

April 2, 2020

Good morning, Everybody.

Last night's Bible study together included a great many selected scriptures; 46 separate passages, if my count is correct. Without PowerPoint, we could never have considered so many in just about 35 minutes. It's a tool for which we can be thankful.



It's a little tedious to run straight through so many passages with just a bare minimum of additional comment. But in this case the downside was necessary in order to just sort of blizzard us under an accumulation of evidences that God truly preserves and governs *all His creatures and all their actions* (Catechism Card 27).

We're so prone to doubting this. I'm not referring to our legitimate concerns to rightly safeguard the truth of human contingency. I'm referring to slowness to believe that's rooted in little more than fleshly fear. It can blot out even the most visible of God's assurances.

Now as Jacob went on his way, the angels of God met him. Jacob said when he saw them, *This is God's camp* (Genesis 32:1-2a).

The messengers returned to Jacob, saying, *We came to your brother Esau, and furthermore he is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him.*

Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed (32:6-7a).

Mahanaim, "two companies," Jacob named the place exultantly when he saw that his host would be accompanied by God's. But shortly he was *greatly afraid and distressed* when he heard that his host would encounter Esau's.

In *Triumphing over Sinful Fear*, John Flavel wrote:

It is a great sin to love or fear any creature above its worth, as if it was master of all our temporal and eternal comforts. . . . In effect,

we act as if it had arbitrary and absolute dominion over us and our comforts—to do with them whatever it pleases.

In doing so, we elevate the creature above its class and rank to the place of God.

Last night we saw a great *host* of scriptures with our very eyes. Each one is held out to our faith as a reassuring, separate evidence that our God's providence preserves and governs *all His creatures and all their actions*.

Should we not this very day exalt Him far above His creatures? *Though a host encamp against me, my heart will not fear* (Psalm 27:3). Would this be cocky presumption? Sinful indifference? Fatalism?

***Whoso is wise? Let him give heed to these things,
and consider the lovingkindnesses of the LORD*** (Psalm 107:43).

Praying for You Today,

Pastor Minnick