

## *When God Hates*

A drash on Parashah 6, Toldot

By MMin Kevin Phipps (aka Oriyan)

God is love. Those who study the Bible, and have a relationship with God know this already. Our love is based on God's love, and the two greatest commands in the Bible are based on that same love. Love becomes so much a part of our faith that when we come across passages like this one, we are not quite sure what to think.

*"I love you," says Adonai. But you ask, "How do you show us your love?" Adonai answers, " `Esav was Ya`akov's brother. Yet I loved Ya`akov but hated `Esav. I made his mountains desolate and gave his territory to desert jackals." [Mal'akhi/Malachi 1:2-3; again quoted by Sha'ul/Paul Romans 9:13]*

God *hated* Esav? If God is love, how can He hate? Well, this is not the only place we see God hating.

*There are six things Adonai hates, seven which he detests: a haughty look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that plots wicked schemes, feet swift in running to do evil, a false witness who lies with every breath, and him who sows strife among brothers. [Mishlei/Proverbs 6:16-19]*

*I had sent you all my servants the prophets, sent them frequently, with the message, "Don't do this horrible thing which I hate!" But they neither listened nor obeyed, so as to turn from their wickedness and stop offering to other gods. Hence my fury and anger were poured out and ignited in the cities of Y'hudah and the streets of Yerushalayim; so that they became waste and desolate, as they are today.' [Yirme'yahu/Jeremiah 44:4-6]*

*"I hate, I utterly loathe your festivals; I take no pleasure in your solemn assemblies. If you offer me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; nor will I consider the peace offerings of your stall-fed cattle. Spare me the noise of your songs! I don't want to hear the strumming of your lutes! Instead, let justice well up like water, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. [Amos 5:21-24]*

*"Adonai Elohim swears by himself," says Adonai Elohei-Tzva'ot, "I detest that Ya`akov is so proud, and I hate his palaces. I will hand over the city, along with everything in it." [Amos 6:8]*

In Hebrew, hate is sane, spelled with a shin, nun, and aleph. The word pictures here in the letters show hate to have the power to destroy life. Love is ahav, spelled

with an aleph, heh, and bet. This shows love to be the strength of the home or family revealed. Since av, is father, love can also be thought of as the revelation of the Father. As we can see, hate is not the opposite of love. Hate can reveal the Father as much as love can. Shlomo also tells us that there is a time to love and a time to hate.

In the verses above, we see a wide variety of things which God hates. Besides Esav, we see Him hating pride, lying, murder, wickedness, strife, and idolatry. These things we might expect, but we some other things we would not expect, like the festivals, worship, sacrifices, and music. So we see that these are all things which God hates, but what is meant by that? When we live in a Christian culture which teaches us to hate the sin, but love the sinner, in what way did God hate Esav?

God is the giver and the sustainer of life. Therefore, anything which takes away life is something which God would be against, and set Himself against. This is hate. Even something which He creates can be hated if it begins to take away other life. Thus God Himself states that any man who sheds the blood of man ought to have his own blood shed. Some might say this is not right, because then you have two dead men instead of just one. What we need to see is that as much as God is a God of love, He is also a God of justice.

*You are not to make for yourselves a carved image or any kind of representation of anything in heaven above, on the earth beneath or in the water below the shoreline. You are not to bow down to them or serve them; for I, Adonai your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sins of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but displaying grace to the thousandth generation of those who love me and obey my mitzvot.*  
[Sh'mot/Exodus 20:4-6]

Would a judge be just if he let guilty go along with the innocent? Those who are victims of crime, go to a judge to get justice by way of punishment for the criminal. In the same way, God cannot be a just God and love wickedness the same as righteousness. He would also have to go against His own character to do so. When we are talking about wickedness, this makes sense, but what about worship and people?

Something we must realize about Torah, is it is a teacher. If we go to class and don't learn we we go to class to learn, then just sitting through one lecture after another, will not make you into the person that the class is intended to make you into. Just because a person holds a degree in engineering, doesn't mean they have internalized the concepts of engineering well enough to actually become an engineer. Almost anyone can build a doghouse from a book, but if you want to build a suspension bridge, you are going to want to find someone whose engineering skills are more of a sixth sense, something which comes from within them because it is part of who they are. They didn't just go to class, but they made every word a part of their being. As students of Torah, it is not enough to just follow a list of commands. This is legalism, which

doesn't impress God. It may impress your fellow man, or it could start a war, however, the laws of God are of no value if they fail to make you into a righteous person. We can play church, sing the songs, memorize the verses, wear the t-shirts, and eat the test-a-mints, but it does no good unless these things are tools which lead us into the presence of God and help us to serve Him as our King. When we see God reprimanding His people for their sacrifices and festivals, or we hear Sha'ul speaking against circumcision, it is because to focus on these things and not the God who commanded these things actually ends up being idolatry. Circumcision is a sign of God's covenant, it is not the covenant itself. In the same way, baptism is a sign of my relationship with God, not the relationship itself. Our praise songs are an outward expression of our praise and thanksgiving to God, but the words and music itself mean nothing if our heart and mind is not in the right place. Even Scripture knowledge itself is nothing as even Satan knows the Bible in every language enough to twist it to serve his purpose. God even hates Torah observance, if it is not part of Kingship obedience.

Notice that in the Amos verse, as well as other passages such as Isaiah 1, God goes from reprimanding His people for they way in which they observe the festivals and sacrifices and tells them to do things like care for the oppressed and the widow. This is not an outward command, but a particular type of person. In the New Covenant, the former covenants were engraved in our innermost being. The purpose of this was to show that the commands were to become part of the person, not just a physical observance or mental belief system. How the law would be written on our hearts would be the work of the Holy Spirit, who does not instruct us from outside us, but guides us from within. Thus the tablets of stone that carried the law would become tablets of flesh.

In the church, we are taught to hate the sin and love the sinner. So then, what about God hating Esav? There are multiple ways of understanding this, as Sha'ul's use of this concept is used in Romans 9 to legitimize the doctrines of election and predestination. This is my take on it, so you can take it or leave it. As with anything I teach, don't take my word for it. Go to Scripture and study it for yourself.

We have to realize that Esav was the firstborn, and thus would naturally have been the favored son. He would have have the blessing, the inheritance, pretty much everything. However, God doesn't always work that way. Remember David. He was the least of the his brothers, but he was the one God chose to be king. God is able to see things that, on a human level, we cannot. Thus He destines, chooses, elects, whatever you want to call it, certain people for certain purposes, and He doesn't always choose who you would think. With Ya'akov and Esau, for whatever reason, even before they were born, God chose Ya'akov to be the stronger brother. If for no other reason, it may be to teach all of God's people that God is God and can break the rules if He wants to. In order for Ya'akov to be the chosen son, though the younger, God had to set Himself against Esav. In this way He "hated" Esav. What this meant is that he lived a life of seeing the advantages go to his brother. He lived a life of difficulty and servitude to Ya'akov. This, however, had nothing to do with his relationship with God. If he accepted his position in life, and fulfilled his purpose given to him by God, and chose to

serve God despite the advantages given his brother, he could have had just as much a relationship with God as his father Yitzchak, or his grandfather Avraham. In the same way, Ya'akov could have taken his advantages and been like the prodigal brother and wasted it on his own glory instead of God. Despite the advantages or disadvantages each brother had, they both had equal opportunity to live a life of either faith or rebellion toward God.

God is King. He created all things and controls all things. He shows favor to whomever he wants. Whatever we have has been given to us by God. Whatever others have, regardless of their relationship with God, has been given to them by Him. The reason why is only important to God who has a plan for each of us. Our job is to glorify Him with whatever He gives us, whether it is a mansion or a dungeon. Sometimes it may seem God has set Himself against us. Truth is, maybe He has. That does not change His Kingship. The test is, can you love God whether He shows favor to you or not? Maybe He gives your neighbor a BMW and you, a Believer, can't even pay your bills. God is still God. You don't have a BMW because you don't need one to do God's will. Who knows why your neighbor has one, but he or she has the same responsibility to serve God.

There are things which God loves and things which He hates. There are those He shows favor to and those He does not. Sometimes He exalts the wicked and brings low the righteous. We can focus on these things and experience confusion, anger, division, and many other things which only serve to distract us from what really matters. Regardless of all those things, God is still King, and you have to decide whether you are going to serve Him or not. I'll leave that up to you.