

MidEast Conflict #4

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[0 : 00] We are considering subject matter having to do with the nation of Israel and the future of it. And we began the series with an explanation and an emphasis upon the Abrahamic covenant.

It is laid out in Genesis chapter 12 and it is repeated in succeeding chapters not only to Abraham, but to Abraham's offspring, Isaac and Jacob.

And we told you that it is impossible to overemphasize the importance of that covenant. I still feel the same way. And the more I study this, the more convinced that I am that what we are talking about is the very essence of God's plan and program for the eventual salvaging of the human race. And what was accomplished through the finished work of Jesus Christ took care of laying the real foundation for that and provides the base for the moral issues that are involved.

But what else is going to stem from that Abrahamic covenant is going to virtually cover everything else. So in addition to the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, accomplished by the way, through Abraham and his offspring, there is also going to be a time of future restoration.

[1 : 35] In fact, Peter talks about this in Acts chapter 3, about the time of restitution of all things. And that is what this is involving. But it is going to come through the instrumentality of Israel.

And this is a real area of conflict among Christians because so very many do not agree with that and do not appreciate that approach.

They opt rather for what is known as covenant theology or replacement theology that says Israel is set aside permanently and there is no future for Israel and that the church has taken the place of Israel and all of that.

And our contention is that the church is an extremely important entity, but it has not taken the place of Israel and it has not altered God's plan and program at all.

The church is what we refer to as a mystery. It is not revealed in the Old Testament. What is revealed in the Old Testament are the prophetic implications.

[2 : 43] And that, of course, involves the nation Israel principally. So when Christ came, for instance, we are told in John 1 that he came to his own. His own received him not.

Who were his own? His own was the Jews. When Christ was talking with the Samaritan woman at the well, he said, You worship you know not what, for salvation is of the Jews.

Could anything be more pointed? Here is the Savior himself, thoroughly Jewish, of course, in every way, just setting the record straight that the salvation which God is going to provide, not only for individuals but for the planet, is going to come through the instrumentality of Israel, the Jew.

And it's somewhat ironic to note that there are more Christians like myself who believe this than there are Jews who believe it.

Because they just kind of see themselves as pushed from pillar to post and persecuted through the ages. And they just feel that they've gotten a bad rap because much of the world blames them, holds them accountable for the crucifixion of Christ.

[4 : 09] And that they suffer all of this rejection and persecution because of that. And that is true in part. But the bigger picture says that Israel as a nation is set aside in judicial unbelief.

They are set aside by God. And they are under divine discipline. Of course, they don't understand that or believe that either. But the time is coming when they are going to be brought back into the centerpiece.

And they are going to occupy a position of incredible importance. And before we get to that, I've got something that I just feel that I need to conclude.

And it's back in Genesis because we dealt enough with Isaac and Ishmael. But I really left things, I feel, unattended regarding Jacob and what took place there.

And I'm going to just as briefly as I can recount this. And we're just going to kind of skip through some of these chapters. But I want to take you back to the time when the deception occurred. [5 : 20] And Jacob and his mother, Rebekah, were instrumental in deceiving Isaac into passing on the Abrahamic blessing to Jacob rather than to Esau, who was the son that Isaac had intended to give it.

And I'm not going to repeat the ramifications of that. But to make a long story short, I told you that as a result of restudying this years and years later, and with the help of this book on Israel Stein by Bill Salas, I couldn't agree more that they did not steal anything. They saw to it that the one whom God promised to be the recipient of the blessing would indeed get it. And that was Jacob. And Rebekah knew that.

And I can't help but believe that Isaac knew it too. And yet he was apparently willing to circumvent that and give the blessing to Esau. And when they stepped in and did what they did, they simply actually fulfilled the will of God rather than denied it.

So as a result of that, Esau is livid. And he says, the only thing that is keeping me from killing my brother now is that my father is still alive.

[6 : 53] But when he dies, I am going to do him in. And mother, Rebekah, being possessed of a mother's heart, didn't want to lose either one of her boys.

And I'm sure she loved both of them. And I'm sure that Isaac loved both of them. But they had their favorites and that produced complications. So she took, Rebekah took Jacob aside and said, your brother intends to take your life.

And then for all practical purposes, I would be deprived of both of you. Now what I want you to do is flee, leave the country and go back to where your father came from.

And there I want you to seek a wife. And we've already looked at the difficulties that resulted from marrying one of the local girls like Esau did.

And they brought nothing but grief to Rebekah and to Isaac. So Jacob is sent away in chapter 28. And he has the dream.

[8 : 05] And it is a reinforcement in verse, chapter 28 and verse 10. Jacob departed from Beersheba, went toward Haran, came to a certain place, spent the night there.

The sun had set in the rock for a pillow and so on. The angels ascending and descending on the ladder. And then this monumental confirmation in verse 13.

Behold, the Lord stood above it and said, I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac, the land on which you lie.

I will give it to you and to your descendants. Your descendants shall also be like the dust of the earth. And you shall spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and the south.

And in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go and will bring you back to this land.

[9 : 12] For I will not leave you until I have done what I promised you. Land, the land, the land, the land. Land, so much of it is made throughout the Old Testament.

And you are as aware as I am that it is still the focal point in the Mideast. This tiny little piece of real estate over which all of the blood has been shed and wars have been fought.

What is it about this land? I'll tell you what it is about this land. The whole earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. But this land, this tiny nation state, now known as Israel, has a peculiar distinction of being referred to as God's land.

Not that all the rest of the world isn't. But there is that which is special about this piece of real estate. It is God's land.

And scripture refers to it that way. Time and again. It is my land. My land. And you would wonder, as I would, what is it about this piece of real estate that causes God to designate it and refer to it as my land?

[10 : 42] He doesn't do that about Europe, about Africa, or any of those countries. No indication that he ever speaks of them in that possessive way.

And as I've already said, all of the land is his. All of the earth is his. But this piece of land is peculiarly his.

And what is it that loving parents always want to do? They want to bestow things upon their children.

And God is no different. And while by virtue of creation, all of humanity are God's children, in the sense that we are all a product of divine creation, but only in a very real, specific sense is the nation of Israel God's children.

God's chosen people in a special way. So he has planted them and put them in this land. And this land, this land of Israel, has just enormous implications for all the rest of the globe.

[11 : 55] I don't know if you're aware of it or not. But the nation of Israel is referred to as the geographical center of the globe.

It's not Washington, D.C. And it's not Paris. It's Jerusalem. And I'm not prepared to tell you this because I don't know, but I have a suspicion that there is something about this piece of real estate that goes back even a lot further than that.

I would not be surprised if it isn't somehow directly involved with the Edenic proposition in the very beginning. And there may be more there than we know, and perhaps one day we'll find out and know more about that.

So we find this reconfirmed here about your descendants and the land and what God is going to do. And I will bring you back to this land.

So, in verse 18, Jacob arose early in the morning, took the stone that had been put under his head, and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on its top, called the name of that place Bethel.

[13 : 04] However, previously, the name of the city had been Luz. And let's come over now, if we may, to chapter 30, where Jacob meets Rachel.

And remember, Rachel is the niece of Rebecca.

Remember when the unnamed servant was sent to find a bride for Isaac, he found Rebecca.

Rebecca. Rebecca's brother was Laban.

And the unnamed servant brought Rebecca back with him to the land of Israel, the land of Canaan, and presented her to his master, Isaac.

And we have that tender expression that says that Isaac took her into his tent, and he married her, and he loved her.

[14 : 11] And, of course, from that relationship came Jacob and Esau. Now, Jacob is on the land, fleeing from his brother, who would take his life.

And he has this vision of the ladder, and the angels ascending and descending on it. And he gets a confirmation of the promise that God had made, not only to his father, but to his grandfather, Abraham, when all of this started out.

And now, he is going back to the land from which their roots actually originated. And there he meets Rachel. And I'm not going to take the time to read all of this, but in verse 9, well, yeah, let's read it. It's a good romantic story. And behold, he looked and saw a well in the field.

And behold, three flocks of sheep were lying there beside it. For from that well they watered the flocks. Now the stone on the mouth of the well was large.

[15 : 22] When all the flocks were gathered there, they would then roll the stone from the mouth of the well. This was a big slab that they would roll it up and then flop it over the covering of the well.

And this would prevent the well from being contaminated and things falling into it that shouldn't be into it and animals falling into it or whatever. So it was a hefty proposition to remove that big slab.

And this was standard operating procedure. So they come there and they strike up a conversation.

And Jacob says to them, my brothers, where are you from? They said, we are from Haran.

And he said, oh, from Haran. Do you know Laban, the son of Nahor? Now Nahor was one of Abraham's brothers.

And they said, we know him. And he said to them, is it well with him? And they said, it is well. And behold, Rachel, his daughter, is coming with the sheep.

[16 : 29] I'm sure he pointed to the hill over there. Here comes Rachel over the hill with his flock of sheep with her. And speaking of Laban, here comes Laban's daughter right now.

And he said, behold, it is still high day. It is not time for the livestock to be gathered. Water the sheep and go pasture them.

But they said, we cannot until all the flocks are gathered and they roll the stone from the mouth of the well. Then we water the sheep. In other words, we don't do it until they're all here.

We're waiting for all the rest of them. And while he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep. For she was a shepherdess. It came about when Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother, which, of course, would make Rachel his cousin.

Not only his cousin, but his first cousin. The sheep of Laban, his mother's brother, that Jacob went up and rolled the stone from the mouth of the well and watered the flock of Laban, his mother's brother.

[17 : 40] Now, I don't know what kind of time passed here. And I don't know what conversation took place or what understanding there was. But verse 11 says, Jacob kissed Rachel and lifted his voice and wept.

Well, let me just inject something here. I don't know this for sure, but we've got to keep this kiss in the biblical context. Most of us think in terms of a Hollywood movie kiss, you know, where they are exchanging saliva for about 30 seconds.

One of those kisses. This was more likely the typical Eastern holy kiss, if you will.

And we see it all the time today. You don't see it too much among the Jews, but you certainly do see it in the Arab population. And they embrace and they this way and then this way and then this way back again.

That's their greeting. We have replaced that with a handshake. And most of us, at least most men, prefer that. But this is the Oriental way of greeting.

[18 : 53] And it is probably what took place here. I don't think this was a passionate romantic kiss like, you know, boy and girl dating, that kind of thing. This was a more customary greeting.

And Jacob told Rachel that he was a relative of her father and that he was Rebecca's son. And she ran and told her father. This is big news. This, you know, this didn't happen all that often because the geography involved is quite distant.

So it came about when Laban heard the news of Jacob, his sister's son, that he ran to meet him and embraced him and kissed him. And this is man to man. So this is likely the kind of kiss that I just described to you, which is a customary greeting then.

And he brought him to his house. And he related to Laban all these things. And Laban said to him, Surely you are my bone and my flesh.

We are kinsmen. You're related. And he stayed with him a month. Then Laban said to Jacob, Because you are my relative, should you therefore serve me for nothing?

[20 : 01] Tell me, what shall your wages be? Now Laban had two daughters. The name of the older was Leah. The name of the younger was Rachel.

And Leah's eyes were weak. I'm not real sure what that means. Some think she needed glasses. I suspect that she didn't have the sparkle in her eyes that Rachel had in hers.

Just a difference in the way one appears. At any rate, I don't think it's hard to miss the point here that of the two sisters, Rachel and Leah, Rachel was the dish.

And Leah was probably a nice girl, but what we would call something that probably no woman wants to be called. A plain Jane. And that's probably what she was.

She didn't have that eye appeal or that attractiveness. She didn't have the appearance that would make a man take a second look. Rachel had the kind of appearance that would not only make a man take a second look, but make it difficult for him to take his eyes off her.

[21 : 24] Okay? That's what we're talking about. That's the difference. And Leah may very well have been just a wonderful human being with lots of other attributes, but she was not the knockout that Rachel was.

So Jacob loved Rachel, and he said, I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter, Rachel. Laban said, it's better that I give her to you than that I should give her to another man. Stay with me. So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of his love for her.

Now, we're not going to engage the story of the deception and the old switcheroo under the covers at night with the honeymoon, and he ends up with Leah, and he thinks he has Rachel, but that is all behind us.

And we're going to skip on down now to Genesis chapter 32. Put that material behind us, and what I want to really get to is this meeting with Esau, and we read in verse 1 of 32, As Jacob went on his way, the angels of God met him, and Jacob said, When he saw them, this is God's camp.

[22 : 45] So he named that place Mahanaim. And Jacob sent messengers before him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom.

This is southern Jordan. It's going to figure in very prominently in this end-time battle that is described in Psalm 83, and will precede the Ezekiel passages that we'll also be looking at.

And what is taking place here is Jacob realizes that on his way home, See, he's left Laban, he has split from that company, and he enriched Laban considerably through his expertise as a shepherd, etc., and the flock multiplied greatly.

But Laban apparently was a real scoundrel, and he was always cheating Jacob, and finally Jacob just got tired of it.

He got fed up about it, and he said, I'm leaving. I'm not going to take this any longer. You've changed my wages ten times, and every time I turn around, you're more demanding about something, and it's better that we just part company.

[24 : 05] I'm leaving. Well, Laban is going to not only lose a lucrative kind of producer in Jacob, but he's going to lose both of his daughters and his grandkids, because by this time, Jacob has got twelve sons and a daughter, Dinah.

And here's old Laban, and he sees his daughters and all of his grandchildren leaving right before his eyes. That's a very bitter pill for him to swallow, and he puts up a struggle to try and hang on to them and maintain them, but it's not going to work, and Jacob has already committed himself to following divine orders, and he's going back home where he belongs, and he's taking his wives and all of his children with him, and all of the animals that they have amassed, and there's a large herd. I mean, there's lots of donkeys and lots of cattle and lots of sheep, and they are driving all of these. And you can imagine what an undertaking that would be.

Fortunately, he's got a number of children old enough to help him, and he's been there for 20 years. Been there for 20 years, and he has fathered 13 that we know of children from two wives and two concubines.

And this is a considerable retinue that is vacating the premises and leaving and moving on. It's just like a huge cattle drive, only with the family along and all of these children.

[26 : 00] And, of course, they have to move rather slowly. They can't cover a lot of territory in a short amount of time. So, in order to get back where they're going, they have to go right smack dab through the territory Esau.

He hasn't seen this brother for 20 years. And the last time he saw his brother, Esau was looking daggers at him.

And you could have cut the air with a knife. And he gave Jacob that look. Your time is coming. Your days are numbered, brother. I'm going to take care of you. And Jacob knew very well he meant it.

But that was 20 years ago. Surely he wouldn't be carrying a grudge all this time, would he? And to get ahead of myself, the answer is no.

[27 : 14] And you know, Esau's lack of grudge or vindictiveness does not fit the template here of the hatred pattern that is established.

Now, maybe he's going to come back to it, but that isn't the way this is going to play out. And it is just fascinating what develops here. I want you to read with me verses 3 and on.

Jacob sent messengers before him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom. Now, we've looked at this on the map.

This is where Petra is. This is southern Jordan. This is where Basra is. In the land of Seir, this is where the Edomites are from.

And this is also known as, by another name, the Greek name for it is Idumea. Herod the king, who will be on the throne when Jesus is born, is from here.

[28 : 17] He is an Idumean. He is an Edomite. Herod the king is a descendant of Esau. And he was one wicked individual.

So now they are going to go right through this area. And, of course, they are extremely vulnerable because they've got all these children with them, all of these animals with them. And what he's wondering is, how are we going to get through this territory in one piece?

Without being massacred. Because Esau, I know Esau. I know Esau is going to be weaponized. And he's probably got a bunch of cronies around him that are a bunch of ne'er-do-wells who are always thirsty for some action and looking for some kind of easy pickings.

And, boy, we are easy pickings. All of these animals and all of these goods and virtually no defense at all. We have no soldiers or anything like that.

[29 : 29] We're just at this guy's mercy. And I don't know how this is going to be. So, out of concern for the safety of his family, he starts plotting a strategy.

And here's what he says. Verse 4. Thus shall you say to my lord Esau. Now, why is he calling him his lord? This, too, is a cultural consideration.

All it means is that Esau is acknowledging the superiority of Esau to himself.

He's not going in there with a chip on his shoulder. He's not going in there challenging or trying to throw his weight around. He's not trying to play tough guy or anything.

He's saying, you know what? Esau holds all the cards in this situation. I am virtually defenseless. And it would not behoove me to be cocky or demanding or anything of the kind.

[30 : 35] I need to go in there very subservient, very submissive, acknowledging that Esau is the top dog in that area, and I'm not challenging that.

That's all he's trying to do. And he's going to sweeten the pot, if he can, with a generous bribe. All that is designed to do.

You know what you would call this in Chicago. You would call this protection money. You pay somebody so that nothing bad happens to you.

Because if you don't pay them, they will see to it that something bad happens to you. And that's a pretty old game. So that's what's taking place here. And he commanded them and says, in verse 4, Thus shall you say to my lord Esau, thus says your servant Jacob.

That's me, your servant Jacob. I have sojourned with Laban and stayed until now, and I have oxen and donkeys and flocks and male and female servants, and I have sent to tell my lord that I may find favor in your sight.

[31 : 47] Now, what this actually involves is he is making it very clear, we are not trying to sneak through your territory.

We are not being clandestine about this at all. We're very upfront. We know this is your bailiwick, and we want to make it worth your while to give us safe passage.

So all of these things we just want you to have. And the messengers in verse 6 returned to Jacob saying, We came to your brother Esau, and furthermore, he's coming to meet you.

And 400 men are with him. I can just seal Jacob now as a heart snake. 400 men!

And there aren't 400 including women and children. There are 400 men. And I'll bet you these characters are rough as a cob.

[32 : 56] Fight at the drop of a hat. Fight over anything. Probably always fighting among themselves. And Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed.

And he divided the people who were with him. Now, what could Jacob have done? What else could he have done? Why wouldn't he be afraid? Why would he not be afraid?

Think about this for a moment. Do you not see here nothing more than a perfectly human lapse of faith along the same order of his grandfather Abraham?

What about the promises that God made to Jacob? Going to bring you back to this land, Jacob.

And you're going to dwell in the land. But how could that be fulfilled if he dies out here in the land of Edom?

[34 : 09] Really? Now, I'm giving you I guess we'd call it 20-20 hindsight.

And it's easy for me to say this many years removed and not facing what Jacob was facing. But if he had just maintained his cool instead of being greatly afraid he could have said and I suggest if he had this to do over again this is probably what he would have done.

Hey, this is going to be a testy situation. I know I'm going to be uncomfortable in it and that can't be helped. But I am also confident that God can be trusted and he has already promised me how this thing is going to come out and I'm going to be back in the land.

So I'm just going to relax and go ahead with the items of the day and what will be will be and God's going to take care of it.

But when panic sets in which is so easy to do and you're in a crisis mode you tend to think the worst and you tend to forget the promises that God has made.

[35 : 25] That's just part of our humanity. So he maps out this strategy and he says now look verse 8 if Esau comes to the one company in verse 7 he divides them he divides the people who were with him the flocks the herds the camels into two companies splits them up puts one obviously way ahead of the other there may be a mile couple of miles out in front of the other two groups are split up and his thinking is when Esau comes with his 400 men we don't know for sure exactly which direction he's coming from whether head on or whether this way or whether this way but whichever of our two groups he attacks will provide an opportunity for the others to get away and that's his

thinking Jacob said oh

God of my father Abraham God of my father Isaac oh Lord who did say to me return to your country and to your relatives and I will prosper you well I'm counting on you to make good on that but he's still one mighty nervous man and you can understand that I am unworthy of all the loving kindnesses and of all the faithfulness which thou hast shown to thy servant for with my staff only I crossed this Jordan and now I have become two companies oh this is wonderful he's reminiscing a little bit and he's saying when I crossed the Jordan here on my way to Laban all I had was his staff that was it my walking stick it's all I had and now look look all these companies two wives two concubines twelve boys one girl all of these animals enough to divide up into two flocks amazing and he is acknowledging

God you did say to me return to your country and to your relatives and I will prosper you now in verse 11 he says deliver me I pray from the hand of my brother from the hand of Esau for I fear him the guy really scares me lest he come and attack me the mothers with the children for you did say here he's reminding God of what God told him he's holding him good to his promises now you've got to deliver on this you promised from the hand of my brother from the hand of Esau for I fear him lest he come you did say you will prosper me make your descendants as the sand of the sea which cannot be numbered for multitude well we're not there yet I wouldn't exactly call 12 kids numbered like the sand of the seashore so there's a lot more producing to be done and you're going to have to see to that and he spent the night there and he selected from what he had with him a present for his brother

Esau 200 female goats and 20 male goats now I don't think he's giving him all of them I don't think he's probably even giving him half of them he's giving him a bunch so how much how many would that mean that he has to start with a large large number and he selected from what he had a present goats 200 ewes 20 rams 30 milking camels and their colts and 40 cows and 10 this guy's loaded isn't he 20 female donkeys and 10 male donkeys and he delivered them into the hand of his servants every drove by itself and he said to his servants pass over before me and put a space between droves don't bunch them all together spread them out this is a marketing gesture make the company look as big and as many as possible spread them out so they'll take up more room look like there's even more of them than there is and he commanded the one in front saying when my brother

Esau meets you and asks you saying to whom do you belong where are you going and to whom do these animals in front of you belong see these people were extremely territorial and they questioned the motivation and the propriety of anyone coming through their territory it was almost as if they claimed complete ownership rights to it and you didn't even have the right to set your foot on their soil except by their good pleasure and here is this whole retinue of people and animals coming through and Esau is very territorial like all of these people are very protective of his turf and he's going to ask you who you belong to and what's all this about and then you shall say verse 18 these belong to your servant

[41 : 12] Jacob it is a presence sent to my lord Esau and behold he also is behind us then he commanded also the second and the third and all those who followed the droves saying after this manner you shall speak to Esau when you find him he's saying now this guy listen this guy can be really touchy so I want you to be very careful how you approach him and how you talk to him because it doesn't take much to set him off he well remembers his brother he probably set him off plenty of times growing up with him and I will appease him with the present that goes before me well we all know how unwise appeasing someone usually turns out to be but he says then afterward I will see his face and perhaps he will accept me so the present passed on before him while he himself spent that night in the camp

I imagine he slept pretty lightly he arose that same night took his two wives his two maids his eleven children and crossed the ford of the Jabbok and he took them and sent them across the stream and he sent across whatever he had then Jacob was left alone a man wrestled with him until daybreak and I wish I understood this better Jacob wrestling with the angel and this apparently is the angel of Jehovah and I just don't have the handle on that that I would like and I'm completely dissatisfied with virtually all of the commentaries I've read that weren't very helpful but as a result of this wrestling we are told that Jacob declares that he had seen God face to face and this certainly has to have been I think a Christophany and his life has been preserved and he was limping on his thigh as a result of the angel touching him on his thigh and most are of the opinion that as a result of this

night

Jacob walked with a limp the rest of his life and that limp was a perpetual reminder of this particular night so in chapter 33 the meeting takes place Jacob lifted his eyes and looked and behold Esau was coming and 400 men with him you know how he could tell there was that inevitable cloud of dust off in front of him and I can imagine it was a big cloud of dust such as would be kicked up by 400 men mounted on horses or camels it would be a veritable army coming right at you and I imagine he is praying and very very attentive as to what's happening here and he put the maids and their children in front and

Leah and her children next and Rachel and Joseph last what is that he is putting his most precious possessions the furthest behind this is a protective device this is once again a picture of parental favoritism where he puts those whom he loves but not as much out in front so that if anything happens they'll be the first ones to catch the arrows or the knives or whatever and those that he cares about most will be in the rear and he himself passed on ahead of them and bowed down to the ground seven times until he came near to his brother what would you call this kowtowing bending over backwards and this is exactly what and he did it seven times he sees

Esau up there mounted on that horse he probably looked like he was ten feet tall and he starts walking toward Esau and he's off in the distance probably as far as from here to Cedar Hills and he stops and he gets down on his knees and he bows toward Esau an expression of complete submission and he walks a little further and he stops and bows again well it sounds to me like groveling doesn't it I think it probably was but again you've got to take the cultural thing into consideration plus the fact that he is trying to be as submissive and as diplomatic as he can be showing that not only does he not harbor any resentment against

[46 : 52] Esau but he is completely subservient to him so he does this seven times until he came near to his brother and I'm bowled over by verse four this is not what I would have expected I would have expected at the least a cold shoulder ah long time no see something like that but Esau what is he mellowed over these twenty years we are told that Esau ran to meet him and embraced him and fell on his neck and kissed him and they wept what was Jacob thinking what was he saying to himself I'll tell you what he was saying to himself as he embraced his brother

Esau whom he hadn't seen for twenty years he is saying to himself oh man I can't believe this I can't believe this I can't believe this he's actually friendly this is amazing I wonder if it's a trick I wonder if while I'm hugging him he's going to slip a knife in my back you're thinking all kinds of things it is obvious from the prep that he has gone through to this this is not what he expected not at all and they wept they had a good cry together and he lifted his eyes this is Esau lifted his eyes saw the women and the children and said who are these with you so he said the children whom God has graciously given your servant which is another way of saying children God has graciously given me and your servant thing is again in keeping with the protocol and the maids came near with their children and they bowed down almost as if this is royalty that they're being introduced to and again it is an expression of abject submission to indicate that they provide no kind of threat whatever and Leah likewise came near with her children they bowed down and afterward Joseph came near with Rachel and they bowed down and he said what do you mean by all of this company which I have met and this is he's talking about the animals and the gift and everything that he sent ahead and Esau saying what's this all about all of these animals that your servants sent Aaron and said that they're a gift to me what's that for what's behind that and he said well to find favor in the sight of my Lord to grease the palms to make our appearance here more acceptable to you and Esau says ah I have plenty my brother let what you have be your own I don't need all this I've got plenty I don't need this this is all yours this isn't necessary Jacob says no please if now I have found favor in your sight then take my present from my hand for I see your face as one sees the face of God and you have received me favorably please take my gift which has been brought to you because God has dealt graciously he insisted and he took it and Esau said let us take our journey and go and I will go before you in other words Esau said well hey okay well there's no no point in standing out here in the sun let's move on and and I'll go with you so he's going to accompany him for a while at least and he says my Lord knows that the children are nursing are a care to me you know and and if they are driven hard one day all the flocks will die so he is again being accommodating and he is declining Esau's offer to be an escort for him that's actually what he's offering because there are bandits in the area and all the rest and he's saying let's go and I'll go with you and Jacob said I really appreciate that but I've got all of these children

and we've got to travel slowly and the herds and everything and you've got 400 men with you who are used to really clipping off the miles and they don't want to be saddled with a responsibility like this and accompanying all of these so he declines he says you go on ahead and

[52 : 22] I will proceed at my leisure at my pace according to the pace of the cattle that are before me and according to the pace of the children until I come to my lord at Seir and Seir of course is there in Edom there's a mountain even by that name and Esau said please let me leave with you some of the people who are with me that's a security detachment but he said well what need is there let me find favor in the sight of my lord so Esau returned that day on his way to Seir and I'm sure that Jacob is going the crisis has passed and all ends well and it is a beautiful thing so this does not fit our template of hatred because Jacob doesn't have that toward his brother however history will reveal that

Esau is going to die and Jacob is going to die and the animosity that began with Isaac and Ishmael is still going to be perpetuated what we have considered in this session is really one of the bright spots of collegiality between these brothers and it almost looks like they buried the hatchet whereas at one time all Esau wanted to do was bury the hatchet in his brother's skull but now that seems to be bygone bygone however this particular area Seir Edom is probably if not the chief culprit one of the principal culprits that has been antagonistic to the nation of Israel from its founding even to this day and we will see how this is going to play out in our next session we'll look at that Psalm 83 and tie that in with the

Ezekiel thing and then I've got something special planned for the last two sessions I hope I'm able to secure what I'm looking for but you will enjoy it and it will take you back questions or comments anybody well it's just to me it just jumps off the page it's just it throbs throbs with life Roger what are we to think of Abraham and Isaac David and condescending struggles in the sight of God I mean it just looks like he's dealing with misfits all the time yeah you're right you're right God does deal with misfits and what's more God doesn't deal with anybody else but misfits because that's all we are no matter which way

God turns it's a misfit here and a misfit there here a misfit there a misfit everywhere a misfit that's the picture of humanity so if God is going to use anybody he's got to use a flawed human being I'm amazed that someone like David is called a man after God's own heart are you kidding me a liar an adulterer and a murderer he's a man after God's own heart wow but you know this is where as is always the case grace comes riding in big time and if it weren't for that there'd be no hope for any of us misfits that's what it's all about God's wondrous grace boy