

# SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

## Lord's Day Afternoon

Date 9<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Preacher Pastor Philip Knowles Hymns/Ps 138v1-5 T  
Winchester 203, 228, 221

Read: Genesis 41:46-57 Text Genesis 41:54-55

Series: Joseph Title: The Famine as Joseph said.

Joseph the servant and faithful messenger of God, has interpreted Pharaoh's dream by declaring the meaning of the dream, which was really God's message, what He was about to do with Pharaoh.

Joseph warned that after seven years of plenty, there would be seven years of famine affecting not only Egypt but all lands.

Therefore, Pharaoh acted upon the word and message which he heard, and appointed Joseph to rule over land of Egypt.

Joseph alone had authority and ability to save the people from perishing.

All who came to Joseph for provision would live.

**Verses 54-onwards**, refers to that seven-year famine, ***And the seven years of dearth began to come, according as Joseph had said: and the dearth was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.***

What is striking are the words ***according as Joseph had said.***

The events took place on account of Joseph's words.

His interpretation concerning the famine proved to be faithful and true.

What He said regarding God's word and eternal decree came to pass.

Therefore, the people were ruled by Joseph's word and lived by obedience doing what He said to them.

What a lesson we have an illustration pointing to Jesus Christ, whose words are faithful and true.

During the Saviour's earthly ministry, His life, death and resurrection was according as He said.

He must suffer, and rise again on the third day, but also, He spoke of His glorious return and reign.

He preached about judgement for sin, a final and eternal separation between the saved and lost, these will be according as He has said.

**But you may doubt, disown, and deny the word of Christ, but that will not stop, all that is yet to take place, according as He hath said.**

God's word is true, it is forever settled in heaven.

Therefore, just as Pharaoh and the people of the land were warned of a coming famine, the need to prepare, be ready as Joseph said,

**so likewise** men and woman you are warned of a coming day of judgment, you must prepare, be ready, for God has established it and it appointed it according as He hath said.

Believer we must do the works of Him that hath sent us, for the time will come when no man shall work, our labour will have ended,

therefore, prepare a people for the coming of Christ, sow the gospel seed, plead with sinners to be reconciled to God, flee the wrath to come, proclaim there is abundant and eternal life in Christ for all who obey the gospel.

May we see our families won to Christ.

**The famine according as Joseph said.**

**I FIRST, THE NATURE OF THE FAMINE**

**1 Destitution of the famine.** **Verse 54**, “...***the dearth was in all lands...***” **verse 55** “...***all the land of Egypt was famished...***”

The word **dearth**, is the actual word **famine**, but it also can mean **hunger**, and so we could read those words, “...***the dearth/the famine, hunger was in all lands...***”

The thought of being **famished** is the exact same thought, meaning ***hunger, to be hungry.***

The idea is of poverty, barrenness, empty, nothingness, destitution.

There was seven years of plenty and now there is seven years of famine. **Verse 55** ***And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread.*** The famine has left the people destitute, hungry.

The famine in its literal and physical meaning, points to spiritual lessons regarding the famine and poverty there is because of man's sin.

When God created this world and mankind, there was fruitfulness in the garden of Eden and with man.

God created man to glorify and enjoy Him forever.

Adam and Eve enjoyed the goodness of God's creation, they never lacked anything.

The garden was beautiful, yeah it was perfect, as God's word tells me in **Genesis 1:29** ***And God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good....***”

**Genesis 1:28-30 records life, no death.**

***the land flourished, the water flowed, there was growth.***

(Paul writes in **Colossians 1:16** ***all things were created by Him, and for Him.***

***the same truth in John 1:3 “All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made. God’s own creation is His own glory. )***

***There was no famine, dearth, because there was no sin.***

But the moment mankind sinned against God by disobeying His word, eating of the tree God had forbidden, all mankind had sinned and come short of the glory of God.

**SC Q 17 into what estate did the fall bring mankind into sin?**

**A “*the fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery.*”**

When sin entered the world, not only was the land cursed, as stated by **Genesis 3:17** ***cursed is the ground for thy sake***, but also mankind, **Romans 5:12** ***“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:***

Mankind lost everything by sinning against God, we have been left destitute. We lost the blessings of God and communion with God.

Due to sin, there is now a famine in the soul of man.

The heart by nature pursues so many avenues to fill the void left by sin, but it remains famished.

The natural heart of man is spiritually famished, it is like a land that is lifeless, barren, dry, empty, and poverty stricken.

As a result of their sin, men and woman are spiritually helpless, hopeless, bankrupt, beggars, and destitute.

**2 Dominion of the famine.**

**Verse 56 “...*the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt.*”**

**Verse 57 “...*the famine was so sore in all lands.*”**

The word **sore** signifies **great, a great famine, a severe famine.**

The same word was used to describe the famine in the days of the Prophet Elijah **1 Kings 18:2** ***And there was a sore famine in Samaria.*** Remember, it hadn't rained for 3 years and 6 months, it was a sore, a great famine.

However, the famine in Joseph's time, is also described as one that **waxed sore in the land of Egypt.**"

The phrase **waxed sore** means **to become stronger, to lay hold upon, take over, to catch, harden.**

Later in the life of Joseph we read in **Genesis 47:20** ***the famine prevailed over them*** that is over the people.

The word **prevailed** is the same original word and meaning as **waxed sore.**

What I'm showing is this, the famine was prevailing, and very powerful in Egypt, and in surrounding countries, its presence was known, it became stronger, through the years.

The famine took hold of the land with such power, strength and force, that the people were powerless to stop it dominating.

The famine took over, its presence was evident.

**So, it is with the famine spiritually speaking, the famine of sin in our land abounds on every corner, sin has dominion over the lives of sinners.**

As years go on, man's wicked imaginations continue, new carnal inventions are created by man, the famine in man's heart prevails, the hardness remains, his sinful actions becomes greater, waxes sore, becomes more severe,

but the sinner has no power to stop the famine, he cannot save himself, **but is bound by sin and lives according to his sin.**

His practises will be in keeping with his corrupt nature.

We know this to be true, when Paul wrote to believers at Rome in making reference to salvation said in **Romans 6:14** ***For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.***

The word **dominion** means **to rule over**.

Meaning, believer before conversion, sin controlled your life, sin ruled your desires.

But since Christ's accomplishment of redemption has been applied to your heart by the Holy Spirit, you are no longer under the Law's curse which is eternal death.

Sin no longer has sovereign rule, reign, power and control over the believing sinner.

Believer's have been set free from sins rule, and reign, its power, and penalty, by Christ's power to live unto God.

Therefore, sinner there is hope for you, because Christ set's sinners free from sins dominion, and rule over lives.

Acknowledge your sin, Turn from sin, and accept Christ as your only Saviour.

This was the scene during the famine in the land one of dominion, everything effected by the famine.

### **Districts of the famine.**

In taking the meaning of all the words, the severe famine, and hunger, ***was over all the face of the earth...***"

It interesting to note, in Chapter 42, Jacob is in the land of Israel, and the family are effected by the famine, so that none escaped.

**Genesis 47:13** ***And there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very sore, so that the land of Egypt and all the land of Canaan fainted by reason of the famine.***

Remember Jacob and his family were Jews, whereas, the Egyptians and other surrounding nations were gentiles non-jews.

Once again we have the message Paul proclaimed in **Romans 3** concerning both Jew and Gentile, that **Romans 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one. V12...there is none that doeth good, no, not one.**

(Paul proved this truth, by exposing sin of the unbelieving Gentiles against God in Chapter 1, then in Ch 2 Paul exposes the sin of unbelieving Jews.

Paul concludes in chapter 3 bringing both Gentiles and Jews together, showing whether you are a heathen sinner as the Gentiles or a self-righteous sinner as the Jews it matters not, all the world is guilty before God, as there is none righteous no not one.)

Sin has touched the whole world, for every country, every land, and all mankind having fallen and sinned in Adam being represented by Him, are cursed by the fall and remain under the curse of eternal death.

(Within the heart of men and woman is a dearth, a hunger that the course of this present evil world in its pursuits, pleasures, practises and programs can never fill.)

This is what the people of Egypt and around the world, discovered by the nature of the famine, **they are left destitute by the famine, dominated by the famine, and all districts are under the effects of the famine.**

Likewise, England and London is famished by sin, there is a dearth to the things of God.

Sin rules city life and the lives of sinners.

So unsaved it is with your life, there is hunger in soul that seeks to be feed, a void that desires to be filled, unless it is fed, and filled by the glorious person and gospel ministry of Christ.

**God created and breathed into your body an eternal soul, therefore, only He knows what will satisfy the sin sick soul, and the answer is Christ because God is satisfied with Christ, who did all that was required to dethrone the rule of sin and bring sinners back into fellowship with God.**

Therefore, the answer for England, London yeah for all, for sinner's eternal life and believers enjoying abundant life, is Jesus Christ.

## **II SECOND, THE NEED IN THE FAMINE**

**Verse 54** “...*and the dearth was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.* **Verse 55** *And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread:*

The need was bread, in other words, the need in the famine was to live. The famine exposed the people's need.

Remember the people knew the famine was coming. They knew by Joseph's message seven years of plenty would be followed by seven years of famine.

During first seven years of plenty, they didn't see the land famished. Their minds had been taken up with the plenty.

Now they became anxious and troubled, **Verse 55** *when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread:* The people cried out in need, for what they didn't have, bread.

Here are the gentiles seeing their need for bread to live.

But in chapter **42:1-2** we read of Jacob telling his sons, *Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither,*



***and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die.***

Here are the Jews seeing their need for bread to live.

Literally Bread is that what fills, nourishes, and sustains the hungry. Without bread the people would perish in the famine.

It was only when the people of the land were made to feel their need, and to understand without bread they would perish, ***did the Gentiles cry out for bread and the Jews came seeking bread.***

The same with you sinner, you are facing a severe famine, a dearth, a darkness, a deadness, a hunger that will never be filled, unless you see yourself in great spiritual need.

Until you see and know your sin exposed by God's law revealing your spiritual misery, emptiness, and understand your need to have sin forgiven, you will remain empty and in misery facing eternal death.

Believer, there was a time when you were taken up with the years of plenty, but you had been told a day of judgment will come, which left you troubled and anxious.

The true need of your heart was revealed, and you cried out for salvation, and since then every day you are nourished and sustained by Christ's person, presence, ministry, and word, because all that thrills the soul is Jesus.

Therefore, unsaved like the people in Egypt and Israel, see your need for bread to have the emptiness filled and misery removed, and the need for eternal life to be spared from eternal death, I urge you to now seek that living bread, for not to is to perish.

***The people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do.***

You ask where do I go for this living bread? or who is the living bread? I answer you Jesus Christ is the living bread. He alone can meet and fill the need. Only Christ satisfies the famished soul.

The Lord Jesus spoke in **John 6:33** *For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.* **John 6:32-33** “...my father giveth the true bread of heaven,” “for the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world.”

The nature and need in the famine:

### **III THIRD, THE NEWS IN THE FAMINE.**

The news in the famine was **Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do.** Go believing and Obeying His word. It was the news they needed to hear.

Joseph was good news. He did all that was required to save life.

Men and woman, Jesus Christ is good news, gospel news, the greatest news. He has done all that was required to save eternally.

Sinner, go to Jesus now for full salvation.

Believer, go to Jesus for continual nourishment.

Do what He says, **John 6:35** “**I am the bread of life, he that cometh to me shall never hunger...**” from a beggary to blessing, from hunger to holiness, from famine to fulness, yeah from death to life.