

Genesis 29:1–12

God's Sustaining and Surprising Grace

Main idea: God sustains believers in doing more than they can do, as He works in their lives to do more than they can ask or think

¹ So Jacob went on his journey and came to the land of the people of the East. ² And he looked, and saw a well in the field; and behold, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks. A large stone was on the well's mouth. ³ Now all the flocks would be gathered there; and they would roll the stone from the well's mouth, water the sheep, and put the stone back in its place on the well's mouth.

⁴ And Jacob said to them, "My brethren, where are you from?"

And they said, "We are from Haran."

⁵ Then he said to them, "Do you know Laban the son of Nahor?"

And they said, "We know him."

⁶ So he said to them, "Is he well?"

And they said, "He is well. And look, his daughter Rachel is coming with the sheep."

⁷ Then he said, "Look, it is still high day; it is not time for the cattle to be gathered together. Water the sheep, and go and feed them."

⁸ But they said, "We cannot until all the flocks are gathered together, and they have rolled the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep."

⁹ Now while he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she was a shepherdess. ¹⁰ And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother.

¹¹ Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept. ¹² And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's relative and that he was Rebekah's son. So she ran and told her father.

Introduction

How we left Jacob: in weariness, weakness, and anxiety. And this is where God meets us in this passage to display to us His sustaining grace and His surprising grace.

1. God's Sustaining Grace
 - a. Moving His saints' feet. When we see that our resources are too small.
 - b. Strengthening His saints' hands. When we see that the challenge is too great.
 - c. Sustaining His saints' hearts. When we are unaware of the greatness of our own distress.
2. God's Surprising Grace
 - a. When we think we've accomplished the mission, but God is just getting started.
 - b. When the certain reality of the future is the opposite of what we see in the present.
 - c. When we need all illusions of our own credit dashed.

Conclusion

Without Christ, even every earthly mercy would ultimately curse us. But with Christ, every earthly trial comes with blessing in the moment and participates in God's bringing about His eternal glory in our eternal blessedness. For, this is not just the history of how God multiplied the family of Abraham. It is the history of how God Himself entered the family of Abraham to redeem, from all of the families of the earth, people to whom this sustaining grace and surprising grace belong.