

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Afternoon

Date 12th November 2023

Preacher Rev Philip Knowles

Hymns Psalm 111:1-4 T Winchester, 439, 9

Read: Genesis 42:29-38, Text Genesis 42:25-38

Series: Joseph Title: Joseph examines his brothers
Confession (2)

When Joseph's brothers came into Egypt and stood before him, the bible says, in **Genesis 42:8** "*And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him.*"

As the conversation developed Joseph picked up certain statements, that confirmed to him after 20 years, his father and younger brother was still alive.

Furthermore, it proved the brothers had lied concerning Joseph, as they said of one of their brothers, one is not, meaning **one brother is dead**.

Off course that was not true at all, unknown to them the Lord of the land whose presence they were in was Joseph the brother they stated was dead.

Since the brothers don't know they are actually speaking to Joseph they think their lies for the past 20 years will go unchecked.

However, Joseph the demands, the brothers will not be free ***except your youngest brother come hither...fetch your brother... This do, and live; for I fear God:***

In hearing the name of God spoken and honoured, these brothers soon became distressed and anxious about matters.

The name of God is a holy name, because the name stands for the person. Since God is holy then His name is holy.

By Joseph saying *I fear God*, the brother's sin was exposed, that they do not fear God, rather they dishonour God by their words and living.

That's why in prison, without even a mention of Joseph, they begin to speak about their guilt concerning Joseph. **verses 21-22** they said *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. ²² And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required.*

God was bringing to light their hidden guilt and offence against Joseph.

In order to prove their confession was genuine and if true repentance, Joseph examines their life in three areas, **Profit are they still greedy men**, **Presentation are they still deceitful men**, and then **Pride are they still self centered men**.

To prove this, Joseph, keeps Simeon in prison, then fills the brethren's sacks with money and corn unknown to them, and then sends 9 of the brothers back home commanding and promising in **Ch 43:3** *Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you.*

In other words if do not obey my words and come to me with Benjamin, failing to fulfil my sovereign law, you will be viewed and treated in my sight as guilty and unaccepted, you will not enter my presence, partake of my provision, and will perish in the famine.

But obey my words, come with Benjamin, and you will be accepted and enjoy my presence, provisions and live.

What a gospel message we have, as by nature we are all guilty of sin against Jesus Christ, though we try to ignore it, and get on

with life, yet we go through life condemned as ***he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.***

However, God will pardon guilty sinners saving them from His wrath.

As sinners obey Christ's word, asking for pardon in Jesus name alone, as no man cometh unto the Father but through Christ, they live eternally, but disobey God's word, refuse His command, don't come by Christ, and you will remain guilty, unaccepted and will perish for all eternity.

Praise the Lord for many listening who have obeyed the gospel, but here are many who must obey the gospel and at once come believing.

Having considered ***I FIRST, JOSEPH EXAMINES THEIR CONFESSION REGARDING PROFIT***

Notice:

II SECOND, JOSEPH EXAMINES THEIR CONFESSION REGARDING PRESENTATION.

In hearing the brother's confession it's clear that their father has been lied to about Joseph's death.

Remember, over 20 years previously how did the brothers present themselves and the news of Joseph's absence to their Father.

Notice, **Genesis 37:31-33** ³¹ ***And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood;*** ³² ***And they sent the coat of many colours, and they brought it to their father; and said, This have we found: know now whether it be thy son's coat or no.*** ³³ ***And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.***

their presentation of what took place was deceitful, their words were full of lies. The brothers wanted their Father to conclude Joseph was killed by a wild beast.

for 20 years they lived with this deceit. Unknown to Joseph for 20 years his father had been lied to and given a false presentation of events.

What is interesting to note, that not one of the brothers standing before Joseph was wearing his coat of many colours.

Jacob didn't transfer the coat to one of the other sons, proving their own father didn't view these men as honourable and trustworthy.

The brothers have said themselves the youngest son, is at home, so Jacob didn't trust them to bring him with them.

Joseph will now examine their confession by how or if they return again.

By their return he will know what they have told their Father.

How will they present their case, because Simeon is in prison in Egypt.

When they return home with their money and corn, what story will they make up, or will they tell their father the truth.

Joseph has given them an opportunity to tell the truth not to bear false witness.

Until this point, the brothers are living a lie, bearing false witness.

They have lived under a false presentation of what took place with Joseph, when no one else was around, except the Lord who sees all.

By Joseph examining their attitude and actions regarding **profit**, as they were covetousness for money, **but also their sin included lying**, they have broken God's law not just on one account but every command.

God commanded in **Exodus 20:16** “*Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.*”

We see the sin of lying in the garden of Eden at the entrance sin into the world. In **Genesis 2:16-17** *the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: ¹⁷ But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

Notice the devil said to Eve in **Genesis 3:4** “...*Ye shall not surely die.*” that is a lie, because God said they would die.

When God comes seeking Adam and Eve, notice *Adam’s lie, false witness, how he presents his case before God.*

God said to Adam in **Genesis 3:11** “...*Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?*”

Adam responds by first accusing God for the wife given, and then blaming his wife for giving him the fruit, notice, **Genesis 3:12** *the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.*

Remember, the scene in **Genesis 3**, all are present, *Adam, Eve and Satan.*

(Picture books present this scene, as if Satan and Eve are in a separate location and then Eve sins and then comes to Adam and so on, that is not the case.)

(Rather all three are present when sin enters the world.)

Adam blames Eve. Eve gives a good presentation of facts she said in **Genesis 3:13** ...*The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.* The word **beguiled** means to be *deceived.*

That is interesting, Paul under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, speaks of this scene, in **1 Timothy 2:14** “*And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.*”

In other words, Adam, watched Eve as she was tempted and took the forbidden fruit, but at no time did Adam stop her, intervene,

but when Adam took the fruit he chose to disobey God's command.

But both Adam and Eve were equally guilty of sin against God. But as the Covenant head representing Humanity to love his neighbour, in this case his wife Eve, Adam failed.

Adam as the head of home, failed as the prophet, priest and King in the home.

He failed as Prophet to teach Eve what God had forbidden and to do what God commanded.

He failed as Priest to intervene and intercede for Eve and Himself.

He failed as King to protect his wife from spiritual danger and rule over his house.

Now there is much more we can say about this but will need to revisit these words another occasion.

The point I'm making is this, Adam's presentation of the event was not true and he blamed God and Eve.

Then both Adam and Eve, sinned further, as they also tried to live a lie by hiding their nakedness with fig leaves because they had sinned.

Joseph's brothers 20 years previous presented to their Father a story that was not true, and now 20 years later they still blame one another, **verse 22 And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required.** But all were equally guilty.

When they return to their Father what will they tell him now? How will they explain Simeon's absence.

Scripture reveals from **Genesis 42:29 through to Genesis 43:7** they presented their Father with the truth about Simeon and Benjamin.

Genesis 42:29 And they came unto Jacob their father unto the land of Canaan, and told him all that befell unto them

Ch 43:3 the man did solemnly protest unto us, saying, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you.

The brothers knew they would find acceptance with the Lord of Land if they came in obedience to His word. They gave evidence to their confession.

What a picture we have in gospel of a life that confesses Christ, being delivered from this present evil age. The Lord makes a change in our behaviour, our walk and talk.

He makes us new creatures in Christ. He gives a new way of living, and new way of thinking, and all who follow Him walk in the light as He is in the light.

Saul of tarsus who persecuted the church of Christ, was saved and known as Paul who preached the faith he once destroyed.

Only Christ could make a wonderful change.

Unsaved one, give Christ your heart and He will give you eternal life.

Confess sin against Him and He will Cleanse all sin against you.

III THIRD, JOSEPH EXAMINES THEIR CONFESSION REGARDING PRIDE.

It's clear Joseph's brothers were filled with pride, self-interest and self-centredness.

Their pride refused Joseph's position given by their Father and his authority given by God that one day his brothers would bow before him.

They only cared for self, what suited them. They didn't care how anyone else felt or how their decisions and actions impacted others.

That is seen in their plans to kill Joseph, or when they threw him into the pit, then to sell him as a slave and then to allow their Father to think Joseph was killed by a wild beast.

Now 20 years later in prison, Joseph hears their confession.

By keeping Simeon in prison, sending the rest of the brothers back to Canaan, filling their sacks with corn and money, Joseph will examine their confession regarding their pride based on the evidence of their return,

will they put Simeon first? will they care for him? Or will they leave him and not return. Will they obey authority over them or will they in stubbornness refuse to obey the sovereign's command.

Once again scripture gives the answer. The brothers put other's before themselves.

They show concern.

Now, Jacob will not let Benjamin go to Egypt, but two of the brothers, Ruben and Judah, make promises to their father to secure Benjamin's safe return.

Though Ruben was over zealous and didn't think his proposal through, his request was not accepted. In **verse 37**, he offered his two sons to be killed if he did not return with Benjamin. But, Jacob would not slay his grandchildren.

Judah offered himself taking full responsibility for Benjamin to secure his safety home to his father.

Both brothers, showed humility, concern for Simeon in returning and for each other as they need to buy more food.

The difference, 20 years it's not about them or pride anymore but others.

It's about obeying the Lord of the land, the word of the sovereign ruler.

You see, Pride was the sin that brought plunged humanity into sin. The devil said to Adam and Eve in **Genesis 3:5** ***For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.***

You can be your own authority, ruler and power not submitting to God's word. **Exodus 20:3 *Thou shalt have no other gods before God.*** To worship self is to put yourself in the place of God.

Therefore, believer, in our sin, pride had dominated every area of our lives, especially when it came to spiritual matters. We put ourselves at the centre of everything. We lifted ourselves above others.

Then the glorious light shone in our hearts, our sin exposed, the pride of our hearts challenged, and in humility we asked God for mercy.

We surrendered our lives to Jesus Christ. We obeyed His word. Delight to obey His commands. We now desired that in all things Christ will have the pre-eminence.

While we still battle with pride, yet it does not have dominion over us, Christ has given power and enables by the Spirit to submit ourselves in humility.

And that ***in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others..***

The gospel makes a great change in sinners, Christ alone makes the rebel a Redeemed sinner.

There is hope for you men and woman, Christ died the just for the unjust to be sinners unto God.