Don't Be Like Esau

A Devotional Meditation on Toldot (Generations)

Genesis 25:19-28:9; Malachi 1:1-2:7; Matthew 11:2-12:50;
Acts 5:34-42; Romans 9:6-13, 11:25-32; Hebrews 12:15-17

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If we want an example of the Unpardonable Sin, we should consider the story of Esau. Messiah Yeshua tells us that whoever speaks against, or blasphemes, the Holy Spirit "will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come." (Matthew 12:32) That's what God said about Esau, as we learn from Malachi:



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> "I have loved you [Israel]," says the LORD. But you say, "How have you loved us?" "Is not Esau Jacob's brother?" declares the LORD. "Yet I have loved Jacob but Esau I have hated. I have laid waste his hill country and left his heritage to jackals of the desert." If Edom says, "We are shattered but we will rebuild the ruins," the LORD of hosts says, "They may build, but I will tear down, and they will be called 'the wicked country,' and 'the people with whom the LORD is angry forever.'" Your own eyes shall see this, and you shall say, "Great is the Lord beyond the border of Israel!"
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> Malachi 2:2-5 ESV

We have further testimony from Paul:

> But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named." This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring. For this is what the promise said: "About this time next year I will return, and Sarah shall have a son." And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls—she was told, "The older will serve the younger." As it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."
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> Romans 9:6-13 ESV

A third witness is the author of Hebrews, who writes:

> See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "root of bitterness" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled; that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal. For

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you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears.

Hebrews 12:15-17 ESV

Ultimately, this matter impacts the salvation of the world. That's why God told Rebecca that her older son would serve the younger. Rebecca surely told Isaac her husband what she had heard from the Lord. Why he did not act on that prophetic insight is not explained in scripture. All we know is that Esau, the older twin, was Isaac's favorite. Because of that, he chose to disregard his wife's counsel and pass on the blessing of the family patriarchy to Esau rather than to Jacob.

Jacob was able to deceive his father because Isaac had become blind and did not recognize his younger son when he impersonated Esau as Isaac was ready to pass on the blessing. Isaac's blindness had already manifested spiritually in that he either did not see or chose not to see Esau's unsuitability. Perhaps Satan was the first to deceive Isaac by persuading him to see only what he wanted to see.

Jewish sages have long taught that Isaac's blindness served a divine purpose in that it allowed the blessing to come to the son God had chosen. Paul might have been thinking of that when he wrote about the blindness, or partial hardening, that came upon Israel so that the fulness of the nations could come into God's Covenant Nation of Israel. Thus, when the Jewish leaders in Yeshua's day rejected him, the way was open for salvation to the whole world, both Jew and Greek, as Paul would say.

So how does this get Esau into that unenviable position of having committed the Unpardonable Sin? It's how he approached the holy things of God. It was always the Lord's plan to redeem the whole world through Israel. Esau opposed that plan because he sought to shut out his brother Jacob, the man whom God renamed Israel. Rather than choosing to be shaped and molded by the Almighty, Esau plowed through life on the merit of his wits and strength. He cooperated with Israel when it suited him, but if there was no profit in it, he reverted to his natural inclination to seize the Kingdom by force, and in the process kill his brother.

That's the perilous path Esau and his Edomite descendants have walked. By opposing Israel in every way imaginable, they have opposed the redemptive work of the Holy Spirit. The fruit of that extends beyond the political and military opposition of ancient and modern times, to every manifestation of antisemitism and Jew hatred, and to teachings that deny the promises of Israel's God to restore the entire nation and bring redemption to the whole world.

This is why Messiah Yeshua warned against dividing the House and Kingdom of God. We all do it, usually with good intentions, but not understanding what we do. We are saved by grace, but unless we are humbly willing to receive correction, we might become like Esau and begin fighting against God.

This meditation was inspired in part by *The Echoes Bible,* vol. I, *Genesis & Matthew*. *The Echoes Bible* is available at https://www.echoesbible.com/.