

(Genesis) Genesis 32:1-8

by J. Vernon McGee

Jacob's encounter with God's host and his preparations to meet Esau reveal his ongoing struggle with fear and lack of trust in God's protection.

Duration: 3:20

Scripture: Genesis 32:6-7, Genesis 32:9-11, Genesis 32:24 - 33:4, Genesis 33:10, Genesis 33:17

Topics: "Genesis"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the story of Jacob and his encounter with his brother Esau. Jacob, who had previously been deceitful, is now fearful and distressed upon hearing that Esau is coming to meet him with four hundred men. Jacob divides his people and belongings into two groups, hoping that if Esau attacks one, the other can escape. Jacob sends messengers to Esau, referring to him as 'My Lord Esau' and himself as 'Thy servant Jacob,' possibly in an attempt to appease him. The speaker emphasizes that God is beginning to deal directly with Jacob in order to bring him into a place of fruit-bearing and vital service.

Transcript

And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host, and he called the name of that place Mahanaan. God is beginning to deal with this man directly in order to bring him into the place of fruit-bearing and of real vital service and witness for him.

And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother the land of Seir, the country of Edom. And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau, thy servant Jacob saith thus. I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now, and I have oxen and asses, flocks and men's servants, and women's servants, and I have sent to tell my lord that I may find grace in thy sight.

This boy Jacob is still clever, isn't he? He just can't let go, even after his experience with Laban now, and he's returning back. And he remembers now the last time, 20 years before that, why Esau was breathing out threatenings against him. And notice now he sends servants, and he says to the servants, says, When you get to Esau, my brother, you say to him, My lord Esau of all things.

And then he says, Thy servant Jacob. Well, that's not the way Jacob had done it. He'd stolen the birthright, and he didn't steal the birthright, but he manipulated for it, and he stole the blessing.

He'd been a rascal, but now his talk is different. He'd learned a few things, I guess, from Uncle Laban. My lord Esau, thy servant Jacob.

And so he sent the messengers, and the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him. And that absolutely frightened poor Jacob, because he didn't know what all that meant. And Esau didn't indicate to the servants at all.

I suppose Jacob quizzed them rather thoroughly and said, Did you detect any note of animosity or bitterness or hatred toward me? And I think the servants said, No. Said, He seemed to be glad to get the information that you were coming to meet him, and now he's coming to meet you. But the fact he was glad didn't mean anything to Jacob.

It could mean he'd be glad for the opportunity of getting revenge. Well, anyway, poor Jacob's upset. Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed, and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks and herds and the camels into two bands, and said, If Esau come to the one company and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.

He's in a bad way, he thinks. Here he is with this brother of his coming to him, and so he divides up the group. He's being clever, and he says, If this boy, my brother, if he strikes one, then the other one can escape.

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