

# God-Given Peace, Purity, and Prosperity

Genesis 33:1-20

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## Introduction:

Today in our sermon series from Genesis, we continue to follow the progress of Jacob as he makes his way back to (and arrives at) the Promised Land.

- In Jacob, the entire church is represented.
  - We have seen that this is so because Jacob is the one (as were Abraham and Isaac) who is to bring forth God's righteous kingdom (the church).
  - The nation of Israel is to come from his offspring, and through them the Messiah who takes away the sin of the world is to come forth.
  - Jacob has the privilege of bringing forth the blessing that every single person desperately needs, and without which no person can be saved.
    - That's right, if you would not be condemned with the rest of the world, you must repent and enter the kingdom of God through faith in Jesus Christ.
    - He went to the cross to atone for His people's sins—and there is no other way for you to be forgiven than by trusting in Him.
    - It is through Jacob that the church that brought forth Christ came!
- But when we look at Jacob—indeed, when we look at what has grown into God's world-wide church, the kingdom of righteousness,
  - we really don't have a lot of reason for confidence...
  - We are so very weak and vulnerable—ready to be destroyed by enemies, by our own sins, by sheer weakness...
    - Isn't it so?
      - We have enemies who are ready to destroy us, we see even our strongest leaders caught up in scandals and sin, and we are just so weak that it seems as if we might just peter out...
      - *except* that we have our LORD and He promises to keep us!

And that is what we keep on seeing with Jacob...

- This man from whom the kingdom is to come—so vulnerable, so fragile in himself, but so kept by the power of God!
  - It's scary to think that the whole kingdom depends on him...until we realise how powerful the hands are that preserve him!
  - Jacob is in God's hands just as the church in our day is in God's hands.
- Through Jacob's life, we learn about how God preserves His whole church
  - At Bethel, we saw how God reveals Himself to us and makes promises to keep us.
  - At Haran, we saw how God multiplies us even when we are foolish and do not pray as we ought.
  - And with the multiplication of Jacob's flocks at Haran, we saw that the Lord provides what we need to do His work in the world, even when we are helpless.
  - And when Jacob left Haran and Laban came after him in anger to harm him, we learned how God protects His church.

- And then at Ma-ha-nay-im we learned how God teaches us to pray, showing us His protection and showing us the danger that we are in...
- And Peniel, we saw how He breaks us and teaches us to stop fighting with Him and rather to cast ourselves on His mercy alone.
- And now, today, we are going to look at how the LORD gives us peace, purity, and prosperity in His kingdom!
  - As we shall see today, it is God who gives us a desire for peace, purity, and prosperity, and then He gives us success in obtaining them...
    - but not in such a way that we would become over-confident...
    - As long as we are in this world,
      - our peace, purity, and prosperity will never be perfected lest we stop looking to the LORD for them...
      - and even inasmuch as we them, there will be a certain amount of danger for us—so that we must always be on guard—as we shall see.

Listen now as I read to you from our text—Genesis 33—beginning in verse 1.

**Genesis 33:1-20:** Now Jacob lifted his eyes and looked, and there, Esau was coming, and with him were four hundred men. So he divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and the two maidservants. <sup>2</sup> And he put the maidservants and their children in front, Leah and her children behind, and Rachel and Joseph last. <sup>3</sup> Then he crossed over before them and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother. <sup>4</sup> But Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept. <sup>5</sup> And he lifted his eyes and saw the women and children, and said, “Who *are* these with you?” So he said, “The children whom God has graciously given your servant.” <sup>6</sup> Then the maidservants came near, they and their children, and bowed down. <sup>7</sup> And Leah also came near with her children, and they bowed down. Afterward Joseph and Rachel came near, and they bowed down. <sup>8</sup> Then Esau said, “What *do* you *mean* by all this company which I met?” And he said, “*These are* to find favor in the sight of my lord.” <sup>9</sup> But Esau said, “I have enough, my brother; keep what you have for yourself.” <sup>10</sup> And Jacob said, “No, please, if I have now found favor in your sight, then receive my present from my hand, inasmuch as I have seen your face as though I had seen the face of God, and you were pleased with me. <sup>11</sup>

Please, take my blessing that is brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough.” So he urged him, and he took *it*. <sup>12</sup> Then Esau said, “Let us take our journey; let us go, and I will go before you.” <sup>13</sup> But Jacob said to him, “My lord knows that the children *are* weak, and the flocks and herds which are nursing *are* with me. And if the men should drive them hard one day, all the flock will die. <sup>14</sup> Please let my lord go on ahead before his servant. I will lead on slowly at a pace which the livestock that go before me, and the children, are able to endure, until I come to my lord in Seir.” <sup>15</sup> And Esau said, “Now let me leave with you *some* of the people who *are* with me.” But he said, “What need is there? Let me find favor in the sight of my lord.” <sup>16</sup> So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir. <sup>17</sup> And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, built himself a house, and made booths for his livestock. Therefore the name of the place is called Succoth. <sup>18</sup> Then Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which *is* in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan Aram; and he pitched his tent before the city. <sup>19</sup> And he bought the parcel of land, where he had pitched his tent, from the children of Hamor, Shechem’s father, for one hundred pieces of money. <sup>20</sup> Then he erected an altar there and called it El Elohe Israel.

May the LORD bless the reading of His holy Word.

- So you see in this passage how God gives us peace, purity, and prosperity...so that we might continue in the world as His people.

**I. Let's begin by looking at how God gives us peace with our enemies.**

- Peace is such an excellent thing.
    - The church has many enemies—both outside and inside the church,
      - but one of the ways the Lord protects and preserves us from them is by giving us peace with them.
    - We are called to be peacemakers, and to live at peace with all men as much as it depends on us.
      - God does not just zap us with peace...
- A. It is our responsibility to go to great efforts to make peace—as Jacob does here to make peace with Esau.
1. We have already had a sermon about this in Genesis 32 where I exhorted you to go all out to pursue peace...
    - We saw how Jacob did this—how he prayed and how he also made plans as to how he might appease Esau.
    - And here we see how Jacob followed through with those plans!
      - This is not always so easy to do—sometimes we make plans to reconcile, but then we never follow through with it—
        - it is not an easy thing to do, especially when we have sin that we must repent of.
        - We are proud and we do not to admit our wrongs, especially to rivals.
        - But it is something you must do whenever it needs to be done—as much as it is possible on your part.
  2. Jacob, who had caused the disruption of peace with his brother, now goes all out to restore the peace.
    - a. Perhaps you remember how Jacob had stolen the birthright that belonged to Esau as the oldest son...
      - It is true that God had promised that Jacob would be the one who would bring forth the righteous kingdom that would bring forth Christ...
        - Now Esau was a profane man and did not care about God's kingdom.
      - But Jacob had thought that he must obtain this blessing (he did not really understand it) by manipulation, deceit, and trickery.
        - So when his father was old and blind was ready to bless Esau, Jacob disguised himself and had the blessing of the firstborn put upon him instead of Esau.
          - He was given lordship of the house and a double portion of the family inheritance.
        - Esau was very angry with Jacob and wanted to kill him—that is why Jacob had left the Promised Land in the first place—for that and to find a wife.

- b. But now Jacob goes all out to show Esau that he is no longer claiming the rights of the firstborn over Esau.
- His language and actions make it clear that this is what he is doing.
    - The drama is very high as we read that Esau is approaching with 400 men—fighting men—and of course Jacob only has his family and his servants.
    - In chapter 32, we saw how Jacob prayed earnestly that he would find favour in Esau’s eyes,
      - And how he did not stop there, but also made plans of how he would relinquish the rights of the firstborn that he had wrongly taken.
      - Now in Gen 33 we see how Jacob follows through with his plan.
- 1) First, Jacob sends his servants before him with a huge gift of 580 animals to appease Esau, showing him that he has not come to take but to give.
- a) He sent these animals in a succession of droves, if you will remember from chapter 32, saying:
- **Gen 32:17-18: “When Esau my brother meets you and asks you, saying, ‘To whom do you belong, and where are you going? Whose are these in front of you?’<sup>18</sup> then you shall say, ‘They are your servant Jacob’s. It is a present sent to my lord Esau; and behold, he also is behind us.’”**
    - And the word *present* is the word for an offering as would be used to make peace with God—an offering of atonement!
    - This shows clearly that Jacob is seeking to appease Esau.
- b) When Esau asks him about this gift in our text—in 33:8, Jacob again refers to it as a peace offering such as would be offered to God...
- In 33:8, he says to Esau of this present: **“These [animals] are to find favor in the sight of my lord.”**
  - And when Esau graciously declines, Jacob insists in 33:10-11, saying: **Gen 33:10: “No, please, if I have now found favor in your sight, then receive my present [same word as before—a gift to atone] from my hand, inasmuch as I have seen your face as though I had seen the face of God, and you were pleased with me.”**
    - Do you see what he is saying here?
    - He is saying that this gift is just like the gifts people offer to God for his acceptance...
      - You will remember, for example, how Cain and Abel offered gifts and Abel’s was accepted and Cain’s was not...
    - Well Jacob is telling Esau that by accepting this gift, he will be like God accepting our offerings for our sins...
  - And Jacob continues in verse 11 with words that refer specifically to the stolen blessing.
    - He says: <sup>11</sup> **Please, take my blessing**
      - Do you hear those word? “My blessing.”

- He is giving the blessing back to Esau!
    - This was not the normal way of referring to gift... **“Please take my blessing that is brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough.” So he urged him, and he took it.**
  - Esau takes it because Jacob has made his acceptance of it a token of his official forgiveness and acceptance of him!
    - It is very clear that Jacob is giving back his blessing that he had taken!
    - He knows that God’s promise to him to bring forth the kingdom is secure.
- And then there is a second way that Jacob shows that he is restoring what he had taken...
- The second aspect of the blessing was the headship or lordship of the home—in which the blessing Isaac pronounced on Jacob had said that his brothers would bow down to him and serve him...
- 2) But now as Jacob meets Esau twenty years later, he constantly refers to Esau as his lord and even bows down to him.
- a) In chapter 32:18, he instructed his servants who presented his present to say **“They are your servant Jacob’s. It is a present sent to my lord Esau; and behold, he also is behind us.”**
  - b) And in addition to that, he bows down before Esau seven times as you can see in verse 3 of chapter 33...
  - c) Jacob is making it very clear that he is relinquishing any right to rule over Esau or to claim lordship over him.

B. The reconciliation that follows is absolutely beautiful!

1. Esau completely melts under Jacob’s show of good will toward him...
  - a. I love the way Robert Candlish, a Scottish minister, describes it and so I quote him in full:
    - Esau’s conduct is irresistibly affecting—the simple, artless manner in which it is narrated only adds to the charm. The man breaks down under the impulse of fraternal emotion; “Esau ran to meet him.” After a separation of more than twenty years, during which few, if any messages could be interchanged, he sees his long-estranged and long-lost twin-brother again. He sees him drawing near, in an attitude of confidence and friendship, soliciting his favourable regard; not presuming on any right which past events—the divine oracle and the paternal benediction—may be supposed to have given him; nor on the other hand shrinking and hanging back as if he were afraid or ashamed—but coming, as brother to brother, younger brother to elder brother, seeking only reconciliation and peace. The generous soul of Esau is touched. All the wrong he thinks he has received—all the wrath he has been nursing—all is on the instant forgotten. An unarmed man, at the head of a number of unarmed men and

women and children and flocks and herds is casting himself on his pity and honour. The brother with whom his days of pleasant childhood were spent, is at his feet....The brothers are twin children once more—and they wept.

- b. There is no reason to doubt that Esau was initially coming with a readiness to fight, to show Jacob who was boss...
  - You don't bring 400 men with you just to keep you company!
  - But Jacob wins his heart by yielding to him as his lord.
2. How sweet is the embrace of peace...
  - **Verse 5: But Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept.**
  - **Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! (Psalm 133:1)...**
  - Peace is such a marvellous thing when it is won!
    - No longer are these brothers out to get one another—now they are friends and protectors of one another.
    - The war is over, the brothers are united in peace and good will.

TRANS> My brothers and sisters, this is what you are to pursue with all people by the grace of God!

C. All of this is the LORD's doing!

1. Peace is one of the ways that He preserves His church in the world...
  - He enables us to make peace with our enemies—precious peace—so that they do not even want to destroy us anymore.
  - It is one of His sweetest ways of preserving us...better than just making them afraid of us...
2. Understand that it was the LORD who worked in Jacob so that he would pursue peace in this way—it is God who works in you so that you will pursue peace.
  - a. Jacob was a different man than he had been 20 years before...
    - He had faith now that the LORD was with him and that the Lord would bless him...
      - He did not need to hold on to his blessing of sheep and goats and camels, nor did he have to demand the place of lordship over his brother.
    - All because of God's gracious work, we are brought to see that our place in this world is the place alongside of Jesus as servants to others!
      - We go from making demands as young immature believers to presenting ourselves as servants to our neighbours and our enemies for Jesus sake.
        - This is the work of God!
        - This is the way of men who have wrestled with God and have been broken so that they are in God's hands, trusting in his blessing instead of fighting with God and demanding things.

- b. Some have questioned Jacob's motives here...
  - Men will always do that when you make peace...
    - "You are just doing that because you are afraid and don't trust God,"
    - "You are doing that just because of guilt,"
  - And I am quite sure that Jacob had a mixture of motives, just like you do when you reconcile with someone...
    - You do it partly because you know God wants it, partly because it is not pleasant to have division with others, partly because you are afraid of an enemy and how they might harm you, or perhaps because you want something from them...
      - but in one way, none of that matters—
      - God uses you with all your mixed up motives, good and bad, to initiate peace.
        - You are never perfect and pure, but by God's grace you do the right thing and pursue peace and God grants it.
- 3. And understand that it was also the LORD who worked in Esau so that his heart was turned to accept Jacob.
  - Jacob recognised that this was so—he knew that it was an answer to prayer!
    - And that made this reconciliation all the more sweet so that he could say honestly to Esau: **I have seen your face as though I had seen the face of God, and you were pleased with me.**
  - You ought to give God the glory when He makes even your enemies to be at peace with you.

TRANS> But there is something to be careful about when we make peace with someone—especially a profane man like Esau.

- Remember that I am using the word *profane* in the Biblical sense of a man who does not fear God or have regard for eternal things...
  - He does not seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, but the things of this world.

## II. But we see that the LORD not only gives His people peace, but also purity.

A. What is the threat to Jacob's purity (and ours when we make peace)?

1. It is that Esau proposes a brotherly alliance.
  - a. His proposal is recorded in verse 12:
    - **Gen 33:12: Then Esau said, "Let us take our journey; let us go, and I will go before you."**
    - Now that they have made peace, Esau is desirous to have Jacob in his company—they will be stronger together—
      - and really it seems that Esau is a little worried about Jacob and wants to protect him—
      - because when Jacob declines to follow along after him, Esau offers to leave some of his men with Jacob (as you can see in verse 15)!

- b. There is no reason to question Esau's sincerity...
    - Esau is a very straight forward man who is not given to deception.
      - He is very open and direct.
      - If he had been suspicious of Jacob and trying to control him, (as some people suggest) he would not have allowed Jacob to separate from him as he did.
        - Esau obviously was in a superior position to Jacob at this time as far as the power that he possessed.
  - c. So what we have here is a very kind and generous offer...and that is what makes it especially dangerous.
    - When you have successful generous people around you who make peace with you and want to help you and work with you...
      - It is a most desirable thing to accept their help—you certainly don't want to offend them—and besides, they are generous and have a lot to offer you.
      - Sometimes, in fact, the men of this world can be more generous and kind and helpful to us than our fellow believers—it is true.
    - I have seen young men and young women make a wreckage of their faith because of attraction to an unbeliever.
      - They may be the nicest, kindest, most attractive person in the world, but how can you make a life together with them when they are not pursuing Christ?
      - It is terrible—you can't even pray with them—you can't speak of your love for Christ and your desires for His kingdom—not, at least, with them as someone who really cares about these things.
        - And what will become of your children?
2. What is the danger of an alliance with Esau?
- a. It is that Esau does not seek—and is not interested in God's kingdom.
    - 1) He is the self-made man of the world.
      - As he says to Jacob when at first refusing his gift, "I have enough, my brother; keep what you have for yourself."
      - And he means that—he has four hundred men under his command as an army—how many more were looking after things at home!
      - He is happy and self-satisfied, successful and diligent and generous, without the LORD, and that makes it very dangerous for Jacob to align with him.
    - 2) Jacob, you see, was looking for the city whose builder and maker is God, eternal in the heavens.
      - He and Esau were going in different directions. They cannot walk together.
      - Even now, there was a clear problem—Esau had moved to Seir, yet God had promised to bless Jacob in Canaan...



- For Jacob to go to Seir would be to trade the blessing of Esau's worldly prosperity for the eternal city of God!

b. Think about the danger of a business alliance with an unbeliever...

- 1) Suppose you run a store together—they may want to open the store on the Lord's Day, but you cannot do that...
  - You will not be able to pray together or seek the will of God—look at what will make your business pleasing to Him.
  - They have no interest in pleasing the LORD if they do not know Him.
- 2) Another similar purity issue would be taking (or keeping) a job that would compromise your faith.
  - Perhaps it is a job that moves you out of reach of a faithful church.
    - Why would you take such job?
  - Or maybe it is a job where you are required to lie or to cheat in some way.
    - Why would you sell out your good conscience before God for that?
    - Better to be dirt-poor with a good conscience than cut off from your Lord because of guilt!

B. But the LORD graciously guards His servants from such alliances.

1. I don't mean to say that He never allows us in the hardness of our hearts to enter into them, but I mean that if we are His, we will not at last be ruined by them.

- We may indeed have very hard lessons to learn and we may have to pay a very high price,
  - For example, we may lose our children to the devil or suffer some other great loss (like David did when he married more than one wife).
  - but if we are His true sons He will chasten us and restore us.

2. But very often, the LORD keeps us from ever making such alliances, and that is far better!

a. So He does here with Jacob.

1) For some reason—and we don't know all of his reasons, Jacob does not consent to this alliance with Esau.

a) You can see how Jacob, in a rather gracious way, declines Esau's advances.

- He is not blunt or ugly—surely he appreciated the generous offer and he does not want to destroy the peace that has just been formed.
  - But he makes what seems a rather lame excuse—that he would slow his brother down because of the children and the young and nursing animals among his flocks.
- Esau must have recognised this as a kind attempt on Jacob's part to refuse him, for he does not argue...

b) But as I said, Esau seems to be genuinely concerned about his brother because he offers the protection of some of his men...

- Again, Jacob is very kind in his refusal, stating that it is quite enough for him that Esau has accepted him.

- That this is what has filled his heart with delight...
  - He says, **what need is there? Let me find favour in the sight of my lord.**
  - And Esau now moves on.
- c) What a fine example of gracious refusal this is!
  - There is no reason to be angular and harsh when such offers are made—a gracious, yet firm decline is the perfect way to go.
- 2) But what were Jacob's motives for declining?
  - Once again, his motives were probably mixed....
  - a) Surely he considered the fact that he would be living in Seir instead of Canaan.
    - Hopefully, this was one of his greatest motivations.
  - b) Very likely, he, being an independent sort of man, was not really interested in coming under Esau's authority...
    - He had called Esau *lord* to show that he was not claiming the dominion that his father Isaac had bestowed on him...
      - but he was not really interested in living under Esau's rule.
  - c) It is possible that being a judicious man, Jacob was also afraid that the alliance would not remain peaceable.
    - He could foresee that although reconciliation had been made, the relationship between them was fragile and could easily be disrupted.
- There may have been other reasons as well...
- b. But the point is that the LORD was in this.
  - It was He who worked in Jacob so that he did not yield to this temptation because the LORD had plans for Jacob!
    - He preserved Jacob from an alliance that would have compromised his purity.
  - God has all sorts of ways of doing that.
    - Sometimes He works in our heart so that we refuse, but sometimes he uses circumstances...
      - I have known situations in which a young believer's heart was attracted to an unbeliever, only to have the unbeliever move away just in the nick of time.
      - I think in my case, I was guarded as a young man from a very dangerous attachment by my shyness and insecurity...
        - It was not that I was wise or that my heart was pure that I avoided certain relationships, but it was my insecurity...
        - And now I can see what a blessing that insecurity was!

TRANS> So you see then how peace (getting along well with unbelievers which is a blessing from God) can put us in danger of compromising our purity,

- but our gracious Lord works in us that we might continue in holiness before Him.

But peace and purity is not all that our LORD gives us as His people to keep us on the right path...

### III. Our loving Father also gives us prosperity in keeping with His wisdom.

A. We now see that the LORD has prospered Jacob's journey, bringing him into the land of Canaan!

1. This is what the LORD had promised Jacob that He would do...
  - a. At Bethel and again at Padan Aram, He had promised that He would keep him safe and bring him back again!
    - In Gen 28:15, we are told what the LORD said at Bethel: **“Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.”**
    - And then in Genesis 31:3, we are told how God called Jacob to return, promising that He would look after him, for we read: **Then the LORD said to Jacob, “Return to the land of your fathers and to your family, and I will be with you.”**
  - b. And now he is there, safely!
    - Verse 17 tells us that he builds a house and booths or cattle stalls for his livestock at Succoth—
    - Verse 18 tells us how he then comes safely to Shechem, which, as it says, is in Canaan...
      - Some translators see translate the word translated *safely* in the NKJV as a place name—*Shalem* which means peace and safety...
      - But I think in either case, the idea is that Jacob is brought safely to Canaan!
2. And as those who have been following the story of Jacob, we realise what an amazing thing it is that Jacob is now safely in Canaan.
  - It is just as amazing as the fact that you are in the Kingdom of God—if indeed you are in Jesus Christ!
    - You are there only because God has kept you!
  - a. We have seen all the dangers Jacob has been in—
    - with Esau's threats that forced him to leave Canaan in the first place;
    - with Laban's deception and trickery that had kept him in Haran for so long and would have kept him longer...
    - with Laban's pursuit of him when he did depart that was only prevented by divine intervention...
    - with the threat of Esau upon his return which we have just seen quelled...
    - and with the most dangerous threat of all, with the Lord Himself opposing him at the border until Jacob was broken and clung to Him for blessing.
  - It is our gracious God that preserves us and keeps us in His way!
    - There would be no church of Jesus Christ if it were not so!
  - b. Jacob has so much to be thankful for...and so do you!

- It is the LORD who keeps you in His care all through life if you are His child—He keeps you in His righteous kingdom—all the way!
    - How great is His grace and kindness toward us!
3. And you see what Jacob does in his prosperity from the LORD.
    - a. He builds an altar to the LORD and he names it El Elohe Israel—which means, “God the God of Israel.”
      - He is rejoicing that God has been his God—remember that God gave him the name *Israel*...
      - Jacob had been broken and had become Israel when he entirely put himself in the LORD’s hands for blessing.
      - I remind you that this is what each and every one of you needs to do too—
        - stop fighting with God and demanding that He do things your way—the only thing to demand is His mercy—His promised blessing.
    - b. Jacob remembers that God is the God of Israel—
      - That He is the God who has blessed him and brought him back to the land that he might inherit the blessing...
      - It is the LORD who has prospered him.
      - Thus you too should honour and acknowledge the LORD in all your ways...
        - Jacob is so clear about this now—even as shown by the way he said to Esau that both his possessions and his family were from the gracious hand of the LORD...
          - and now that his safety in the land is from Him.

TRANS> It would be nice to end there...

- But there is a blot in Jacob’s actions, one issue—a fly in the ointment—
  - A blot that reminds us that we are never perfected in this life and that we must be careful, especially when God prospers us.

B. In his prosperity, Jacob seems to become negligent of his duty!

1. It was at Bethel that the LORD had met with him, and it was to Bethel that the LORD had called him to return...
  - It was at the stone at Bethel that Jacob had vowed to come and worship the LORD as his God and give a tenth of all that he had.
    - How is it then that Jacob is in Shechem?
    - How is it that he spends not a few years there (for Dinah grew up from the age of seven upon his arrival to a girl of marriageable age) instead of going to Bethel?
      - How is it that he buys land in Shechem and builds an altar *there* when he had been called to Bethel?
2. There seems to be no other explanation but that in his prosperity, in his safe arrival to Canaan, Jacob had become careless!

- a. It is so easy to assume that all is well in your walk with God when everything is going so well—you have peace and purity and prosperity in His kingdom—surely, all is well.
    - But not when you are neglecting what God had called you to do...
    - Still, it seems to be okay and you are prospering.
  - b. Foolish, foolish, presumption!
    - We will see next week the trouble that comes to Jacob's house because of his sojourn in Shechem!
3. The LORD is very kind and very gracious to us,
- He keeps us and looks after us, but sometimes when He does, we become negligent.
    - Be careful about this my brothers in sisters!
    - Do not think that you will escape His chastening hand if you go on neglecting your duty!
    - He loves you too much to let you go on in your presumption and He will deal with you as a Father who chastens His children.

TRANS> But that is for next time...

**Conclusion:** Today we have seen how our gracious LORD...

- often gives us peace with our enemies so they do not destroy us,
- how He preserves our purity so that we continue in His way,
- and how He prospers us, bringing us safely to His kingdom.

Let us stand and give thanks to Him!