

Hatred Towards the Edomites Is Sanctioned

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Hatred to the Edomite sanctioned
(*2Kings 14:3, 7*)

Hatred to the Edomite forbidden
(*Deuteronomy 23:7*)

Events that took place in the book of Deuteronomy preceded those that occurred during the kings of Israel and Judah by hundreds of years. As the instruction God gave in Deuteronomy 23:7, regarding the treatment of the Edomites, did not contain any language indicating it was binding on Israel's descendants forever, it is misleading to infer that by the time of 2Kings 14:7 Israel had to treat the Edomites fairly, even though they were allied in battle at that time against Israel. In fact, the Edomites were among other nations who were attacking Israel during the time of King David, and this occurred before 2Kings 14:3-7 (cf. 2Sam. 8:11-14).

Not only did God exclude terms that would indicate Israel had to act fairly toward the Edomites forever, His instructions were not unconditional. Therefore, if the Edomites decided to attack Israel, Israel would not be bound by God's directive in Deuteronomy 23:7. Instead, the people of Israel could defend themselves against their enemies and by the time of King David the Edomites were one of Israel's foes.

Although the Edomites were related to the children of Israel through Esau, they did not continue to obey the commands that God gave Moses (cf. Dt. 2:4-5). Although the Edomites were given an opportunity to become part of the nation of Israel within three generations

following the proclamation of God's law and commandments at Mt. Sinai, they preferred to assimilate the pagan worship systems that were practiced by other nations around them.

You (Israel) shall not abhor an Edomite, for **he is your brother**. You shall not abhor an Egyptian, because you were an alien in his land. **The children of the third generation born to them may enter the congregation of the Lord** (Dt. 23:7-8; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

There is a spiritual principle associated with the Edomites becoming Israel's enemy, instead of their friend and ally.

A friend loves at all times, and **a brother is born for adversity** (Prov. 17:17; emphasis added).

...But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother (Prov. 18:24b).

You are my (Christ's) **friends if you do whatever I command you** (Jn. 15:14; RNT; Ed. note in parenthesis).

The Edomites are a poignant reminder that not everyone who claims they belong to God is considered a friend of God. The Pharisees during Christ's earthly ministry claimed they belonged to God because their genealogy could be traced back to Abraham, who was considered a friend of God (cf. Jas. 2:23), but they did not have a heart to obey God's word.

Therefore bear fruit worthy of repentance and do not begin to say in yourselves, 'As father we (Pharisees) have Abraham,' for I (John) say to you that from these stones God is able to raise children to Abraham (Lk. 3:8; RNT; Ed. notes in parentheses).

So being a friend of God is not automatically associated with one's family or genetic background. Instead, it is a matter of choosing to obey God.

For whoever does the will of my (Christ's) Father in the heavens, is my brother and sister and mother (in a spiritual sense) (Mt. 12:50; RNT; Ed. notes in parentheses).

By the time King Amaziah of Judah defeated the Edomites, their pagan religious beliefs were so pervasive that Amaziah embraced them rather than removing them.



**...BUT THERE IS A FRIEND WHO STICKS
CLOSER THAN A BROTHER**

[Proverbs 18:24b](#)

Now it was so, after Amaziah came from the slaughter of the Edomites, that he brought the gods of the people of Seir (country of the Edomites), set them up to be his gods, and bowed down before them and burned incense to them (2Chr. 25:14; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Had King Amaziah rejected the religious system of the Edomites, he would have been considered a friend of Almighty God. Instead, he became an enemy of God and as a result was defeated by Joash, king of Israel, and removed from power (cf. 2Chr. 25:21- 27).

Therefore the anger of the Lord was aroused against Amaziah, and He sent him a prophet who said to him, 'Why have you sought the gods of the people, which could not rescue their own people (the Edomites) from your (Amaziah's) hand? 16 So it was, as he talked with him, that the king said to him (the prophet), 'Have we made you the king's counsel? Cease! Why should you be killed?' Then the prophet ceased, and said, 'I know that God has determined to destroy

you, because you have done this and have not heeded my counsel' (2Chr. 25:15-16; Ed. notes in parentheses).

So the Edomites had an opportunity to be considered part of the nation of Israel. This is why God told the Israelites not to abhor them. However, after the Edomites rejected God's offer and progressively embraced the pagan beliefs of other nations, the favor they were originally offered was eventually removed. When the Edomites conspired against the people of Israel in various attempts to harm them, the directive that God gave in Deuteronomy 23:7 was no longer binding on the Israelites.

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