taken place.

The daughters of the land which Esau married were probably not the choice of, nor of the advice Isaac and Rebekah gave him, as scripture says they were a grief of mind to them both. But instead of correction the situation and heading advice he continues in one selfish choice after another. How many other things did Esau do that became a grief of mind to his parents in living only for self? How many other selfish decision and lifestyles did Esau indulge in that were also a grief of mind to his parents? Well we are not told but taking Canaan wives is not the only example we have of Esau's life, he is ultimately know best for selling his birth right to his brother and it is this choice that has become the central point of his character.

Turn to Genesis chapter 25.

We all know the story; Esau comes in from the field hungry and weary and his brother Jacob seeing opportunity, takes advantage of his brother. Genesis chapter 25 verse 29-34

29 ¶ Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he *was* weary.

30 And Esau said to Jacob, "Please feed me with that same red *stew*, for I *am* weary." Therefore his name was called Edom.

31 But Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright as of this day."

32 And Esau said, "Look, I *am* about to die; so what *is* this birthright to me?"

33 Then Jacob said, "Swear to me as of this day." So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob.

34 And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils; then he ate and drank, arose, and went his way. Thus Esau despised *his* birthright.

Now many will condemn Esau for this transaction but look closely at the text, who was the deceiver in the narrative? Was it not Jacob who prepared the stew? Was it not Jacob who initiated the thought of selling stew for birthright? Was it not Jacob who affirmed to Esau by saying ‘swear to me as of this day’ to the sale of a birthright? Is he not rightly call Jacob?

Which one of the brothers is more righteous than the other? One who couldn't care less about the blessing and inheritance that were rightfully his or the other who crafted the moment of seduction and stole something in the moment of the others weakness? We again come to one of the first question I asked in the first message in asking 'how could God love either one of these men?'

Listen to the commentary in my nelson study bible regarding the first born;

The first born son would normally inherit a double portion of his father's estate, exercise authority over the household, and bear the honor of his father's name. The father, however, legally could name a younger son to 'firstborn' status. Hurrian law also provided that such a birthright could be sold. Esau's action was legally right but morally wrong; he despised his birthright as having no value in light of his immediate hunger and bartered it for a bit of bread and stew. But what of Jacob? He acted in the spirit of Cain; he failed to guard his brother from committing foolishness in his weakened condition, and thus failed to be his 'brother's keeper'.

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Could we not say that both brothers are guilty?

On one hand we have a reckless Wildman who loved the outdoors and selfish living not giving heed to the important things in life and on the other we have a calculated manipulator and deceiver, who wholly plans things in advance. Sometimes I wonder if God in heaven look at Abraham and said ‘this is what I have to work with, these two brothers?’

At this point it may make you wonder how could God love either one of them? How could God love one and hate the other when at this point neither one of them acted in a righteous manner. Well Since these are messages about Esau we will look at his actions in greater detail. Turn in your bibles to Hebrews chapter 12, here the writer of Hebrews gives us a description of Esau like this in Hebrews 12 verse 16;

lest there *be* any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.

Now when we read of these two descriptions of Esau as being a fornicator and a profane person, I think they are used as extreme examples through the eyes of the writer in describing Esau, as we do not read of such evidences in the Old Testament. We do not read of him as him being this kind of man. What I think the author of Hebrews is doing is amplifying the life of Esau and his sin with these descriptions.

You see the context of Hebrews 12 begins in verse 4, it is in the context of the chapter that the writer gives us this small insight of Esau's life. Starting in verse 4 and through verse 11 the writer writes about the chastening of the Lord, about who receives it, and for what reasons. And it is because of this chastening of the Lord that we come to verse 12 and if we start reading read from verse 12 through verse 15 it says this;

12 Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees,

13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.

14 Pursue peace with all *people*, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:

15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;

Now looking at verse 15, he tells us to look carefully, lest anyone fall short of the grace of God. This I think is the context of his thought, falling short of God's grace is his main concern as is most of the book of Hebrews.

Then as the primary example, he brings up the root of bitterness that causes trouble and by this bitterness, many become defiled.

Falling short and becoming defiled are phrases that the author uses to depict unbelief or a falling or rather walking away from faith. He then in verse 16 goes on to use Esau as the example, by saying;

lest there *be* any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.

The context of the passage is still about the Christian looking carefully at their own lives, of falling short and of bitterness springing up and causing trouble and then inserts the example of Esau.

He first depicts Esau as being a fornicator, but we know from previous verses we looked at, Esau was married and had at least 3 wives, if there was any unfaithfulness in his marriage he would be called an adulterer not a fornicator and we have no record of fornication in the Old Testament about him. So why does the author of Hebrews call Esau a fornicator?

Well, what I think the author has done here is to use the history of what happened with Esau in selling his birthright and compares it to what we are to watch ourselves for. Esau was not a literal fornicator as far as we know from the Old Testament.

Fornication as we know it is illegitimate relations before marriage and the Greek word used to describe illegitimate relations before marriage is porneia por-ni'-ah Strong's #4202, you have heard this word and its definition before in some of pastor Phil's sermons. However the word the author uses here in Hebrews is not porneia but pornos por'-nos Strong's #4205 and is defined in the Online Bible Greek Lexicon first definition as;

1) a man who prostitutes his body to another's lust for hire

This pornos por'-nos Strong's #4205 as the Online Bible Greek Lexicon says is akin to the base word of piprasko pip-ras'-ko Strong's #4097 which simply means 'to sell' an example of this is in Jesus parable of the kingdom of heaven in Matthew chapter 13 verse 45 and 46 where He says;

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls,

46 "who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and **sold** 'Piprasko' all that he had and bought it.

This is the base word in the Greek, and simply means to sell. But when the author of Hebrews wanted to use it in an extreme illustration in Esau He used the word, por'-nos ~~Strong's #4205~~ depicting a man who, not only sold his birthright but 'sold himself for

his own belly, sold himself for his own desire.’ Not as ‘Porneia’ in the illegitimate relations before marriage but ‘Pronos’ as a man selling himself or in Esau’s case selling his birth right, which is in a sense the selling of self.

This is the first illustrations that the writer of Hebrews is getting at.

As Christians we are to be cautious of falling short of grace, looking carefully that you do not ‘sell yourself out for your own selfish desires’ and ‘forfeit’ your salvation, falling short of the grace of God for earthly pleasures.

This I believe is the message the writer of Hebrews is portraying, Esau sold himself, he sold his inheritance, he sold his birthright, he sold in a sense the promise of God which he was to keep. He sold that which God gave to his grandfather Abraham, sold what Abraham gave to Isaac and he sold that and himself to the desire of his flesh, his own belly, sold himself to the devil as we would say, Pornos.

Moreover, this goes along with the second description we get from the book of Hebrews.

The other word used by the Hebrew author is the word profane, he says Esau was a profane person, the word profane as described in the Encarta dictionary is 1) showing disrespect for God, any deity, or religion, to treat something sacred with disrespect.

In the Online Bible Greek Lexicon says of this word 1) accessible, lawful to be trodden of places and 2) unhallowed, common, public place.

Esau' birthright was treated with disrespect, it was unhallowed, it was of no worth to him in the immediate sense, no more than one morsel of food as the author of Hebrews says. But again I think that the author envisions more than just a birthright, the birthright included all the promises that God had promised to his grandfather Abraham, all that his household after him were to keep in order to receive the promises.

This included the inheritance of being one of the patriarchs of the Hebrew lineage, this included the redeeming plan of God for the world, it included the lineage of the redeemer and he viewed it all as common, unholy, lawful to be trodden on. And sold it for food.

You see this is the extreme example that the author of Hebrews is trying to make, in Genesis chapter 25:34 it says that Jacob gave Esau bread, and stew of lentils; then he ate and drank, arose and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright. Esau did not see the eternal value of his birthright, not for him, not for his own posterity nor for all of humanity. Think of it like this... that in one sense, he sold your salvation for a bowl of stew and a bit of bread.

Esau was a very short sighted man, and I don't mean he needed glasses, no, I mean he was a very very spiritually short sighted man, Esau was what we would call a worldly man, a carnal man, a fleshly man, a soulish man living only for the here and now of life.

He only saw the world in the visible tangible sense, in the material and present fulfilling sense. And this is one of the reasons why God hated Esau. Paul says in Philippians chapter 3 verses 18 and 19

18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ:

19 whose end *is* destruction, whose god *is their* belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things.

Esau did not seek the heavenly things, and did not fully grasp them either, 1 Corinthians 2:14 I think describes him well when it says;

But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

Esau was a natural man and did not want to receive the things of the Spirit, this man who is the grandson of Abraham and the son of Isaac and the brother to Jacob was not interested in any of the spiritual aspects of God and therefore he sold the blessing, not lost the blessing,

no he sold it for cheap. This is the illustration I quickly want to make to those who accuse us of teaching the fact that we can lose our salvation is untrue.

I say you never lose you salvation, you lose your keys in the couch, you lose your phone at the theater, you lose your wedding ring when you go swimming in the ocean, you never lose your salvation, you walk away from it, you choose to walk away from the faith you have been taught and you sell it for cheap, you sell it for your own belly. You sell it for some worldly or earthly pleasure and sin.

If there is one thing that truly separated this natural man of Esau and his divisive brother Jacob and all his shortcomings is this, Jacob listened to God and had faith.

As the book of Hebrews warns us to look ‘carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled,’ Esau fell short, purposely fell short and became defiled.

And Jacob, even with all his deceptions and failures and own shortcomings, held to the one thing Esau did not and that was faith. In keeping the way of the LORD to do righteousness and justice that, the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him. In all his deceptions and dealings Jacob heeded the call of God in the end.

In Jacobs's journey to Laban he encountered the Lord in a dream and when he awoke said this;

"If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on,

21 "so that I come back to my father's house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God.

22 "And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."

Why did God hate Esau? Is it because as far as we know he spurned every call God sent to him. We do not know how many times God called him but in the end he did not heed to the instruction of his Grandfather Abraham. And rather chose the path that did not lead, not only to his salvation but the path that would bring salvation to the entire world. He sold salvation for a morsel of food.

Well when we come to Genesis chapter 33 and we come to the reunion of Jacob and Esau it sounds as if time has healed Esau's bitterness and their relationship. Genesis chapter 33 starting in verse 1 through verse 4 we read;

1 ¶ Now Jacob lifted his eyes and looked, and there, Esau was coming, and with him were four hundred men. So he divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and the two maidservants.

2 And he put the maidservants and their children in front, Leah and her children behind, and Rachel and Joseph last.

3 Then he crossed over before them and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

4 But Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept.

It was an encounter Jacob could have only dreamed of, and from the whole account it genuinely sounds like a fully restored relationship between the two brothers. But underneath it all there still remained something sinister in the background. Yes, it appears that all things were restored between Jacob and Esau as far as we know, but there was still a family feud that was still bubbling underneath, something very bad that was passed down to the children. A generational hatred handed down first to the children and then to the children's children and it would only reveal itself in the years to follow and it would not be pretty.

Parents, a quick word to parents, oh be careful what those little ears hear, and be careful what those little eyes see. For the things you do in your life and the words you say may become magnified in your children and grandchildren as they grow up.

Remember we started with the verse, which said;

'As it is written 'Jacob I have loved but Esau I have hated.'

A phrase that was written some 1300 years after the brothers lived, written in the last book of the Old Testament by the prophet Malachi who was speaking for God, and by Paul quoting it in his letter to the Romans.

In these past two messages we have looked at the reasons why God hated Esau, of his life, his actions, of election.

And in the next we will look at how this affected the rest of his descendants and the nation that would come from him.

So in conclusion we have the man Esau, a man who lived for self, lived for his own belly, lived in a purely short sighted earthly manner. A man who was, I'm sure taught the right way by his father and grandfather, but was a man who chose not to follow or walk that path of righteousness. A fornicator and profane person as the author of Hebrews describes him and not only did he despise his own birthright but all the promises that followed it and would come from it.

Your promise, my promise, the promise of the world in brining the redeemer to mankind he sold for a bowl of stew and a piece of bread. It is a warning to each and every one of us as the author of Hebrews reminds us that we are to;

~~12~~ Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees,

13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.

14 Pursue peace with all *people*, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:

15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;

And you sell your salvation for the earthly pleasures of this world as Esau did.