

## How God Treats Those He Loves

"...and to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. I gave Esau the hill country of Seir as his possession, while Jacob and his children went down to Egypt." Joshua 24:4

Many years earlier God promised Abraham: "And He said to Abram, 'Know well that your offspring shall be strangers in a land not theirs, and they shall be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years.'"<sup>1</sup> Thus, when Joshua said that God gave Esau the hill country of Seir, He gave them centuries of freedom; when God sent the descendants of Jacob to Egypt, He gave them 400 years of slavery.

The Apostle Paul reminds his readers, "...for the children being not yet born, neither having done anything good or bad, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. Even as it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."<sup>2</sup> Before the children were born God elected Jacob and rejected Esau.

God expressed His pleasure in Jacob by sending his descendants into 400 years of slavery and His hatred of Esau by giving his descendants centuries of freedom.

You must learn well this lesson if you wish to survive in your relationship with God without becoming bitter. Often (but not always), He sorely tests those He loves with severe pain and loss, and that without giving His rationale for doing it. Two temptations you must avoid: 1) - Blaming Satan or some other source for your affliction. 2) - Concluding that God does not love you.

<sup>1</sup> Genesis 15:13 <sup>2</sup> Romans 9:11-13 quoted from Malachi 1:2-3