

Genesis in Biblical Perspective: The Gospel of Christ from Genesis – The Birth of a Nation

Genesis 29:31–30:24

By [Dr. Harry Reeder III](#)

Let's look in Genesis 29. This is the Word of God. It's the truth. Genesis 29:31–35 says

[31] When the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb, but Rachel was barren. [32] And Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben, for she said, "Because the LORD has looked upon my affliction; for now my husband will love me." [33] She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Because the LORD has heard that I am hated, he has given me this son also." And she called his name Simeon. [34] Again she conceived and bore a son, and said, "Now this time my husband will be attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." Therefore his name was called Levi. [35] And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "This time I will praise the LORD." Therefore she called his name Judah. Then she ceased bearing.

The grass withers, the flower fades, the Word of our God abides forever and by His grace and mercy may His Word be preached for you.

Do you know someone whom you're convinced that they will never be saved? You think that they'll never get saved because they are so bad. They just can't seem to get it. No matter what you say to them they miss it. Is there anyone you know like that, that maybe you're tempted to cross off? Have you looked at situations and become despairing because you think to yourself that there is no way any good can come out of this? I think this is just beyond God blessing in any way. Is there any situation that you are despairing of today?

I'm so glad for the opportunity to preach through the Bible. I'll confess to you this would not be a text that I would normally choose to preach from but when you're preaching through a book expositively you have to handle all the Scripture and all the Scripture is profitable. There are some amazing truths in texts like this. I have read this many times and yes we see the twelve tribes that come from this but there is so much more. I love the Bible that I preach from because not only

did the Holy Spirit inspire it, it's sufficient and inerrant but it has so much integrity. It is so true and reliable.

It gives me things I wouldn't know. For instance, when I come to a text where we are studying the life of Jacob, God says to me "I want you to know that before the foundation of the world and all eternity My electing love was placed upon Jacob, not because he deserved it but My sovereign love was placed upon him. Jacob I have loved." When I look at Jacob I am so glad the Bible is as honest as it is because I am just sitting there wondering who would love Jacob. He's deceitful, lurking in the shadows, always crafting a deal, uses and abuses people and I'm kind of tired of preaching about Jacob because I just keep seeing myself here. I also see that God's grace is so glorious. God can save people that we don't think will ever be saved. He saved me. God can fulfill His promises even when we think there is no way in this situation that God's promises can actually be fulfilled here. Yet God keeps bringing that up to bear upon us.

There have been two themes we have studied in the life of Jacob. One thing that is very clear is that we see Jacob as he is and we have learned that God's grace is greater than our sin but sin still has a cost to it. You're forgiven but there are consequences. It hurts your life when you willfully sin, even if you're saved. God may restrain it from hurting as much as it could but it will hurt your life, families, relationships, the body of Christ and I ought not treat sin in a cavalier way because I know I'm saved by grace. On the contrary I ought to hate it that much more.

The second theme it tells me is this. As heinous as sin is and all the consequences that come with it, I'm so grateful that God's grace is so glorious that He can save anyone – chief of sinners and all kinds of people. He can get His promises fulfilled when we think there is no hope for anything. That's what Jacob's life keeps shouting and shouting and shouting. Let's start looking at this text.

This text is pretty easy to preach from and there are a couple of ways it can be divided up. I like to divide this like a three by four. My daddy used to tell me he was going to take a two by four to me but this one is a three by four. There are three sections in which we get to see four sons born. In two sections four sons born and in one section there are three sons and a daughter born. There are three sections where four children are being amassed here so when you get to the end you have eleven sons and one daughter and a promise of one more. It takes place over a period of seven years, the second seven years. Remember, Jacob put himself into indentured servitude in order to get Rachel and Laban pulled a bait and switch on him and got Leah instead. So he signed up for another seven years and got both of them and willingly became a polygamist. All of these sons are born during that seven years and the daughter is born after the seven years but they are all included here for us.

Here at Briarwood during our baptismal service the father, representing his leadership will hand me the covenant child and then I'll hand the child back to the mother acknowledging the nurturing role of a mother after I baptize them. The father will name the child and the blessing. In this text you'll see the amazing shrinking man in this study. Jacob is the amazing shrinking man in this text. We got a little spiritual pulse out of Jacob when he was at Bethel and he saw the ladder from heaven although he wasn't converted yet we could see something working. His spiritual blood pressure goes down to about sixty over forty in this text. He is almost comatose here. However he doesn't name his children. He lets his wives do that. He basically becomes the sire of children in this text. He is almost like an item that is being bartered for. In the mothers naming the children we get some amazing insights into their spiritual condition and perspective on life, their family, children and the Lord Himself.

Each section begins with a narrative editorial comment. Here is the first comment. Genesis 29:31 says *[31] When the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb, but Rachel was barren.* So what do we know from this comment? We know that Rachel is loved and Leah is hated. We know that Leah is the one whom God mercifully opened the womb and gave her children while Rachel, the loved one, did not get the children here in the beginning.

As we will see, all of the sons names sound like a Hebrew word in order to get something across. The first son is Reuben and it sounds like the Hebrew word for God sees or God looks upon. Genesis 29:32 says *[32] And Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben, for she said, "Because the LORD has looked upon my affliction; for now my husband will love me."* She is acknowledging that God has looked upon her affliction and that the child is a gift to her from God's mercy, but she doesn't praise the Lord. She thinks this child will get her husband's affection and allegiance. That is the way she looks at her child.

Her second son is named Simeon and that name sounds like the Hebrew word for God hears or God has heard. What does this mean? It means she has been praying and she acknowledges that God has heard but again she looks at this child as a way to get her husband, his affection and allegiance. Genesis 29:33 says *[33] She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Because the LORD has heard that I am hated, he has given me this son also." And she called his name Simeon.*

Then her third son is named Levi which sounds like the Hebrew word that means attached. Now she thinks that because of these three sons that her husband will be attached to her and not to Rachel any longer. Genesis 29:34 says *[34] Again she conceived and bore a son, and said, "Now this time my husband will be attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." Therefore his name was called Levi.* God will appoint the tribe of Levi for what purposes? It will be the priests to serve in the temple with absolute devotion. They will be attached to

ministry and the temple. Leah sees this as a way to get her husband attached to her but God says He is going to use them to be attached to ministry and the benefit of other.

Then she has a fourth son named Judah which sounds like a Hebrew word that means worship or praise. This time we seem to have some progress. Genesis 29:35 says *[35] And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "This time I will praise the LORD." Therefore she called his name Judah. Then she ceased bearing.* She has acknowledged God. She's praying. She has seen the hand of God. We're not too encouraged by the way she sees her children as instruments to get her husband's affection and allegiance but here she doesn't mention that at all. She sees that Judah has come from the Lord and she decides to praise the Lord, seemingly losing some hope for Jacob. So there are the first four children.

Now let's look at the second four where it starts with an editorial comment of how Rachel is observing what is going on. By the way, if you're having eleven kids in seven years it's obvious we have some overlaps here, right? Don't ask me to sort that out because I don't have the slightest idea how that worked out but we know there are some overlaps to have eleven sons in seven years. Genesis 30:1–13 says

[1] When Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, she envied her sister. She said to Jacob, "Give me children, or I shall die!" [2] Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel, and he said, "Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?" [3] Then she said, "Here is my servant Bilhah; go in to her, so that she may give birth on my behalf, that even I may have children through her." [4] So she gave him her servant Bilhah as a wife, and Jacob went in to her. [5] And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. [6] Then Rachel said, "God has judged me, and has also heard my voice and given me a son." Therefore she called his name Dan. [7] Rachel's servant Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son. [8] Then Rachel said, "With mighty wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister and have prevailed." So she called his name Naphtali. [9] When Leah saw that she had ceased bearing children (It looks as though Rachel has ascended to the conjugal rights and is not allowing Leah and Jacob together anymore but Leah will do something about that a little later.), she took her servant Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife. [10] Then Leah's servant Zilpah bore Jacob a son. [11] And Leah said, "Good fortune has come!" so she called his name Gad. [12] Leah's servant Zilpah bore Jacob a second son. [13] And Leah said, "Happy am I! For women have called me happy." So she called his name Asher.

Now let's walk through these four sons. So here is what has happened. Leah has these four sons out of God's mercy because she is hated and Rachel is loved. As these sons come, she names them, acknowledges and praises God but there is

this use of the sons in terms of the affection and allegiance of my husband. Rachel sees that her sister is having children and wants them as well because of envy. So she is now willing to multiply polygamy by now starting the practice of concubines. Has this ever happened before where a loved wife that didn't bear children uses her maidservant? It happened with Sarah. I am sure Rachel must have known about that story and that didn't turn out too good the first time, but that doesn't stop her. The reason she wants the children is because of her envy of her sister and the four sons she has had.

The first thing Rachel does is blame Jacob. Then Jacob makes a wonderfully, correct, theological assertion, "This isn't me. It's God's issue. Don't come to me, go to God." He may have been theologically correct but his people skills were extremely lacking at this moment. He could have gone to God for his wife. He could have talked to his wife about her perspective on children and her sister, but he checked out – the shrinking man. He makes the theological statement, lays it on her and then disappears until Bilhah shows up. Then Jacob has two more children through her. As soon as he has these two children, Rachel puts these two children on her side of the ledger and says "My son, (opposed to the four sons from Leah) through a surrogate trumps all four." Rachel then names this first son Dan meaning that God has made a judgment and has put me over Leah by giving me this son through this surrogate Bilhah. I'm not sure about all the logic behind it but that's how she saw it. Dan means judgment, judge or prevailing.

What tribe will most of the judges come from in Israel? Most will be produced from the tribe of Dan. Interestingly, in the midst of all of this, these woman are being prophetic and don't know it with the naming of these sons. Bilhah has another son and he is called Naphtali which means wrestling where Rachel has wrestled with her sister for a child and that means that I, Rachel am the victor. I now have two through a surrogate and my two absolutely vindicate me – judgment, Dan – and have wrestled with my sister and I'm the winner. My two surrogate children trump her four sons. That is Rachel's perspective.

Leah who we left who had been praising God through the four children with Judah the last one, now gets caught up in a web of bitterness and envy. When she sees what Rachel has done with Bilhah she intends to do the same thing with her maidservant, Zilpah. So Leah gives Zilpah to Jacob and she has two children. Leah names the first one Gad which sounds like the Hebrew word which means 'good fortune.' Leah thinks, "How about me. I now have a surrogate son which trumps your surrogate son along with the four sons that have come biologically through me." Leah names Zilpah's second son Asher which means 'happy am I.' She does that because all the women are talking about her now. Now I have six children – four from me and two from my surrogate and everyone is talking about me. I'm happy because all the women envy me. Boy have I triumphed over my sister. She thought she could get around me.

Now we come to the third section. It also begins with an editorial comment. Genesis 30:14–15 says [14] *In the days of wheat harvest Reuben went and found mandrakes in the field and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes."* [15] *But she said to her, "Is it a small matter that you have taken away my husband? (Rachel has obviously rescinded the conjugal rights of Jacob from Leah) Would you take away my son's mandrakes also?" Rachel said, "Then he may lie with you tonight in exchange for your son's mandrakes."*

It's obvious that this thing has really uncorked something in Leah's heart because I'm having a hard time understanding when she says "You have taken my husband and now you want my mandrakes." There is something that is not proportionate here. Mandrakes were considered a love fruit in the Middle East, an aphrodisiac, an intoxicant. It was supposed to send you into romantic moods of not only intimacy but also potency. So here is Reuben who is probably four or five years old who has brought these mandrakes in and Rachel sees them and has plans for them. Leah now says "you have my husband and now you want my mandrakes!?" There is not a lot of logic here but sin never makes sense and certainly bitterness never makes sense. It is obvious that we have uncorked some bitterness here with Leah. So Rachel makes a deal with Leah for the mandrakes by having the conjugal rights with Jacob. Leah takes the deal. Genesis 30:16–24 says

[16] When Jacob came from the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him and said, "You must come in to me, for I have hired you with my son's mandrakes." So he lay with her that night. [17] And God listened to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son. [18] Leah said, "God has given me my wages because I gave my servant to my husband." So she called his name Issachar. (Leah had hired Jacob out and this was part of her son was part of her wages, hence his name.) [19] And Leah conceived again, and she bore Jacob a sixth son. [20] Then Leah said, "God has endowed me with a good endowment; now my husband will honor me, because I have borne him six sons." So she called his name Zebulun. [21] Afterward (meaning after this seven year period) she bore a daughter and called her name Dinah. (That will be an interesting study in Genesis 34 about Dinah.) [22] Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb. [23] She conceived and bore a son and said, "God has taken away my reproach." [24] And she called his name Joseph, saying, "May the LORD add to me another son!"

So now we have the eleventh son with the promise of a twelfth son which will come from Rachel. So we start off with Rachel barren, Leah hated, Leah bears the children, Rachel is loved but is barren. We end up with Leah in ascendancy with Jacob by a deal she struck and now Rachel bears a child, Joseph, with a promise of one more. That last one will be named Benjamin. Now we have the seed base of the nation of Israel, the twelve tribes and the daughter, Dinah.

I'd like to give you three takeaways from this interesting text. The first takeaway from the text is a warning. Unrestrained sin creates chaotic lives and families, even in those who have the promise of electing grace. Unrestrained sin brings division and chaos in the lives of families. Here is a narrative that supports a Biblical truth. Think of the laws of physics, the laws that God has put into nature. There are some spiritual physics out there with probably a better name but let me give you one of those laws that God has established.

First I'd like to look at Galatians 6 with a couple of examples here. Here Paul brings conclusions with exhortations. Galatians 6:6–9 says *[6] Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches. [7] Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. [8] For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. [9] And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.*

Here the exhortation is, sow that which is gracious and good and don't grow weary because eventually God will bring the crop in. At the same time He reminds you that if you sow to the sinful nature you'll also bring a crop in then. It is what is called today GIGO – the positive to that is grace in, grace out, the negative to that is garbage in, garbage out. A life of grace sowing for His glory produces the products of grace. God will bless that faithfulness to whatever degree He chooses to. The negative side is that there is a lot of garbage that has gone into the lives of the people of this text. You are looking at a text of a shrinking man, vindictive women, a chaotic family and half-lives that think idolatry is the answer.

Here is an absolute warning. We are saved by grace and many times by God's grace He mitigates the consequences of our faltering sin, He works in us and uses our sin to teach us but we should never look at sin as a trivial matter in our family, our marriages, and our relationships. Walk through with me the people in this text. There is one whose name hasn't been mentioned in this text but he is all over it. His name is Laban. We have four people in this text with three named and one not named, not counting the children. The three that are named I believe will all eventually be converted and will know the Lord of glory. They are not yet converted but clearly the Lord is working on them.

There is one that is not named in the text but is in the text and I don't think he is ever converted. His name is Laban. What did Laban do? He used two daughters to barter for personal gain from Jacob. What do his daughters do? They use their children to barter for personal gain. One hopes that her children will give her, her husband's affections. The other one hopes that her children will help her prevail over her sister. The children become tools of bitterness, rivalry and faction instead of blessings from the Lord to give Him glory. When our hearts aren't right, even good things like marriages, spouses and children, can be turned to idolatry.

Laban sowed it and now it was sown again with their children. We will see how these children respond to life later as their mothers have sown this into their lives and patterned it into life. Here are two daughters who become pawns for Laban's personal gain and then the daughters use their children as pawns for their personal gain.

What about Leah? Here we can see God working. Leah is praying. She acknowledges God's mercy. She isn't talking about the idols of the day but she does pray and acknowledge God yet when you look at little closer you see a woman who uses her children for the idolatry of her marriage and her husband. Her children become an instrument for what she really thinks will make life – the affection of her husband. God's love and mercy for her is not enough, even the gift of four sons is not enough. Her life is only meaningful if Jacob says she is meaningful. It is the idolatry of a husband. Marriage is good for it is a gift from God. Marriage is an asset from God but we can take good things and turn them into idols. Leah then slips into the idolatry of a husband and uses her children as instruments for that idolatry to be fulfilled. Then she descends into the bitterness that her sister has promoted. Finally the husband she wants attention from, she ends up buying in a business deal for mandrakes. Then when she gets a son from him after that deal she just calls him her 'hire' – the son of her hire and wages.

Rachel certainly has the love of her husband but not only is the love of God not enough, the love of her husband is not enough. She basically said to her husband, "you may love me but I want children." So she has the idolatry of children but the amazing thing is she doesn't have the idolatry of children because she wants to nurture children and give birth to them, but she has the idolatry of children because of the bitterness toward her sister. She wants to defeat and ridicule her sister so she is willing to multiply polygamy, disdain the love of her husband and she is willing to use her children just for one purpose – to ascend to the heights of defeating her sister.

What about Jacob? First of all it is amazingly distasteful to us when we see a man who will love the one woman and it's enough that he has committed the sin of polygamy but clearly he has two wives and the Bible says that he loved Rachel and hated Leah. Jacob will still use Leah sexually and the woman he loves is barren. Does that sound familiar? Was Rebekah barren? Yes. Was Sarah barren? Yes. What did Abraham and Isaac do? They prayed but not Jacob. He is prayerless and praiseless. Notice the theological statement that he makes is correct when he says "God is the One who rewards the womb" but there is an absolute absence of leadership of caring for, exhorting, challenging, encouraging, leading and having compassion for a wife, who is caught up in this bitterness cycle. He becomes the shrinking man in the text with no leadership. Finally Jacob is reduced to an item for bargaining. Here is a man who bargained fourteen years of indentured servitude for one woman, Rachel. That woman then bargains him away for mandrakes.

Our sin is atrocious and while we thank God that He overcomes our sin, we're forgiven and redeemed for it, we ought to ask Him, even though we know we're not going to be sinless, "God help me sin less. I don't want to sow sin in my life, my family or my relationships." Now let's look at our Sure Hope. Our sure Hope is God's grace. God is still working. God will bring Jacob to Himself, Rachel to Himself and Leah to Himself. Here are people who are going to be brought into this covenant, personal relationship with the Living God and you can even see pieces of Him working in this distasteful text with chaotic families and half-lives. So over here is sin and we understand sin and its cost. Over here is grace where God's grace is greater than all our sin. O marvelous amazing grace! There is our Hope, not ourselves, but God's grace that overcomes our sin. There will be saved sinners, redeemed sinners and He even transforms them so that where their vices stand so obvious they can be turned around and their vices can become the virtues of ministry by God's transforming power.

Recently when this Virginia Tech homicide hit the news media it became an annoyance to everything and everybody because of how much it was covered on the air and in production but more than that you got a chance to see the current, secular, dominant world and life view. An evil thing happened and we could not say it was evil. Now perhaps a couple of people did but we couldn't say it. We have not category for evil. For instance we would say "How could he do that?" That is a dead give away that there is no Christian world and life view.

In a Christian world and life view we understand how a man can do that. What we marvel at is why it doesn't happen more often and the reason why is because God's grace restrains evil people from being as evil as they could be or would be. God restrains us. The other thing is except for the grace of God I could have been that person. Do you really believe that you were born dead in your sins? That drastically effects the way you minister to other people and care for other people, because it takes self-righteousness out of the picture. We are horrified at a sin but we reach a sinner because we know the same heart Hitler was born with is the same heart I was born with, but God by His grace gave me a new heart.

Because we didn't have a category for evil, what did we do? Five minutes after the report we immediately had to excuse the presence of evil by blaming someone else. We try to blame the victims saying "I believe he was probably bullied and ignored by people and so that's why he did it." They went back to his neighborhood to try and blame his neighborhood. Then we went to the President of the University and campus police. We blamed the respondents. Why are we attempting to scathingly denounce people like a president has a plan for a 33 ten minute homicide rampage packed away in his desk somewhere? Then we start saying "Why wasn't he put away somewhere because he would never talk to people? Why didn't we get him into therapy or drug him?" We have no category and we have no hope so we have to blame the system and blame other people.

You understand where evil comes from and you have a Hope. God's grace is greater than all of our sin and even people who can commit those kinds of acts, God's grace is greater than their sin because it's greater than my sin. God's grace changed me and it can change him. Do I really believe a guy like that can be saved? Absolutely. Go look at the greatest King of Israel. He is a murderer and adulterer and his name was David. Go look at the man's life who is writing the book of Genesis, Moses. He is a two time murderer. Go look at the greatest teacher and evangelist this world has ever had. He is a religious terrorist. He killed Christians when his name was Saul who became the Apostle Paul. Look at me and look at yourself. God's grace is glorious and great. There is our Sure Hope.

There is something else we know. God's grace is even at work, we call it His Providence, in the midst of a broken world where there is evil, God says all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28). In the frowning of the circumstances, there is the smile of God's grace here somewhere and I can trust Him.

I want to give you just one little thread from the Virginia Tech incident. In 1994 Campus Outreach and a man named Neil, who had been discipled by a man named Mike, came up from Augusta, Georgia to Charlotte, North Carolina where he was a part of Christ Covenant Church and I had the privilege to be the pastor there at that time. We started Campus Outreach there in North Carolina. In 1995 a freshman soccer player at the University of North Carolina Charlotte came to Christ under that Campus Outreach ministry. He was nurtured and discipled under that ministry in that church and eventually came on staff with Campus Outreach in 1999. Last year he went and started his own ministry at Virginia Tech. He started Bible studies this year at the very hall and dormitory of the first two murdered. You would not believe the conversations and ministry he is having all over that dormitory right now. There is a thread of God's Providence.

How did Mike disciple Neil who discipled Matt who sent him there? How did that Christ Covenant Church get there? There had to be people who loved Jesus at a place called Briarwood. Years ago they started a ministry at Samford. Tom oversaw that ministry and then he worked with Curtis who discipled Mike and that's how it all got started. Mike went to Briarwood and then went over to Augusta and discipled Neil. Do you see the thread of God's tapestry, the thread of His Providence working? I'm just picking one piece of it out. We don't even know the thousands of people who have been affected by that in unbelievable situations. There are many more threads. I haven't even pulled out the Reformed University Fellowship thread up there. I don't need to do that for you who are believers because you know that God is at work in a broken world. God is at work in the lives of people and there is your hope that God is going to do great things.

Here is one last thought. Here is the last takeaway. Here is this amazing thing that is happening. Jacob is in exile in a foreign land. When he comes back he will bring a nation, twelve sons and a daughter of the twelve tribes. He will come back with all kinds of wealth. In the next study you'll see how he gets all that wealth. Then he'll come back with all this wealth out of exile to the Promised Land. Who is writing this? Moses is writing this. Where have they been? They have been in exile. Now they are reading this where God took Jacob, brought him out with wealth back to the land, gave him a nation and we've been in exile for four hundred years in Egypt. We are coming through the wilderness and the plunder of the Egyptians is with us and God will bring us back to the land.

Don't stop there, because there is Someone greater than Jacob and His Name is Jesus. He has come into a foreign broken world. He has saved a people and is making a Royal Nation, a Kingdom from all the nations. He will bring it with the wealth of the glory of His Father to the glory of His Name. Now we're in exile right now. We're sojourners, we're aliens but we have Jesus, not Jacob. We have the Lord of Jacob and He will bring us home as surely as He brings Jacob to Himself and builds a nation. Please trust in that Jesus. Love Him, serve Him and embrace Him. He is a beautiful Savior. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the privilege to be in Your Word and to worship You. Thank You for the privilege to study Your Word. God bring it home to our hearts. I don't know where you are right now but you've seen Jacob, Leah and Rachel and the Bible has been honest. So you be honest and say "Lord, I don't with anything. I just come to put my trust in Jesus. I know He can save me. His grace is sufficient." God we who know Jesus, while we have made that prayer of "Lord, I know I'm a sinner and I put my trust in Christ" Lord, help us walk in obedience, not because we do that to be saved, but we love our Savior, our life in the Lord, our witness and our family. We want to sow by the power of the Spirit and not by the flesh. O God, thank You that Your promises are sure and even in the midst of an evil and broken world Your Providence for Your people will cause all things to work together for good, so we trust You, not our chariots, not our horses, not our gods in this world, but we trust our Savior. O beautiful Savior, in Jesus' Name, Amen.

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