

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Evening

Date 5th December 2021 Hymns 270, 439, 691 tune of 145 Read: Genesis 37:1-2 Text Genesis 37:2

Series: Joseph Title: Joseph and his Brethren (1)

Having considered some of the events in Joseph's early days before the age of seventeen, Genesis 37 covers Joseph's life from the age of seventeen onwards.

Jacob has entered into the land of Canaan, yet he only possessed part of the land as it was still occupied by their enemies worshipping false gods.

However, Jacob is to live for God and as the head of the home, he was the **prophet** to instruct his children, the **priest** to offer prayer for his children, and a **King** to protect, correct and govern in their lives.

That is the responsibility for every father in the home, to lead his family in the ways and worship of God to have a time set aside to read the scriptures and pray together, what is called family devotions.

Joseph applied the instruction to his own life to live for God, sadly some of his brothers did not.

Oh may there always be that application to our lives that if spiritual matters in the life and home have been neglected, abandoned, then put the matter right, repair, restore, return, to Bible reading, prayer, family worship.

Its never to late to repair and restart family devotions.

Based on the mercies of God in Christ, present or give yourself and your family to Christ, and He will never disappoint.

Notice today **Joseph and his brethren.**

I FIRST, JOSEPH'S PLACEMENT

We read in verse 2 these are the generations of Jacob, Joseph being seventeen years old. The word **generations** refers *to the genealogy or family line Jacob.*

This phrase **these are the generations of,** are mentioned 12 times in the book of Genesis, but 10 in reference to people, each time marking a new section in the book of Genesis.

Therefore, Genesis 37 -50 marks the last section of the book, centring upon Joseph.

In the generations or family line usually when the Father is named, then the name of the first born son would be placed next in the record.

For instance, in **Gen 5:32** ***Noah, begat Shem, Ham and Japheth.***

Turn to **Gen10:1** ***Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth:***

Gen 25:12-13 ***Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son... And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth...***

The point I'm making is this, in the family of Jacob the next name following should be Ruben.

We read at the end of **Genesis 35:22** ***... Now the sons of Jacob were twelve, v23 the sons of Leah, Reuben, Jacob's firstborn...*** But now in **Gen 37** the Genealogy records the name Joseph.

Why is that. Ruben was the first born of all Jacob's sons and had first right to the blessings of the father, he should have received the inheritance.

The first born son enjoyed the right and privileges the rest of the sons did not. As the first born Ruben was in a responsible and leadership position as in every family.

According to **1 Chron 5:1-2** ***Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel, (for he was the firstborn; but forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel: and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright.***

2 For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler; but the birthright was Joseph's:)

Ruben lost the blessings of His Father Jacob, the birth right which normally went to the oldest child, as the consequence of falling into sin.

We read this in **Genesis 35:22** ***“And it came to pass, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine: and Israel heard it.”*** Bilhah was Rachel's maid, who she gave to Jacob for bear children.

Ruben committed the sin of covetousness breaking God's law, as written down In **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.***

Ruben might have thought he had gotten away with his sin and never to hear about it again, however, Jacob never forgot the transgression of His son, for on his death bed Jacob called his sons together and delivered a word for each son,

Notice, **Gen 49:3-4** ***“Reuben, thou art my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power: 4 Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel; because thou wentest up to thy father's bed; then defiledst thou it: he went up to my couch.***

Reuben your sin hath found you out, your wickedness has been exposed after all this time.

When Ruben sinned he lost the blessing and rewards of His father, Ruben forfeited his rights by disobedience.

However we read the name of Joseph, who received the blessings lost by Ruben, **verse 3** “*Israel loved Joseph...he made him a coat of many colours.*”

Where Ruben sinned in temptation, Joseph succeeded over Temptation. Ruben brought sin, shame and sorrow, but Joseph secured provisions protection and praise.

All that Ruben lost Joseph claimed. Ruben who was once crown was dethroned, whereas Joseph crown with glory and honour.

There we have a picture in the gospel in the replacement of responsibilities between Adam and Christ.

Adam, is called in **1 Cor 15:45** “*the first man...*”

Adam as the first man, was given a leadership role however when he fell into temptation and sinned Adam lost the blessing of God, his sin was that of covetousness, He desired, wanted and took, what God forbid him to have or touch.

Adam broke God’s law, disobeyed his command.

And Adam thought he had gotten away with his sin, for he tried hide and to cover it up, but God spoke to Adam where art thou, the question was not about location but about relationship and fellowship where are you with regard to communion with me.

Adam as result of falling into sin, lost communion with God, he lost a sight of God that he once enjoyed, his knowledge of God was not darkened by sin.

However, **1 Cor 15:45** also speaks of Christ as “*the last Adam.*”

In other words Adam brought sin, there was no other after him but Christ who could provide salvation.

Christ obeyed His father, He did not fail when tempted, and as result Christ restored and secured blessings for His people.

All the blessings of God that Adam lost by his sin, was claimed by Christ for His people.

Let me say sinner, God knows your sin, he sees you as one who has sinned against him, and that sin must be cleansed other wise you will never know forgiveness, peace with God.

Like Ruben you will think for years your sin has been forgotten and you'll get away with it, like Adam you tried to cover it up, but God said **Numbers 32:23** "**be sure your sin will find you out.**" you will face the wages of sin, the punishment in eternal hell. But in place of Ruben there is a Joseph, in place of Adam there is Christ who saves from sin.

Believer maybe like Ruben you sin and think because you are a Christian God will turn the other way.

Always keep before, God will always punish sin, either upon the sinner or Christ's the sinners substitute.

Though a Christian will never be punished for sin in hell for Christ bore the penalty of sin by His death, but God does chastise correct His people on earth for their backsliding.

He has saved a people to live holy unto Him, to glorify Him, to worship Him. He will have His people be like Himself, holy.

Believer you have the blessed assurance that you are eternally forgiven, saved from the penalty and punishment of sin, but you need to be daily cleansed from the pollution and pleasures of sin.

He has saved a people to see them sanctified. Therefore, believer, there is cleaning from sin by the book as **Ps 119:9** states "**Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.**"

1 John 1:7 *the blood of Jesus Christ His son cleanses us from all sin.*

Eph 5:25-26 "...**Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.**"

Sins your ashamed of, but what a promise, what a comfort, cleansing for our minds and lives.

Keep reading scripture and confessing sin, because there is never a time when the book & blood of God's Son does not cleanse from sin.

II SECOND, JOSEPH'S PREREQUISITE.

Joseph's prerequisite or his obligation or his role was that of a shepherd. Notice in **verse 2** "**Joseph being seventeen years old was feeding the flock with his brethren.**"

This role was given to him by his father. Whenever the children reached a certain age they were put to work, obligated by their father to watch the flock and to feed them.

However, it is clear from the scriptural reading Jacob's other sons particularly with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah which were **Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher**, were unfaithful in their obligation, because **Joseph brought unto His father their evil report.**

While we do not fully what they did, said or how they behaved, **however**, since the evil report was made during their time within the field with the flock, **It may involve something surrounding their duties to feeding the flock a lack of care.**

Remember Jacob himself tended to the flock, he knew what was required, maybe he saw signs of slackness in his sons care for the sheep.

Jacob is concerned in **verse 14** about the well being of his sons bit also the flock.

The Holy Spirit wants us to see that Joseph is feeding the flock with his brethren however what evil takes place Joseph is not a partaker of it.

Joseph is set apart, he is not involved or included in their evil report, he is outside the camp.

Therefore, surely as we consider Joseph a young teenager feeding the flock, we have a wonderful view of Christ our heavenly Joseph as the shepherd of His sheep, His redeemed people, feeding the flock of God by the word of God, but also teaching the difference between a good shepherd and a hireling.

Not only was Christ in the temple at age 12 teaching the religious leaders, and answering their questions as recorded in **Luke 2:42-47** He is feeding them with the word of God.

But also the Lord Jesus taught in **John 10:11** ***"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."***

The word **shepherd** means **a pastor**, A shepherd cares for his sheep, he feeds them, leads them provides for them. **Psalm 21:1** ***the LORD is my Shepherd, Jehovah is my Pastor.***

Then Christ said ¹² ***But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd***, the word **hireling** means **one hired**, it refers **to a hired servant or worker.**

whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The word **leaveth** means **to forsake, to leave alone, go away from.**

in **Matthew 9** Christ showed His disciples the multitudes in **verse 36** ***He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd.*** No pastor to care for their soul, and to teach as Samuel did the good and right way.

¹³ ***The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.*** The word **careth** is a key word, it means **to be concerned about to be interested in, to focus upon.**

However, the negative shows the hired servant is not concerned for the sheep, he has no interest in the sheep, he is just there for gain, but he has no interest in them, he can walk away at the

end of the day and forget them, if they are in danger, they are left to themselves.

Then the Lord Jesus brings it back to Himself, ¹⁴ ***I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.*** I am the good pastor, **John 10** I gave my life for my sheep, **v15** I laid it down for them, I am concerned about my sheep, I care for them, I pray for them.

Though the sheep are prone to wander and go astray, I will go and search for them, restore and bring them back.

I will not leave them to defend themselves, that's my obligation, that's the charge I lay on myself. **Verse 28** ***“And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”*** No one will ever love you more than Christ.

Paul calls Christ in **Hebrews 13:20** ***“our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, Peter calls Him in 1 Peter 5:4 “the chief Shepherd...”***

Believer we have a shepherd one we love so well how He has blessed us tongue can never tell. On the cross He suffered, shed His blood and die that I might ever in His love confide, therefore, follow Him day by day.

I just wonder, in thinking about Joseph and his brethren, Joseph cared for the sheep in the field, but his brothers viewed it more a job, and where cared not.

There is a lesson for us all in the life of Joseph from the Minister to the individual in dealing with people.

That I will look beyond Joseph feeding the flock of animals and see Christ feeding the flock as in His redeemed people, and follow His example and fulfil my heavenly obligation given by the Father, and an oath I have made before the Lord, to be a good and faithful pastor, to you, the flock in London, and pray for you,

care for you, love you, lead you, feed and protect by the instruction from the word.

To one another in the congregation, and parents in the home, shepherd the flock, the family God has given you. May our children know they are loved and cared for in home. May husband and wife know they are loved by one another, cared for my one another, this is Christ like.