

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Afternoon

Date 22nd October 2023

Preacher Rev Philip Knowles

Hymns ps 130 t martyrdom, 310

Read: Genesis 42:21-28 Text Genesis 42:25-28

**Series: Joseph Title: Joseph examines his brothers
Confession (1).**

In Genesis 42, Joseph's brethren for the first time in 20 have spoken of the events regarding their sin against Joseph in his suffering, sorrow and selling him as a slave into Egypt.

Now remember the story, the brothers stand before the Lord of land, and make their confession one to another, yet unknown to them, the Lord of the land is in fact their brother Joseph, the one they sinned against.

The very fact they speak of this event, and acknowledge they sinned against Joseph, confirms they know they are guilty.

It proves they hated Joseph without a cause, they wilfully set themselves against, they despised and rejected him.

**but Joseph still does not reveal himself to them, why!
because people when they are in trouble say so many
things, just to get out of trouble.**

How many times do you hear people pray in hard times, in testing situations, they ask for salvation, some make promises to God of greater service, yet once the storm has passed, they are nowhere to be seen, the words they prayed was just caught up in the moment.

Joseph has heard his brethren's confession ***one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us.***

Is this a genuine confession, or just caught up in the moment in jail?

Their sin and offence against Joseph concerns three areas, ***their profit, presentation, and their pride.***

The brothers sold Joseph to make a profit, their presentation to their father was deceitful and full lies, and then they were filled with pride, they wanted Joseph gone as he received the praise and position given by their father.

However, 20 years have passed and they have made a confession to one another, ***but what will they do what that confession?***

Joseph, the Lord of the land, having heard their confession to one another must hear their confession to directly to himself.

you see the brothers can confess to one another their sin against Joseph, then meet Joseph and deny such a confession and refuse to make confession to Joseph himself.

Or the confession made during the time of trouble will soon be discovered false if they do not return in obedience to Joseph words, ***Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you***

Therefore, Joseph must examine, their confession regarding the attitude and actions of their profit, presentation, and pride, in order to bless them.

There is a clear gospel message, directing our thoughts to the greater Joseph, a superior Lord of the land, namely the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of all lands, yea KING of Kings and LORD of Lord's, Christ, the King of Glory.

God blesses sinners through the Lord Jesus Christ with all spiritual blessings,

but when sinners confess sin, they must do so to God, acknowledging all sin against Christ, and then by their fruits or evidence ye shall know them as Jesus illustrated this in **Matthew 7:17** *Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.*

A Christian's fruit is to *glorify your Father which is in heaven* by living a life *as it becometh the gospel of Christ*, therefore, *If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*

The evidence of that confession will be demonstrated in obeying Christ's word.

I FIRST, JOSEPH EXAMINES THEIR CONFESSION REGARDING PROFIT.

Remember, it was Judah who suggested in **Genesis 37:26-28**, there was no profit or gain, in slaying Joseph's blood, but there is profit in selling him.

Judah is motivated by gain. Judah refused the words of Joseph, He rejected His very presence and person.

Judah was instrumental in guiding the brothers to money over their brother, finance over family.

Joseph's last sight of his brethren 20 years before, was to see them get their money, leave and not return for Joseph.

They loved their money they would part with Joseph but not their money. They would give up their brother but not their money.

They loved their riches but not Joseph.

Now 20 years later, the brethren will be in the same situation. Joseph's servants will fill their sacks full of money, and when the brothers realise this, **what will they do?** Because the brother now they are leaving is Simeon.

Will they still love their money over their brother Simeon?

Will they return for Simeon, or wait more years, since they will have money and corn?

Would they make up another lie, only this time that Simeon was killed by a wild beast?

You see, if the brethren return with the money, Joseph will know a change as taken place and their confession to one another concerning Joseph will be genuine not false.

When the brothers came to Egypt and meet the Lord of the land, though unknown to them it's Joseph, they brought money to buy corn as **verses 5-10** states.

So that means their money is taken of them weather on arrival or just before they were jailed for three days.

but after three days, Simeon remains in prison and 9 are released, **v25**, *Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provision for the way: and thus did he unto them.*

Their money is returned and restored without them realising.

On their journey back to Canaan, the brethren stop at an inn to rest, to tend to their animals, **verse 27** to the first part of **verse 28** *And as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender in the inn, he espied his money; for, behold, it was in his sack's mouth. ²⁸ And he said unto his brethren, My money is restored; and, lo, it is even in my sack...*

Now at this stage you would think the brethren would be leaping for joy, their money is restored.

They have left Egypt with much more than they entered.

Joseph's men in **verse 26** *laded their asses with the corn.*
Chapter 42:35 “*And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, that, behold, every man's bundle of money was in his sack: and when both they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid.*”

20 years before, their focus was wealth, they made a profit and were content, and now 20 years later, their profit, their wealth has increased, because they have money and corn,

But instead of rejoicing notice the end of **verse 28** ...*and their heart failed them, and they were afraid*.... that's quite a different reaction.

They were now burdened. The expression *their heart failed them* is Hebrew poetry.

it literally means *to go out, or went forth*. Their heart didn't literally go out of their body, and so the poetry gives the idea *of shock and surprise*.

It's the same expression when someone is startled and they say my heart nearly jumped out.

Then adding to their shock they become **afraid**. The word **afraid** means *terrified, to tremble, to shake*.

The brothers, now feared for their lives, because the Lord of land described them as spies and in their thinking the Lord of Egypt will condemn them as spies, and Simeon who is left.

But notice, this trembling took place under the sovereign the power of God, they said *one to another, What is this that God hath done unto us?* This is the first time they mention God.

read their language, *What is this that God hath done unto us?*, In other words they concluded God is dealing with them, chastising them for their sin against Joseph. They believed God

brought and permitted their trouble because they had broken His law.

These young men would have been instructed in the ways of God by their father to worship God not idols. **Genesis 35:2 *Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, put away the strange gods that are among you and be clean, and change your garments.***

God is holy, pure, light and there is no darkness in Him. God commanded ***thou shalt have no other gods before me***, the word **before** means ***in the place of***. No other gods, idols, in place of me.

Exodus 20:17 *“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.*

These brothers knew sin is a transgression a violation of the law of God, they understood to worship anything such as imagery, materially, financially in the place of God or equal with God was to sin against God.

The brothers, sin was covetous, greed, profit, always wanting and not caring what they had to do to get money or who they have to remove out of the picture, as long, as they make profit, and their lust was fulfilled.

but now they tremble in the presence of Holy One.

And yes while Joseph was the one who commanded to fill their sacks full, yet God is working according to His sovereign plan, and once again revealing the natural state of their heart.

The sin of greed and covetousness, is the centre of all sins.

The word covet means **desire, to or to take pleasure**, the idea is **to fix the mind or heart upon**

It was covetousness that brought sin into the world, Adam and Eve wanted what God had forbidden. Coveting or

covetousness only becomes sinful when you covet what God has forbidden.

God commanded our first parents, in **Gen 3:3** concerning the forbidden tree “**ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.**” This tree is named in **Gen 2:17** “...**the tree of the knowledge of good and evil...**”

However, **Gen 3:6** says “**when the woman saw that the tree was good for food (the forbidden tree), and that it was pleasant to the eye and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit therefore, and did eat and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.**”

Did you notice the words **saw, pleasant, desired, took**, they signified **to covet, to fix the mind upon to lust after.** Eve has coveted after that which God forbids that make it lustful sinful.

She could have had any of the other trees, but the one forbidden was the one Eve desired and took.

The word “**saw**” signifies in Hebrew “**to behold with intention purposely**” there was a purpose in Eve’s sight and that was to take what she saw.

But there was forgiveness of sin, through faith in the promised Saviour, and His sacrificial death to pay the penalty of sin, illustrated to Adam and Eve by the ram which died in their place and its blood sacrificially shed.

There is forgiveness for the brothers, but their confession to one another must be demonstrated personally, publicly and practically by obedience to Joseph’s word, come with Benjamin, rather than profiting themselves.

Their response would give evidence of their confession, they had sinned against their brother or prove were they still greedy men, their heart fixed on profit.

Scripture shows from the end of **Ch 42-43:11-14**, the brothers came in obedience bringing Benjamin with them and they brought the money back.

Judah evidenced a great change in that he offered himself to take full responsibility for Benjamin's safety and return to His father. ***Just as Christ took full responsibility for sinners He came to save and guarantee their safety to heaven.***

20 years before, Judah's plans was to offer Joseph for profit, now he will profit by offering himself in obedience to Joseph.

God gave him mercy or favour in the presence of Joseph.

the brothers deserved to remain in prison and left to perish but they received mercy in that Joseph gave them what he did not deserve, provisions, life, and turned away from them the punishment they did deserve, death the punishment for sin.

Men and woman, you will never lose in giving your life to Jesus Christ. Turn your eyes upon Jesus, come in obedience to His word, He has promised to put away your sin, to remember your sins no more, blot out every sin.

Declaring you fully pardoned by Christ's blood.

Allow me to illustrate this scene, by the events in Northern Ireland, Belfast 1923. There was a preacher named W P Nicholson, (1876-1959) who was called the 'tornado' of the pulpit, as he preached God's word.

He spoke the language of the people. He seen thousands saved under his ministry. In fact, its recorded by **Anthony Buckley** in one of his six week gospel mission in Carrickfergus, 1,200 souls were converted to Christ. ***and in the mornings, men sang hymns on railway platforms while they waited to go to work.***

As the gospel was preached in Belfast, and following a gospel mission, workers from the shipyard were saved by grace, their lives transformed by the gospel.

The converted workmen brought back all the tools and much more they had stolen, so much had been brought back that was

stolen, that a new storehouse was built on site to hold all the returned tools. It was named the 'Nicholson Shed. I quote- ***“it was impossible to sack the men responsible because they were so many.”***

The change was evident, as seen in Judah and his brethren, as **Zacchaeus**, in **Luke 19**, they returned the money that didn't belong to them.

Come now as you are, and God will give you favour and mercy with Christ. His blood has turned away the wrath of God for all who will obey the gospel and believe on Christ.

Such a confession to Christ will be found true.