

# BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

*And Interesting Facts About the Holy Word of God*

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE, INC.

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ISSUE 1

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### *From the President's Desk,*

As I write this update, our "Spring Term 1" for our Online Instructor-led courses is well underway. We also continue to be blessed with new students applying for our **Self-Directed** Courses. Besides our on-campus classes, I remind you that BBI also offers two options for taking classes through the institute. First, students can enroll in our courses that are **Self-Directed**. These classes last for sixteen weeks and the student can apply to start a course at any time during the year. Another benefit of **Self-Directed** courses is that it allows for the student to work on the course at a time and pace that accommodates their schedule. The sixteen week **Self-Directed** classes are broken up into four different intervals with scheduled assignments due on the dates assigned.

Second, students may also apply at certain times in the fall and spring to take our **Online Instructor-led** courses that meet online weekly with a BBI instructor. In March, we will begin our "Spring Term 2." The courses being offered are: 108 Romans, 106 Basic Bible Doctrines II, 218 Ministry Leadership, 116 Biblical Worldview, and 202 Christian Education I. Our "Spring Term 2" courses begin on March 14th and meet until May 5th. The enrollment deadline for these courses is March 3rd. If you are interested in taking any of these online courses or enrolling in our **Self-Directed** courses, please visit our website ([boreanbibleinstitute.org](http://boreanbibleinstitute.org)) where you can fill out an application online, or you call our office to speak to a BBI Advisor.

As BBI presses forward to accomplish our mission of training pastors, missionaries, and Christian leaders for the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ and proclamation of the Gospel of the Grace of God given to and through the Apostle Paul, we ask you

to keep us in your prayers. It is an honor to share with you how God continues to bless us with new students who desire to be trained to serve the Lord more effectively. We also want to challenge you to consider partnering with us financially so that we can continue to carry forth this important mission. Your prayer support and financial partnership allow us to have the resources necessary to train more and more students who desire to serve the Lord and share the gospel of God's matchless Grace.

Because He Lives,

Dr. Robert E. Nix,  
President, *Berean Bible Institute*

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**QUESTION: I have heard that Genesis 3:15 is the first promise of a redeemer. How is that so?**

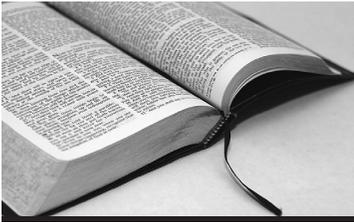
**ANSWER:** In Genesis chapter three, sin entered God's Creation. Satan, by means of a serpent, deceived Eve, and Adam sinned against God by eating of the fruit that his wife offered to him. God called Adam and Eve out for their sin and set forth His judgment, beginning with the serpent (Satan) in verse 14.

Verse 15 continues with the injunction against the devil by stating, "*And I [GOD] will put enmity between thee [Satan] and the woman, and between thy [Satan's] seed and her [the woman's] seed; it [the woman's seed] shall bruise thy [Satan's] head, and thou [Satan] shalt bruise his [the woman's seed] heel.*"

This verse is actually a judgment on Satan's rebellion against God in leading humanity into sin. It resulted in hostility (enmity) between Satan and mankind (Eve, the first woman, is the mother of the human race). Satan would constantly be striving with mankind. The reason is unfolded in the verse.

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*"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." II Timothy 3:16*



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While I'm trying not to read what we now know back into this verse, it involves God working against Satan to deal with the now present existence of sin and bringing mankind back into a relationship with Him—a relationship like Adam and Eve enjoyed with Him before the entrance of sin into Creation.

The second phrase continues to explain by narrowing its focus to Satan's seed and the woman's seed. A few notes about the woman's seed: (1) A woman doesn't have "seed" for this is produced by the man. (2) The word "seed" is singular denoting one particular descendant. The argument becomes what "Satan's seed" and "the woman's seed" refer to. I am not personally aware of anyone who argues against the woman's seed directly referring to Christ. We know this because we have a completed Bible. Satan's seed, however, has been suggested to be his minions, the unsaved, and the Anti-Christ. I personally think we can see "Satan's seed" as a general term to denote all who take Satan's side (willingly or unwillingly), but the ultimate fulfillment may reside with the Anti-Christ, whom Satan will bring forth during the Tribulation.

The last phrase of the verse speaks of little victories versus winning the war. The Hebrew language places the most important words first. We tend to do it chronologically, so "*you will bruise his heel, but it (the seed, or "he") will bruise your head.*" If I absolutely had to choose between taking a gunshot to the foot versus a gunshot to the head, I'll choose the foot every time. The head shot is a mortal, life-ending wound, while the wound to the foot can be overcome. This prophecy (it is in the future tense) speaks of the temporary sufferings of the Seed that Satan will inflict on Him versus the mortal blow that will eventually be dealt to Satan by the Seed. When will this prophecy take place? I believe the climax is the Cross, but the conclusion will come at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ to earth.

My explanatory, loose paraphrase would go something like this: God is creating hostility between Satan and mankind. This exists because he didn't give us up to Satan, but is actively working against Satan to win mankind back to Himself. The ultimate source of hostility exists between Satan and the incarnate Christ, who lived and served to satisfy God's wrath against sin. Satan will have a few minor

(seeming) victories, but Christ will raise up to be victorious forever.

Another way to explain it would be that this verse explains the conflict between God and Satan (good and evil) over mankind. God wants to redeem us back to Himself through His Son, while Satan wants to keep us away from Him (and His Son). The reason many call it a "prophecy of a Redeemer" is because it speaks of a time when the Seed will be brought forth that will conquer Satan. We can now identify this Redeemer as Jesus Christ.

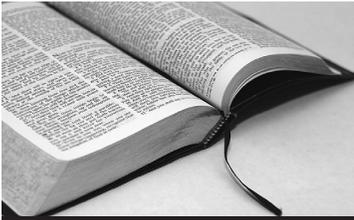
### **QUESTION: Did God really hate Esau?**

**ANSWER:** According to the divine, inspired Scriptures, the answer is yes. Malachi 1:3 says, "*And I hated Esau,*" while Romans 9:13 records, "*Esau have I hated.*" Can the same God who is love (I John 4:8) hate someone?

Much like the English language, Hebrew and Greek both have a general word for hate. Think of how we use that word in the English language. A battered wife may come to a point where she proclaims hate for her abusive husband. A Boston Red Sox fan may say he hates the Yankees. Someone with an adverse reaction to onions may pronounce that he hates onion rings. When something annoys us we say, "I hate when that happens." We use the word "hate" in a variety of ways that has a variable level of spite. Yet, we read that God hated Esau and automatically conclude that He absolutely detested the guy.

The most used Hebrew and Greek words for hate in the Scriptures (*sânê* and *miseō*, respectively) are also widely used for a variety of circumstances. In most cases, it speaks of an adversarial relationship (e.g., Exod. 20:5; Deut. 24:3; Prov. 1:22; Luke 16:13) and not as detesting someone (e.g., Psa. 119:163; Prov. 6:16; Matt. 24:10).

Keeping this in mind, God declaring that He hated Esau does not automatically mean that He abhorred and loathed him so much that He condemned Esau to Hell. In some cases, it is used in a comparative sense, especially when used with "love." One example can be found in Luke 14:24 where Jesus says, "*If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters,*



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*yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.*" Jesus was not telling His followers to share a revulsion for family members and seek harm against them. To follow Christ would mean making tough decisions, even decisions against the wishes of the members of one's family. When it came down to loving Christ by following Him or loving their relative by rejecting Him, they must love the Lord above anyone else. Another example is found in John 12:25, where we read, *"He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal."* Jesus was not telling them to despise their life in the flesh, which some would take to mean inflicting harm on the flesh or not fulfilling personal responsibilities or enjoying hobbies like fishing; He is telling them that the things of this world cannot have first place, the things of the world to come must be loved most of all.

Let's quote a little more of the two verses mentioned previously—Malachi 1:2-3: *"...I loved Jacob, And I hated Esau..."* and Romans 9:13: *"As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."* Both verses are used in a comparative sense, which is why many explain this statement by rewording it, "I loved Jacob more than Esau," or "I loved Esau less." Now, don't misunderstand me, the word "hated" is in these verses, but maybe this will help someone understand the intention in which it was written. Yes, God hated Esau, but maybe not in the way someone is thinking. But there's more.

We also must keep in mind the truth of what the Lord was trying to get across in these verses. What is the context? Take a look at Malachi 1:1-4:

*"The burden of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi. I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast Thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob, And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. Whereas Edom saith..."*

Verse 4 goes on to detail the judgment the Lord would bring upon the nation of Edom (Esau's descendants). Malachi is referring back to God's initial choice of Jacob over Esau to remind Israel of the special covenants of promise they had from the Lord. No nation, including the nation that traced back to Esau, would thwart God's plan for the nation that branched from Jacob's twelve sons.

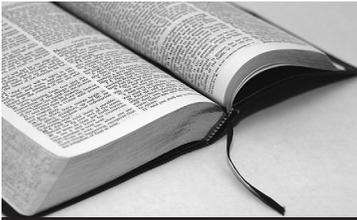
This is not the only time the names of the brothers (Jacob, Esau) are used when addressing the nations that rose from them (Israel, Edom). Some examples: Jacob—Numbers 23:7; Psalm 14:7; Isaiah 41:8; 59:20; Esau—Deuteronomy 2:4,5,8,12,22,29; Jeremiah 49:8,10; Obadiah).

This is also the case in Romans 9:13. Paul is patiently laying out an argument in chapters 9-11 that God was just in choosing to set Israel aside in this current dispensation so that he might extend mercy to the nations. Israel had no cause to complain because they had benefited from the Lord's choosing in times past; thus, the statement that *"Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."* So, the intention of this phrase is not, as some believe and teach, to reveal that God allows some to be saved while sending others to eternal condemnation, but to show God is just in showing His love to all nations. The mention of Jacob and Esau in Malachi is a reference to the two nations their descendants became.

If anything should convince us of God's love toward undeserving humankind, it should be this current Age of Grace. God was willing to send His Son, while we were still sinners, to endure a cruel cross, to pay the price for sin that we could never pay. Let's be thankful that God loved the world and took action to make it possible for *"whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord"* to be saved (Rom. 10:13). And we must always keep in mind the fact that God promised to send a Savior from the line of Abraham through his son Isaac and grandson Jacob. The issue is not God's treatment of individual's but rather God's purpose for His covenant People through whom He would send the Messiah. God loving the whole world is the basis for His treatment of these two nations.

**QUESTION: Malachi 1:2 says, "Jacob Have I Loved and Esau I Hated." Was God Being Unfair?**

**ANSWER:** God can never be accused of being unfair. Even regarding our salvation, God is fair in declaring the believing sinner righteous due to the fact that our sins have been paid for by the shed blood of Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:26). He is the holy Creator, so His Creation has no right to demand an explanation for His actions (Rom. 9:20). He knows what He is doing; He always does the righteous thing, so we are called to trust Him.



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In response to the question, first, Esau was not a godly, kind man. This is seen in Hebrews 12:16-17. He was willing to throw away a lasting blessing for temporary comfort. Let us not forget that HE despised His birthright. Second, this verse in Malachi is discussing God choosing Jacob to create a nation (Israel) and rejecting Esau (Edom). It does not speak of God feeling personal hatred for Esau, but the fact that He showed favor to Jacob and not Esau. God had His reasons, ultimately only known to Him, but we can trust His judgment.

The issue of God's fairness is answered in the book of Job. Job and his friends were having a debate about why devastation had entered into Job's life. The problem with the entire discussion was that the men were presuming to speak on God's behalf without having all of the necessary information. The Lord puts this group of men in their place with His very first question as he demanded, "*Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?*" (Job 38:2). Another pointed question asked by the Lord in His reply is found in Job 40:9: "*Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?*" Wow! There is a powerful reminder in these questions.

As human beings, we tend to want to know all of the details. This is why gossip is so popular. We love to spread news and philosophize on the details we don't know. We do this with God as well, whether we will admit it or not. We forget that we don't have access to the information that God does and that even "*the foolishness of God is wiser than men*" (I Cor. 1:25), so we rationalize and explain God's decisions in a way that we can comprehend them. Yet, God doesn't need us to defend Him; He wants us to trust Him, to "*let God be true, but every man a liar*" (Rom. 3:4). In other words, we need to admit that we can't diagram every detail of the sovereign God, but we do know we can trust Him to always be just and fair.

So, no, there is never unfairness with God. He is not man, and He will always do what is right. He cannot do otherwise. Trust Him!

### QUESTION: What must I do to be saved?

**ANSWER:** This, of course, is the question the Philippian jailer asked of Paul and Silas after the miraculous release of their prison bonds (Acts 16:31). We have received various forms of this question at the *Berean Bible Institute* throughout the years, so let's answer the question: What does one need to do in order to be saved from an eternity in the Lake of Fire, to be taken from death unto life?

The varied denominations and churches and religious organizations preach Christ, but the messages surrounding how to participate in salvation are diverse. Do you have to believe Christ and keep the Mosaic Law? Do you have to believe and follow Christ until the end in order to be saved? Do you have to trust Christ and bear fruit to make it into Heaven? Are you saved the moment you trust in Christ alone for salvation? Even Paul's answer to the Philippian jailer ("*believe in the Lord Jesus Christ*" Acts 16:31) was further expounded as Paul went to the jailer's house. What does one have to believe about Jesus Christ in order to be saved? It's more than just believing He was a great person or God in the flesh.

The message of how to receive salvation today is found in Paul's epistles. We must believe (Rom. 3:22) by faith alone (Eph. 2:8-9) that we need a Savior (Rom. 3:23) and that Jesus Christ is that Savior through His death, burial, and resurrection (I Cor. 15:3-4). At the moment of belief, we are saved and sealed with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13-14) and nothing will ever unsave us (Eph. 4:30).

Now, I have a most important question for you, dear reader: Have you trusted in Christ's redemption work alone for your salvation? If not, please, do so today.

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