

God Loves Wrestlers 6-23-13

There is an interesting passage in Romans 9:13: As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated." Why did God love Jacob but hate Esau? Let us suggest the following: Jacob was a fighter, and God loves fighters. Esau was not, and God despises those who don't fight.

If you know the events in the life of Jacob, you know that from birth he was not the most respectable of persons. His name meant *supplanter*, because he grabbed his brother's heel trying to stop him from being first born (Genesis 25:23-25). Later he took his brother's birthright in a moment of weakness (Genesis 25:23-34). Many years after that he deceived his father in order to receive that same birthright. (Genesis 27:6-42). We might call Jacob the usurper, or Jacob the manipulator, or even Jacob the liar & thief. But these things all point to a single characteristic that God found desirable: he was willing to do anything to get the blessing, even to fight with God Himself (Genesis 32:24-32). When that moment came, God changed Jacob's name to Israel, or one who fights (Isra) with God (El). To this day, we bear a form of that name (Romans 9:6).

Jacob was willing to fight for blessings. That is the characteristic that is found even in his despicable deeds. Because he wanted blessings so bad he was willing to fight, God LOVED him for that. At the same time these events reveals that Esau was not eager to defend or pursue the blessings; we would say he was indifferent towards his birthright. In Hebrews 12:14-17 we are warned not to be an Esau. The same author warns us not to neglect our salvation (Hebrews 2:3), nor to hold it as a common thing (Hebrews 10:29). Such actions cause us to lose our inheritance.

The point is this: there are many times we need to put up a fight. God despises indifference. He tells us this many times (Revelation 3:15-16, 1 Kings 18:21). We need to be zealous for the Lord. Remember Phinehas in Numbers 25:7-13? He was outraged (righteous indignation) over the offense presented by Israelites before God and he was moved to act. Because of this, Israel was spared, and God commended his zeal by making a unique covenant with him. Remember Jesus in the Temple (John 2:15-17)? The apostles saw that zeal for God's house had overtaken Him.

Where is our zeal for our inheritance? Are we willing to pursue the means we need to in order to preserve our blessings? Where is our righteous indignation towards the world as it continually offends God? If someone came into our home and slapped our spouse or children, we might be unable to restrain ourselves. Yet God is assaulted daily, and we stand by as though we were impotent. Fight back!

Put Up a Fight! God has equipped us for battle (Ephesians 6:11-18) and trained us in the means of spiritual combat (II Corinthians 10:3-6). We know that our homes, our family, our marriages are battlegrounds of this warfare. We need to be ready to fight.

Let's move ourselves to more zeal, righteous indignation, a fighting spirit. God Loves a Wrestler, as we saw with Jacob. He wants people to FIGHT for blessings. Even more, He wants people to FIGHT for Him. At the same time, we see Esau and know that He rejects the apathetic. Which one are you?