



The Sermon

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Genesis 30:25-43

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"Speckles of Unstoppable Providence"

TRANSCRIPT

It is really nice to be with you. And I want to ask you to turn in your Bibles, please, to Genesis chapter 30, Genesis chapter 30. You know, it's been a strange week, hasn't it, a special week, one of those weeks where we see so clearly, as we've just watched the news, that God is in control. And the Lord is able. There's not one part of this life, this society, where God's fingertips do not reach and have full influence over. But, you know, last week, God was in control last week, too. And He will continue to be in control, as we watch whatever unfolds over the next number of months, and reactions that will take place.

Please know, Christian, our God sits on His throne. Our God is able. And I think especially today after all that has taken place, it's wonderful we're going to have baptisms at the close of the service, because there's no more clear demonstration of God's active control and engagement in this world than seeing testimony to lives that have been transformed, individuals that have been pulled out of darkness into light, lives that were once dark, individuals that were once blind, individuals that were once dead, who are now alive in Christ, because our God is in full control. He's even in control of sheep breeding; and that's what we're going to see this morning in Genesis chapter 30. Strange segue, I know; but we'll see it.

Genesis chapter 30. Let me begin reading at verse 25, Genesis chapter 30, and reading from verse 25: "As soon as Rachel had borne Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, 'Send me away, that I may go to my own home and country. Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served you, that I may go, for you know the service that I have given you.' But Laban said to him, 'If I 5622 Dyer Street, Suite 200 | Dallas, Texas | 75206 | 214.972.9679 | TrinityBiblechurchofdallas.com

have found favor in your sight, I have learned by divination that the LORD has blessed me because of you. Name your wages, and I will give it.' Jacob said to him, 'You yourself know how I have served you, and how your livestock has fared with me. For you had little before I came, and it has increased abundantly, and the LORD has blessed you wherever I turned. But now when shall I provide for my own household also?' He said, 'What shall I give you?' Jacob said, 'You shall not give me anything. If you will do this for me, I will again pasture your flock and keep it: let me pass through all your flock today, removing from it every speckled and spotted sheep and every black lamb, and the spotted and speckled among the goats, and they shall be my wages. So my honesty will answer for me later, when you come to look into my wages with you. Every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats and black among the lambs, if found with me, shall be counted stolen.' 34 Laban said, 'Good! Let it be as you have said.' But that day Laban removed the male goats that were striped and spotted, and all the female goats that were speckled and spotted, every one that had white on it, and every lamb that was black, and put them in the charge of his sons. And he set a distance of three days' journey between himself and Jacob, and Jacob pastured the rest of Laban's flock.

"Then Jacob took fresh sticks of poplar and almond and plane trees, and peeled white streaks in them, exposing the white of the sticks. He set the sticks that he had peeled in front of the flocks in the troughs, that is, the watering places, where the flocks came to drink. And since they bred when they came to drink, the flocks bred in front of the sticks and so the flocks brought forth striped, speckled, and spotted. And Jacob separated the lambs and set the faces of the flocks toward the striped and all the black in the flock of Laban. He put his own droves apart and did not put them with Laban's flock. Whenever the stronger of the flock were breeding, Jacob would lay the sticks in the troughs before the eyes of the flock, that they might breed among the sticks, but for the feebler of the flock he would not lay them there. So the feebler would be Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's. Thus the man increased greatly and had large flocks, female servants and male servants, and camels and donkeys." Let's pray.

[Prayer] Heavenly Father, we know that Your Word is always right, is always good, and is always timely. And we pray and we ask, as we come to this ancient book and we come to this particularly strange passage, we ask, Lord, that You would give us insight; we ask, Lord, that You would speak; and we ask, Lord, that You would make us a people who are doers of the Word, not simply hearers. We ask, Lord, that You would remind us afresh that we have One who we worship, who is in full control. We pray that You would comfort our hearts, that You would encourage us to press forward,

indeed, Lord, that You would even prepare our hearts to rejoice as we later witness testimony to Your control and intervention into lives. So bless us during this time of study we ask. For it's in the name of Christ we ask it. Amen. [End]

Did you know there are a breed of sheep called Jacobs. I know. We have a young girl in our church and she is 16, and her hobby – this is very Irish – is breeding sheep; that's her hobby. And this particular year she has bred a breed of Jacobs, a little herd of Jacobs; they're strange. You can Google them later, don't get distracted now. They have that kind of pattern of a dairy cow, but on the fur of the sheep. They have two horns – double-horned. They're wonderfully beautiful, though strange to look at. And their name that has been given to them comes from this particular passage of Scripture: Jacobs. They look a little different. And we want to think about them a little bit this morning.

Fourteen years at least have passed at this particular point. Jacob, he had to flee home, he had to run away because his twin was seeking to murder him. He came with nothing. Remember in chapter 28 he is asleep on a pillow of rock. He comes with nothing, and he finds Uncle Laban. And Uncle Laban takes him in, and he begins to work for Laban. In time, Laban offers wages, but Jacob besought it with Rachel. He says he'll work and he'll serve for the sake of a marriage. And maybe because he worked so hard, he doesn't just get one marriage, he gets two out of it. And he works hard for 14 years. And he's had eleven sons and at least one daughter at this point.

And so Jacob wants to go home. Jacob was a homebird by nature, he love to be around the tents. He'd admired and yearned to be in the Promised Land. And, no doubt, he missed his mom. He was a mama's boy, and he wanted to be near her. Maybe knew that she was getting older and, at some point, wanted to see her before she passed away and introduce her to the grandchildren.

So, we read in verse 25, "As soon as Rachel had borne Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, 'Send me away, that I may go to my own home and country. Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served you, that I may go, for you know the service that I have given to you.'" Now Laban doesn't want him to go, not because he's going to miss his daughters, not because he's going to miss his grandchildren, but because he's prospered. In fact, he's prospered exponentially under Jacob's care and influence.

If you remember, back to Genesis 29, when Jacob first arrived in the land, all the other shepherds were kind of lounging around this big rock. They were waiting until enough of them were there that they would move this rock and water the sheep. And Jacob, in the midst of that, he's frustrated, because while they're lying around doing nothing, it seems like a waste of energy, it seems like certainly a waste of the work day. And though Jacob has many flaws – he has a lot of flaws – the one thing he had going for him was he had a good work ethic, and he worked hard. And Laban, who had very little, becomes very rich under the employment arrangement where Jacob would work for him.

Laban's rags to riches story wasn't simply due to the fact that Jacob worked hard, however. Rather, look at verse 27, verse 27: "But Laban said to him, 'If I find favor in your sight, I have learned by divination that the LORD has blessed me because of you.'" And notice the "LORD" is that capital L, that capital O, that capital R, that capital D: Yahweh, the God who has made covenant promises, the God who has promised, especially in chapter 28, to be with Jacob.

Laban is not one who worships Yahweh. In fact, in the next chapter we're going to read about his pretend gods getting stolen and smuggled away. Yet even this Pagan, Laban, looks around at what has happened to his herds, what has happened to his bank account, and he recognizes that what has taken place is not normal, that what has taken place has taken place because God is with Jacob, God is caring for Jacob. And Laban, because he's close to Jacob, has experienced the overflow of that blessing. He's benefitting because of God's commitment to Jacob.

And Jacob says as much as that. Look at verse 29: "Jacob said to him, 'You yourself know I have served you, and how your livestock has fared with me. For you had little before I came, and it has increased abundantly, and the LORD has blessed you wherever I turned.'" And so it's not surprising in verse 28 Laban says, "Name your price. My business has grown, so I'm going to do anything I can to keep you in employment with me. Name your price, and I'll give it."

Jacob's work has proved lucrative for Laban, and so he wants to keep him. And so Jacob proposes, "Well, I can take the stripes and the spotted sheep and goats." In that ancient world, in particular, goats were tended to be black and sheep tended to be white. There always was some that were

speckled, some that had marks, and they were less valuable. So in a sense, what Jacob is asking for here is, "Look, let me take the less valuable ones."

You think if the sacrificial system in the Old Testament: it was the lamb without spot or blemish, it was considered the most valuable. Well, Jacob says, "Look, I'll take the lesser valued ones, and that will be a way of ensuring what is mine and what is yours, it'll be easily identified. And that arrangement, had it taken place properly, well, it would have helped Jacob to get off the good start. But it also would have been extremely beneficial for Laban. Jacob's taking the second-class ones and the ones that tend to be born less, and Laban, that means, gets the premier league, the limousines, the best of the best. He's going to do really, really well in this arrangement, except Laban's a greedy man.

And I even after he has agreed to these terms, he immediately tries to manipulate the situation and exploit Jacob. Look at verse 35: "But that day Laban removed the male goats that were striped and spotted and all the female goats that were speckled and spotted, every one that had white on it, and every lamb that had black, and put them in the charge of his sons. And he set a distance of three days journey between himself and Jacob," that day, that day. You can picture this scene. The terms are decided, the handshake is done. It's not a gentleman's handshake, because Laban's involved. And so he shakes hands, and he goes out and he tries to monopolize the situation, and he puts this distance in between, trying to guarantee that his assets will succeed, that Jacob won't flourish.

Now back in Genesis chapter 12, God made promises to Abraham and his children that would come after him, and he said to them, in part, "Those who bless you, I will bless; and those who curse you, I will curse." And we know that, and it applies in this situation. And before, even though he wasn't a great man, as Laban had looked after Jacob, he had experienced tremendous blessing. But now as he becomes so dangerous and he seeks to exploit the situation, we know he is playing with fire, and we expect him to get burnt .

And so what happens is a strange account – and it is strange – in verses 37 to 43, where Jacob who has been stolen from, he seeks to, I guess, get on with the job. What can he do about that? He just has to work. He's got to work his way out of the situation. And he employs all his knowledge of breeding, and, I think, all the old wives' teals that he had heard over the

years from other local shepherds, he tries to bring them all together to his advantage.

Remember, the speckled and spotted were less valuable. So the shepherds had stories they told each other about how to avoid speckled and spotted sheep, speckled and spotted goats, you know, "Check the water, make sure there's no weird branches in there, make sure there's no exposed whites of the tree stumps." It's a bit like spilling salt and throwing it over your shoulder; it's strange, it's weird, it's desperate. But that's the point. Jacob, he's desperate here. He's the underdog, he's the oppressed, and he's desperately doing anything he can, including employing every little old wives technique he has heard, in order to try and get himself out of this miserable situation.

And sure enough, or maybe we should say despite the fact that he resorted to those techniques, we read in verse 43, "Thus the man increased greatly and had large flocks, female servants, male servants, and camels and donkeys." Laban, who only ever thought of himself, he'd already sold his daughters by deception, and had very purposefully stolen from a son-in-law. He hated seeing Jacob prosper. He hated seeing somebody else do well because it wasn't Laban. And according to chapter 31, the next chapter, verse 6, Jacob did serve him with all of his strength. Jacob didn't stop working hard here, he still worked hard for Laban.

Verse 7 reveals that Laban had actually come and changed Jacob's wages ten times. In fact, next week as you study chapter 31 more, it becomes clear that Laban is the abuser here. And yet, the more he abused Jacob, the more he seemed to lose in the process. Yeah, Laban's strange, far from - start to lose, and then soften and change his opinion, change his technique.

Laban's like so many non-Christians. Sometimes when people are confronted with their sin and the damage it does, it softens them. But actually, sometimes when people are confronted with their sin and the damage it does, they harden. And that's what happens with Laban, he doubles down in his devious techniques. Yet all the time, all the time, even when Laban is at his worst, Jacob prospers, his herds grow. His herds grow despite that aggressive opposition.

So here's the question: "How do you explain that? How do we explain what takes place here. Well, at one level, I could give you a wonderful lecture

this morning on sheep breeding, the difference between a phenotype and a genotype, and that would be really stimulating. And that might explain a lot about how sheep multiply. But it wouldn't explain Genesis chapter 30, for this isn't a story about science or genetic engineering, friend, this is a story about the providence of God. That's the only way to understand this story: the providence of God.

While in chapter 30, Jacob the man who's stolen from he's frantically cutting his stripes and his sticks by," chapter 31 he realizes what has actually taken place. Look at chapter 31, verse 12: "And God said, 'Lift up your eyes and see, all the goats that mate with the flock or striped, spotted and molted, for I have seen all that Laban is doing to you. I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed the pillar and made a void to Me.'"

What affected the breeding of sheep? God did. God did. This is a story about God's unfolding providence. God is the mover and shaker of Genesis chapter 30. Psalm 50:10 tells us, "For every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. in Genesis chapter 30 , he adds the sheep also and the goats. They're all His, He is the one in control. And this is a story about how in every obstacle, every circumstance, even every animal-bird, our Lord is in control. His providential control stretches over it all.

John Piper has defined providence as "God's purposeful sovereignty." I think that's a helpful definition" God's purposeful, sovereign thing. In other words, when we talk about providence, we're not simply saying God is in control. He is, He's in control of everything. He can do whatever he wants. He's the king of kings, the Lord of lords. He's in full control. But the point of providence is that he has purpose in that control in other words, it's more a statement that the one who is in full control knows what he's doing, His plan and design in it. He's unfolding all of the circumstances with His wisdom coming to bear, making it come together into a beautiful picture. And because the one who is in control is our God, who is good, who is loving, who is wonderful, the child of God is able to rest in that control through all the turns in their lives.

Now we said last week it doesn't stop difficulty coming our way. O Christian, heartache is part of the Christian pilgrimage, trials are part of our journey; we will be tested by fire. But in all of those circumstances that come, we don't need to let our mind spin helplessly out of control; for we know there is a consummation of these things. We know they are being

weaved together towards something, and that that something, because of the nature of our God, will be good. That's our hope.

And so this morning I want to give you just three very quick points about providence, and the first one is this, and we see it very clearly in this story: "Providence can't be stopped by human obstacles. Providence cannot be stopped by human obstacles." For most of us, when we first come across this glorious doctrine of providence, the greatest hindrance to believing it or embracing it is often the very real pain and hard circumstances that we've walked through.

I want you to notice – and we saw this last week as well – but I want you to notice in this story, the Bible makes clear pain is part of the Christian life. Difficulties come, opposition happens. Hardship and persecution from the world does come our direction, but that doesn't mean God is not in control.

In this chapter we see selfish hearts. We read of theft. We see exploitive employment arrangements. We see family abuse. You think of how Laban treats his daughters – you'll hear more about that next week as well. All that's happening here, it's a cocktail of nastiness and brokenness that has all flown out of sinful hearts. You can't read Genesis chapter 30 and preach a sermon on how to have your best life now. Preachers who would be inclined to go that direction – and there might be one or two – will never open their Bibles at Genesis chapter 30 to get there. You can't, because you read this story, and what is highlighted to us is the fact that those who are part of God's family cry. Those who are part of God's family hurt. Those who are part of God's family will be attacked, will be opposed; they won't be able to, even though they are right.

Jacob was right here; he was wrong a lot of the time, but he was right at how he worked in this situation, and yet he was exploited in a tremendous way. And yet though sin makes life so painful and hard for Jacob and his family in these moments, do you see the providential control of God? It's not hindered in any way. It keeps marching forward over the top of sinful hearts, over the top of theft, over the top of the exploitive employment arrangements, over the top of that family abuse.

We live in a broken world, people; we can't expect it to be perfect. Oh, perfect it's coming, and we long for it. But here and now it is broken. It was

mentioned at the beginning, just the wonder of what has happened in the news just this week. Friends, it's going to be a hard week to come, it's going to be explosive; but God is in control.

This section reminds us that brokenness and pain is real; and yet that doesn't negate the fact that our God is in control, that His providence marches forward. Romans 8:28, you know we're going there. What does it say? "All things work together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purposes." Now I think about that. He doesn't say three things work together. Doesn't even say a hundred things work together. What does he say? "All things." Now dwell on that word.

Yes, the good; but also the hard. The hard egg? Yes. My mistreatment? Yes. Me being overlooked at work, mistreated by my family, the loss that I experienced, the disappointments. We talked last week about the real pain of miscarriage. All things He promises, every single one, the Lord is working over the long haul to bring it all together in a glorious story of redemption. Even the brokenness, and even the hurt; none of it is an obstacle, none of it stops the Lord.

It was wonderful last week to get to talk to a number of you. I know some of you have come from difficult backgrounds. And maybe even now, and continue to live in situations where you feel that the biggest obstacle for you marching forward as a Christian is maybe even somebody who lives in your home, a situation you feel stuck in. Friend, it doesn't stop God. That's one of the glorious points we see highlighted in this text. Providence is not stopped by human obstacles.

And the second thing I want us to see is, "Providence grows the child of God." It's a tool used by God to grow us and to grow our appreciation of Him. Now we just said pain and hurt in this world is real. And again, we need to stress the reality that Christians will suffer, that Christians will cry, that often even the life of the Christian feels turned upside-down. And what I'm not saying this morning is, if you just read your systematic theology and you suddenly had a good definition in your head of providence, if you could talk about it, if you believed it, all of a sudden all of life's problems would disappear. That's not the point.

They don't disappear. But what comes through appreciating this glorious doctrine that our God is in control and working all things together, what

comes through that is an ability in the midst of the storm to trust, in the midst of the storm to know that there is someone holding our hand; and that does help us through what is a very real painful experience. In fact – and this is the point – sometimes it's only when we go through those painful, dark experiences and come to that place where we know He holds us that we really understand that aspect of our good God, that we have a trustworthy God, who is trustworthy.

That's something that we see here. In chapter 30, that mistreated Jacob, he's stolen from, he's exploited, and he responds initially by picking up of sticks and carving. But when he looks back on the situation – look again at chapter 31 – you don't see any mention of those wonderful sticks and all they did. Rather, look at verse 5. He says, "God of my father has been with me." Look at verse 7: "God did not permit him to harm me." Look at verse 9: "God has taken away the livestock of your father and given them to me." Verse 12, God testifies, "The angel of the Lord saw all that Laban was doing to him."

Do you hear the change? There's no sticks anymore; rather, as Jacob reflects he can see the providential hand of God working in all circumstances. For us, that's often the way it is. We don't fully understand God. We can't see what He's doing in the immediacy of the moment. But as we reflect back, we can see something of that thread that He has woven over the years.

Someone has said, "Providence is a lot like Hebrew, it can only be properly read backwards." That's true. I think if you found Jacob in chapter 30, you would have found a man whose knees were knocking. But by chapter 31, he looks back on that situation and he sees God knew what He was doing, God was able.

We're going to see baptisms in a few moments. And that's the story of so many. They were bouncing around through life. But God knew what He was doing. He brought the right person across their path, the right influences to bear. He brought understanding when things had grown cold. God is able to do it. And when we look back we can see so much testimony to that fact.

We said last week that glorious verse in scripture, "Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you." Now you can know that prophetically God has said, "Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you," and so I can march forward knowing that truth; and you can. But you see in pastoral ministry it

tends to be the older saints who believe that truth the most. Why? Because they haven't just heard it prophetically, they've experienced it. They have an experiential understanding of that first.

When they went through the cancer treatment, "Never did He forsake me. Never did He leave me." When our family was in great difficulties and we didn't know how to move forward, we couldn't see any way out, "Never did He leave me, never did He forsake me." And it's not that the thinking has changed about God. I know God can. But these reference points where God did become something that we lean upon in a deeper way; that's what we're talking about here. Providence cannot be stopped by human obstacles, but also providence grows the child of God. It grows our trust and our confidence in Him.

And the last thing I want us to see this morning is, "Providence is wonderful because God is wonderful." Not very articulate, so this is what you get as a point: "Providence is wonderful because God is wonderful." It's an amazing reality, isn't it, that God is working in the midst of every circumstance, unfolding it all just as He has purposed. But what I want you to notice is the very simple point in the text about why providence is a good thing and a source of comfort.

Again, look at verse 12 of chapter 31: "And God said, 'Lift up your eyes and see, all the goats that made with the flock are striped, spotted, or mottled, for I have seen all that Laban is doing to you. I am the God of Bethel. I am the God of Bethel.'"

And it brings us back to chapter 28, and especially to chapter 28, verse 15, where God promised to look after him: "When you leave this land, I will go with you, and I will bring to bear every promise I made to you, Jacob." And now by chapter 31, verse 12, Jacob has lived long enough to see that God keeps His promises. And God reminds Jacob in doing so that He is a God who is faithful to do all that He says: "I was that God back in Bethel. And Jacob, look at everything around you. I've done that; I've kept it; I fulfilled My words."

Now I know we've already said that point and you're thinking, "Why is this guy going on and on and on about the same thing?" But here's my point: "We don't just have a God who is in control; but friends, look at what you have in your hands. We have a God who's in control who has revealed

Himself to us, who's told us what He's like." And what is He like? Oh, He's good. He's a God of love. He's a God of light. He's a God who never makes mistakes. He's a God who never gets anything wrong. He's a God who cares for His children. He's a God who is present with His children. And He's a God who has given specific promises to us. He's a God who is committed to us. He's a God who does not change His mind.

So many of those ancient gods, the gods of Greece and Rome, if you've read any of the stories about them, humans are all the time coming in trying to manipulate them, trying to convince them to bend towards their way. If you get them at the right time of the day maybe you can win them over. Oh, but God of Scripture, He is a hundred percent dependable. He's always caring towards His own.

And so providence is a wonderful doctrine. He's working all things together; He's in control, and there's plan and there's purpose in it. But it's wonderful because He is wonderful. In other words, this One who is in control, who's weaving the tapestry. He's not cold. He's not some robot. He's not some despot. He's not simply moving the pieces in a chess game just at a whim. Rather, Jacob knew, "He's my God of battle." In other words, "He was the God who talked to me when I was at my lowest, and promised specific things to help me, and has kept each of those promises. When I was terrified, He spoke and He changed the circumstances."

Friend, if you're a Christian this morning, He is your God who saved you, who sent His Son into this world to live that life you could not, who punished His Son instead of you: "For God so loved the world." He's one who cares for us, that's why we call Him our loving, heavenly Father. Providence is a glorious doctrine when you know the Person who is in control, and you're trusting the nature, the character of this God.

My oldest daughter Isla is seven - eight? What are you, Isla? Eight. Just happened, just happened recently. Imagine after school, local elementary school, someone turns up at the school gate and takes Isla into their car, promising they're going to take her to the shop and buy her sweets, candy, and drives off. That's a horrible picture, isn't it? Why? Well, she doesn't have a relationship with them. And as Dad, alarm bells are going immediately. I don't want my daughter getting into a car with a stranger, even if candy is promised: stranger danger.

But if I turn up at the school gate, and she comes running out, and I say, "Isla, we're going to the shop to get some candy." She, with a big smile, hops in the car, and away we go. That's a sweet picture, isn't it? That's a happy picture. Why? Why the difference? She knows me; we have a relationship. There is this understanding of love and care and trust between me and her; and that's why it's a good picture.

Friend, that's how we have to understand providence. Providence, in a theoretical sense, is daunting. There is someone in control working all things together, yes. But look, I love Him, because He loves me. He's moved heaven and earth in order to bring me into His family. And that's why providence is one of the most comforting doctrines to the child of God. It's comforting because they are a child of the God who is in control.

Maybe you're here this morning because you've been watching the news, and you're scratching your head trying to work out, "What do I make of this dramatic shift in culture?" Maybe you're here this morning because we're about to have baptisms, and somebody close to you is about to get baptized, and you're a loyal brother, sister, uncle, whatever, and so you're here to support them. You're very welcome, and it's good to have you.

Let me say to you especially, there is a God who is in control of everything, who's in control of your life and every aspect of it. But He is one who you can know this morning as your loving, heavenly Father. He declares in the world, "All who come to Me I will in no way cast out." And He issues an invitation in Scripture, this God who is King of kings and Lord of lords, in control of everything. And should you repent of your sins and put your trust in Jesus Christ, He will put His arm around you and bring you into the family; and you can move forward knowing that in this world of topsy-turvy, everything it is always in flux, you can know the One who is actually in control of it all, and you can know that He loves you. Let's pray.

[Prayer] Our heavenly Father, we do thank You for providence. This world is not just bouncing to and fro a whim, but that there is One who is in control of every aspect of it. We pray and ask, Lord, that You would help us to trust You. We ask, Lord, that You would help us to even be able to look back and to trace Your providential hand through all of the circumstances that have unfolded. And Lord, we thank You that we have in a few moments testimony to the fact that You're a God who is engaged in the lives of Your people; so help us to praise You.

And we pray, Lord, for those who are amongst us, any who don't yet know You. We pray, Lord, that You would help them to see that in a world that is always moving and shifting, that there is a solid Rock upon which the foot can be planted, and we pray that today would be their day of salvation. Lord, we ask that You would work amongst us and cause us to love and to trust You more. For it's in the name of Jesus Christ, Your glorious Son that we ask it. Amen.