

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Afternoon

Date 28th January 2024

Preacher Pastor Philip Knowles

Hymns Ps 23 498, 303

Read: Genesis 43:11-26 Text Genesis 43:11-26.

Series: Joseph Title: Giving To The Sovereign (1) Their preparation

In **Genesis 43:8-9**, when Judah interceded on Benjamin's behalf, to take responsibility for Benjamin's return to his father....

....Israel their father submitted to Judah's pledge, and role of the surety, and obligation, however, Israel would not allow his sons to meet the Lord of the land, empty handed.

When Jacob sent his sons the first time to Egypt to buy bread, he did not know they would stand in the presence of Sovereign of the land.

However, when his sons returned home, based on their report given, they told their father of man they met.

They described *the man...* in **Genesis 42:30 as the Lord of the land**. Straightaway, Israel is aware, this is not just any man but a man in authority, leadership, and a sovereign ruler.

Therefore, Israel instructs his sons to give three things to the Lord of the land, which are named in these verses in detail, but summarised in **verse 15** *And the men took that present, and they took double money in their hand and Benjamin; and rose up, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph.*

Israel instructed his sons to give freely.

Israel's instruction and the sons response is wonderful, because there is a famine in the land, they are in great need, but still they have a giving heart.

Never forget as you read the scriptural record in **Genesis 43-49**, Joseph, the Lord of the land, reveals himself to his brothers, and he blesses the whole family, in giving more than they brought.

They came in obedience and Joseph blesses. They honoured His word and Joseph supplies their needs.

Joseph said to his brothers in **Genesis 45:13** ***And there will I nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty.***

Pharaoh said to Joseph in **verse 18** ***And take your father and your households, and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land.***

When Joseph's word was obeyed and honoured, they were **nourished** or as the word also means **provided for**.

In considering the father's instruction, the sons giving and the circumstances they are in, there are lessons to learn believer.

There are lessons to learn dear father, parent when instructing your children, even in challenging times, give to the sovereign one of heaven and earth, give to your Creator and Saviour the honour due to His name.

Give Him your present, a gift, a talent.

Give Him your possessions, and give Him your life and give your children to Him, to nourish, and provide.

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

men and woman what lessons there is when giving to a great Sovereign, one who is Lord over all, one who is the man Christ Jesus, you shall not want, your cup will run over and you will abound in blessing.

we will only deal with the first point of four today.

I FIRST, THE PREPARATION FOR GIVING TO THE SOVEREIGN

In making preparation notice it is Israel, their father who takes the lead, ***their father Israel said unto them, if it must be so now, do this.***

Those words ***do this***, are not to be missed, because it's Israel is saying to his sons, here is what you are to do, here is a lesson to learn when coming to the sovereign of the land.

Israel's instruction means two truths that are seen in this passage but also, applies to our lives as we come before the sovereign Lord.

Let me give you 4 phrases to what Israel's words to his sons ***do this***, mean in preparing to meet the man of the land, to stand in the presence of the Lord of the land, the sovereign ruler.

They Prepared To Give EXTRA and They Prepared To Give EXACT.

They Prepared To Give SACRIFICIALLY and They Prepared To Give SPECIFICALLY.

They Prepared To Give OFFERINGS and They Prepared To Give OBEDIENTLY.

They Prepared To Give CHEERFULLY and They Prepared To Give what was COMMANDED.

Now in developing these phrases, I want to consider 4 thoughts:

The first 3 deal with giving Extra, sacrificially, offerings, cheerfully, going above,

and the 4th one deals with giving, exactly, specifically, obediently, what is commanded, and required which was giving Benjamin.

In other words the first 3, are things right, and proper to do when giving but they are only accepted, a act of true giving if the 4th, or one thing asked to do is done or given.

The Lord of the land would only accept these other gifts, as they came in obedience by Benjamin.

Without Benjamin, all other giving was rejected.

So God will accept our worship, giving, offerings, talents, as pleasing when they are offered to Him through Christ.

Without Christ, the service, giving is in vain and rejected.

1 They prepared to give the best produce. **V11** **their father Israel said unto them, if it must be so now, do this, take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels.... a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds:**

The land of Canaan was known to be a land of plenty and good things, as **Exodus 3:8** describes, **unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey**

Yet the famine started in Egypt has now spread into Canaan, and while in the early stages of the famine, within the first two years, there was a shortage of corn to make bread, yet there was still some natural produce of the land left.

That is why Israel is careful with his words, he didn't say, go take of the fruit whatever you can salvage, and put it in your vessels to take with you and give to the sovereign, the man.

Rather, in the time of famine, Israel teaches his sons, ***take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels... , a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds:***

Now while it is true these items are naturally provided yet they were of great use.

such as, ***the balm for healing wounds, and sores, the honey for its sweetness, spices and myrrh, used for making fragrances, and the nuts and almonds for their oils.*** These were of great expense, costly and great value.

In fact these items were listed in **Genesis 37**, when Joseph was sold as a slave, remember, ***a company of Ishmeelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt.***

Businessmen made sure they sold the best, they travelled with costly things.

Israel's instruction means **If it's not the best do not take it**, do not give any fruit that just about passes, or it will have to do, or hopefully the Lord of the land will not see any difference.

Rather, go and search for the best fruits, **choose the best fruits in the land**, because you are coming to the sovereign of the land.

That's interesting, since the Lord of the land is Joseph, and we have seen how his life points in many ways to Christ, then the symbolism continues as the best was given to the sovereign of Egypt, **so believer give the best to Christ the superior sovereign over all lands.**

What another thought in the life and character of Joseph, we have that leads to Christ, because each of the best produce of the land pointed to Christ who is the best God has given to fallen humanity.

Each teach the gospel, that **Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; ⁴ And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures:**

CHRIST AND HIS WOUNDS.

Christ's Death, as symbolised, by **the Balm** that is collected from the tree being pierced, to heal wounds and sores when applied by the Physician, as taught in Jeremiah 8.

So Christ blood is the healing balm and from the Tree at Calvary, pieces of wood shaped like tree, He body pierced, His blood when applied by faith brings spiritual healing from all sin, for by His strips we are healed, Christ is the great physician.

CHRIST AND HIS WORD.

The scriptures, as symbolised by the honey for its sweetness, as shown in **Psalm 19:10** *More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.*

Christ Himself is the Word of God, the message and messenger from heaven, and when we read scripture we taste and see the Lord is good.

CHRIST AND HIS WRAPPINGS.

Christ's burial as symbolised by the **spices, and myrrh-** used for fragrance, for anointing oil as seen in **Ex 25:6**, but these were used by Jews in burials, such as Christ's burial in **John 19:39-40** *And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. ⁴⁰ Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.*

CHRIST AND HIS WITNESS

Christ's Resurrection as symbolised by the *nuts, and almonds*: The nuts were used for oils along with spices to make the ointment, but the almond tree was the first tree to show life in Israel after the cold death of winter.

This almond was the first sign of life, or the first fruits, and then all other trees at some point followed showing forth life after winter.

The bowls made of almond symbolised life after death, the resurrection of Jesus, as **1 Cor 15:20** states "***But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.***" He was the first to rise with an incorruptible body He rose from the dead to confirm that all who die in Christ, live with Him eternally. Christ is in heaven now alive forevermore. Life and death.

So in the famine, when death was staring them in the face, here was token, a sign of life after the famine.

Christ and His Wounds, Christ and His Word, Christ and His Wrappings, Christ and His Witness.

In preparing to reconcile sinners to Himself, God when He gave His Son as a sacrifice, gave the best sacrifice, the best substitute, the best provision. There was no other good enough, suited to provide a perfect righteousness, bear away sin, pay the debt of sin.

Paul said in Romans 8:32 "*He that spared not His own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?*

The gift of God is eternal life, anything less than the best was failure, unacceptable and unaccepted by God.

What a lesson there is to our own hearts, as we think of preparation to meet with our Saviour, day by day in our homes, but above all in his House.

Give Him the best of your praise, singing, voice, time energy, and years. Give Him the best of your service. Give the best of your resources. Give Him the best of your family.

Give Him the best of your mind, eyesight, walking, speech, we use of much of these blessing for other things, why not give the best of them to Christ.

Yes, we must give time, talents, energy, finances to other causes, pay bills, that's right and proper, but we must not allow giving to other causes, taking part in other things, the reason for giving less to Christ. Give Him to best.

The famine didn't stop Jacob instructing his sons to give the best to the Lord of the land. He recognised the one they were coming to was of great position and honour.

You know the story, the brethren received much more in return than they gave. Joseph saved them from perishing in the famine, he gave them not just land, and possessions, but gave them the best land in Egypt, **Genesis 47:11-12** ¹¹ ***And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. ¹² And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families.*** **Verse 27** *"...they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly."*

Believer don't allow anything to stop you giving your best to the Sovereign Lord, He is worthy of all. You can never out give God, and God will never leave you stuck.

You give God the best when you give to Him on the basis of Christ's glorious person and gospel ministry.