

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Morning

Date 16th April 2023

**Preacher Rev Philip Knowles Ps/Hymns Paraphrase 2
(Salzburg), 627 (Stracathro) 317, 203**

Read: Genesis 41:45, 50-52 Text Genesis 41:50-52

Series: Joseph Title: Joseph's Sons

The exaltation of Joseph was a blessed and glorious day.

The people of the land were gathered together to bow the knee and confess Joseph as ruler.

Pharaoh had clothed Joseph in majesty, put on him the ring of power, gave him a name high over all **Zaphnathpaaneah** which has three meanings **the revealer of secrets, the bread for living, and the Saviour of the world.**

Pharaoh had given all things into Joseph's hand, all authority and dominion. The kingdom would be ruled by Joseph's word.

He also gave Joseph, **Asenath** a gentile woman to be his bride.

Through their marriage union two sons were born, the first **Manasseh** and then **Ephraim**.

Though living in Egypt, a type of the world, Joseph didn't give his sons Egyptian names rather he gave his son's Hebrew names.

Joseph ruling over Egypt, speaking Egyptian, dressed in Egyptian Royal garments, and marrying an Egyptian woman, did not turn Joseph's heart from following the Lord,

he was not ashamed to identify his family, his children as being brought up in the ways of God, or to give them names of spiritual meaning.

Joseph was bearing testimony in a pagan land, as for me and my house we will serve the Lord.

That is clear by giving his sons Hebrew names that still reflected the sovereignty of God in his life.

The name **Manasseh** means **God hath made me to forget all my toil, forgetful forgetting or, causing to forget.** The name **Ephraim** means **God hath caused me to be fruitful, God hath caused me to be fruitfulness or doubly-fruitful or God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.**

Manasseh, for God said he, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house. Ephraim: For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.

The meaning of these names brings to Joseph's remembrance God's goodness and blessing even during adversity.

By Manasseh, we learn that God had freed Joseph from the painful remembrance of his sufferings, and from the sorrowful recollections of his father's house, in not condemning his brethren, but to save them.

By Ephraim, God had raised Joseph to honour and caused him to be fruitful in his life and in the land he lived.

What a glorious picture of Christ, as He sits on a throne of majesty at God's right hand, clothed in glory and honour, worthy to be praised.

To Him the remembrance of His sufferings and agonies at Calvary are past and the sorrowful recollections of His betrayal

and rejection by His own people are now put away, for He has finished His race and having entered within the veil, at God's right He rules on high.

Christ is raised to honour and the fruit He bore from the land of His affliction is eternal.

The fruit of His labour is like the corn that Joseph gathered up, it is as the sand of the sea, a multitude of sinners that no man can number.

Believer by Manasseh and Ephraim, we learn in affliction there is still blessing.

I FIRST, MANASSEH – THE CAUSE TO FORGET

Verse 51 *“And Joseph called the name of the first born Manasseh, for God said he, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house.*

As stated already the name **Manasseh** means **forgetful, forgetting or, causing to forget**. By naming his first son Manasseh, Joseph was saying, "God has made me forget."

But what did Joseph forget, we read, **all my toil, and all my father's house**.

The word **toil** means **trouble, labour**.

As Joseph laboured for God, he suffered at the hands of his brethren.

Joseph was despised, rejected, mocked, shamed, scorned, betrayed and sold. They hated his position given by the father they refused the prophecies concerning his ruling over them.

In Egypt the land of his affliction, He was tempted, falsely accused, imprisoned and forgotten.

However, the birth of Manasseh, caused Joseph to forget all his toil, trouble in life in Egypt, and hard labour from his father's house.

It's not that Joseph forgot his brethren or his father or the place he grew up, or his prison experiences in Egypt, because he knew them in following chapters especially chapter 45.

Rather it means **Joseph viewed his trouble in the eternal plan of God to preserve his people, ch:50.**

He didn't hold any hatred, hostility, bitterness, against his brethren, as seen by chapter 45:3-4.

Rather, by looking at his son, Joseph looked beyond his afflictions, to the will of God and live a victorious life.

Because he viewed his toil and afflictions as the plan, purpose and providence of God for His life to save a people.

As Joseph viewed his son, Manasseh *God said he, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house.*

What a picture we have of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It focuses upon a union, a oneness, a relationship between a Father and Son, and a forgiveness that does not dwell on the past.

It refers to what is gone.

Just as Joseph's son Manasseh caused Joseph to forget the transgressions committed against him and not hold his afflictions against his brethren.

therefore in thinking of Christ, the birth of His church, causes Christ to forget all the afflictions committed by them against Him, and not to hold those afflictions against his own brethren, his own kinsmen He came to seek after and preserve.

Jesus Christ was despised and rejected. He was a man of sorrows. He was tempted, falsely accused, lied against, scorned, mocked, shamed, betrayed, sold, and afflicted.

He endured the cross despising the shame, because joy set before Him was the salvation of ungodly and unrighteous sinners He came to save.

Upon Golgotha's hill, Christ purchased His Church with His own precious blood. He paid the full price for all the sins of all His believing people.

He prayed, Father forgive them for they know not what they do.

The church is Christ's inheritance, His Jewells, His body. The church is in union, united or one with Christ.

Ephesians 5:25 Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it

Therefore, Christ did not forget His afflictions, because He suffered for His people, the nail prints are on His hands and feet, but He does not hold His afflictions against His redeemed people, or any accusation, revenge, or in bitterness against them.

Hebrews 8:12 "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

When God sees the blood of Jesus Christ applied to our lives, He both forgives, and sends those sins away never to be searched for and never to be found.

See Christian how we are to look to Jesus Christ the Son, as our example and pattern to forgive, not holding grudges, in order to honour God.

You see this world, the area you live, the place you work, the school you attend, the community where the church building is located, **is in the land of your affliction, this world is our spiritual Egypt**, and through it there are many toils and snares we have already come and yet to face.

Like our Saviour, we will be despised, rejected, betrayed, and mocked from strangers who oppose the gospel, but also from family, and at times even those within the household of faith can cause hurt.

However, when we see how Christ was reviled, accused, He did not revile back, so we are commanded not to hold grudges, bitterness against those who afflict us.

Paul said to believers in **Ephesians 4:32**, ***forgiving one another as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.***

There are some who chose to live in the past. They will not forgive or let go.

They will not put the affliction aside. They cannot get over what has happened to them. They relive, recall, remember, and revisit in their mind the same afflictions.

There is no removal, rest or relief from sorrow.

Can you image if Joseph continually relived, recalled and revisited in his mind every ***sorrow, suffering, scorn against him.***

But he can speak to them in peace in ch 50. He gives a word to their heart.

Could you imagine Christ, recalling, revisiting your afflictions from the past, and those in the present, and include those in the future, **we would all be condemned to hell.**

God speaks to us in peace by the blood of Christ, putting sin away.

Christ said in **Matthew 5:44** ***Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.***

Like Joseph, Keep your eye on the son of blessing that God has given, the Lord Jesus Christ, He alone takes the burden away, He cause us to forget the toil against us.

I FIRST, MANASSEH – THE CAUSE TO FORGET

II SECOND, EPHRAIM THE CAUSE OF FRUITFULNESS

Verse 52 ***and the name of the second called he Ephraim: For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.***

Ephraim means ***fruitfulness, doubly-fruitful or fruitful, in the land of my affliction.***

Joseph remembers that is it God who has caused him to prosper and that the Lord is the source of his fruitfulness.

But notice, it was in the land of affliction where he was fruitful.

Really from **verse 52** until Joseph's death recorded in **Genesis 50**, these chapters are filled with Joseph being fruitful in the land of his affliction.

In fact in **Genesis 49:1-28** when Joseph's father, Jacob, calls his 12 sons together, he gives a message about each son what shall befall them in the last days.

Jacob starts with Reuben, the eldest, and working his way to Benjamin, the youngest.

Jacob gets straight to the point with each son, he exposes any sin, speaks of their character and describes their relationship with God.

Through our series in Joseph's life, we have considered some of Jacob's challenging words about his sons.

This time in thinking about Joseph, Jacob's words are from **Genesis 49:22-26**, but in taking **verse 22** **Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall.**

The words deal with spiritual fruitfulness.

That is amazing, because the concept of spiritual fruitfulness is in keeping with the meaning of Joseph's name which means **Jehovah shall add, adding or increasing**, which was given in **Gen 30:24**.

Rachel named her first-born son *Joseph* in faith that "**The Lord shall add to me another son...**" which He did in the birth of Benjamin.

However, the significance of the adding or increasing in Joseph's name went far beyond the addition of Benjamin, for in the family history it reached the height of its fulfilment in one of Joseph's own sons, **Ephraim** meaning **fruitfulness, or fruitful**.

Jacob said, **Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall.**

The word **bough** in the original text is the Hebrew word **ben** meaning **son** and also meaning **a branch**.

The point is this Jacob's words concerning Joseph could be read **Joseph is a fruitful son, branch.**

Moreover, the words may also be translated **Joseph is a son of a fruit tree**. Remember, Jacob himself was spiritually fruitful, we read this in **Gen 48:3-4**; God said **I will make thee fruitful**.

Joseph therefore entered into that spiritual fruitfulness that his father had enjoyed, he was the son of a fruit tree in that he flourished, because of the union between father and son.

God caused Jacob to be like a fruitful tree, and God caused Joseph to be like a fruitful branch, that flows from the tree.

But we can lift our minds higher still, Christ is a greater than Jacob, Joseph, and Ephraim as they were fruitful because of Christ. He is greater than Benjamin, Christ is the Son at God's right hand.

Christ is the Spiritual *Fruit-Tree* whose people are **His boughs, His sons or even branches.**

We can see the same language and imagery when Christ spoke of the union between He and His people in **John 15:5**, **"I am the vine, ye are the branches."**

Here is the secret and success of spiritual fruitfulness, *being in union with the Fruit-Tree, the Vine*, the Lord Jesus Christ, it can only result in **a tree with its branches, spreading out over the wall, growing, advancing further into new territory.**

So believer as Joseph drew his life and strength from the Lord, so do you and I.

We are to bear fruit, always growing and spreading expanding our knowledge and love for Christ.

The only way to be fruitful in the land our affliction, is to consider the **Son**, at God right hand, who is fruitful.

In closing it's interesting to note, that Joseph named his first son **Manasseh** **forgetful** and his second son **Ephraim**, **fruitful**, rather than the other way around, naming his first born, **Ephraim** meaning **fruitful**, and then **Manasseh** meaning **forgetful** as his second son

You see, unless your past is forgotten, sin confessed, and forgiven, as symbolised by Manasseh, you will not be fruitful in the present and future, as symbolised by Ephraim.

Joseph's forgetfulness and fruitfulness.