

## Lord's Day Afternoon

Date 10 March 2024

Preacher Rev Philip Knowles

Hymns Read: Genesis 43:26-34 Text Genesis 43: 26-34

Series: Joseph Title: Joseph's sympathy, and seating.

When the Joseph's brothers, left home and entered Egypt, Joseph the Sovereign Ruler sent his steward to bring these men to him.

In fulfilling Joseph's command, the steward, testifies of Joseph, brings comfort to the troubled men on the basis of Joseph's purpose, and leads them to Joseph the sovereign ruler, where he will meet with them and provide for them.

We seen how the work of the steward in comforting and leading the men to Joseph, points symbolically to the ministry of the Holy Spirit who comforts and leads sinners and saints to Christ for salvation and sanctification.

In entering the sovereign's presence, the men present their gift and bow themselves to him, acknowledging His Lordship, position, power and pre-eminence, not just as ruler over Egypt but over them, because they know He has all authority given into his hand to make them his servants.

However, he will bless them, because in **v16 when Joseph saw Benjamin with them... he said these men shall dine with me at noon.**

They came in obedience to His word, **Genesis 42:20 bring your youngest brother unto me...and ye shall not die.**

Such words point to the Lord Jesus Christ who receives and dines with sinners that trust in His word.

Having considered **Joseph's Steward, Sovereignty,** notice:

**III THIRD, JOSEPH'S SYMPATHY.**

In **verse 29** *Joseph lifted up his eyes and saw his brother, Benjamin, his mother's son and said is this your younger brother of whom ye spake unto me?*

**Verse 30**... *his bowels did yearn upon his brother*..... the word **yearn** literally means **to grow warm and tender, to be or grow hot.**

**It refers to strong feelings, tenderness, sympathy, that causes one to act.** This is not a feeling that goes away, but a strong feeling, that must be acted upon.

It is used in **1 Kings 3:26** when two woman claimed to own the same baby.

Solomon in his wisdom said he would cut the child in half for each to share, however, the child's true mother couldn't bear this to happen and so intervened, **for her bowels yearned upon her son**... her feelings for her child called her into action.

Joseph yearned for Benjamin his brother, and his strong feelings called him to take action.

He couldn't refrain himself, he had to enter into his chamber and he wept there.

Joseph yearning, feelings and weeping for Benjamin, caused him to pray, **God be gracious unto thee, my son**, and then to make provision for him, **v31 set bread.**

Joseph sympathises with Benjamin, because they both lost their mother, but also, they had been separated from one another due to the sin of their brothers in selling Joseph.

Now they had been brought back together, and Joseph yearns to bless him, fellowship with him and restore the years lost due to sin.

He also yearns for his brothers, and sympathises with them, he asks for their well being. He knows they are in great need. He desires to save their lives from perishing in the famine.

He sympathises with his brothers, He yearns for them, because Joseph is their brother.

He identifies with them as their brother, as he suffered for 22 years, being despised, rejected, hated, betrayed, sold, tempted, accused, sentence to prison and forgotten.

He knows how they feel. God has permitted Joseph's sorrows and sufferings to save his brothers and preserve them from perishing in the famine.

What a picture we have of Jesus Christ who yearns over the sinners spiritual well being.

His mercy calls upon Him to be gracious unto them, to take action to save sinners from spiritual death, to forgive their sin, to restore them to God and fellowship with them.

That He did by suffering in their place, welcoming them to His table, to remain all the days of their life.

Believer, even from heaven, Christ still yearns to bless you, He sympathises with you.

We have a man in the glory, the Godman, who is touched with the feelings our infirmities. He understands every struggle, care, read, fear and need. He enters into those feelings.

He lived to die for us, He arose to justify us, He entered heaven to pray for us, He sits upon His throne to bless us, and One day He will return to meet with us, and we will sit at the table He has prepared.

**Joseph's Stewart, Sovereignty, Sympathy**

**IV FOURTH & FINALLY, JOSEPH'S SEATING v31-34.**

**Verses 31-34** focus upon the feast that Joseph prepared.

Remember the words at the end of verse 16 “**bring these men home, and slay and make ready, for these men shall dine with me at noon.**”

In Joseph’s house verse 25 states “**they heard that they should eat bread there.**” Verse 31 ...**set on bread**...

Notice three thoughts about Joseph’s seating:

### 1 The placing of Joseph’s seating.

At the meal, three tables were arranged by Joseph, v32.

At one table, Joseph is seated by himself because he is the sovereign ruler.

Then another table for his Jewish brothers,

And then the Egyptians are seated at another table, as verse 32 states for the **Egyptians** to **eat bread with the Hebrews... that is an abomination unto the Egyptians.**

Genesis 46:34 states **every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians.** At this stage Joseph does not want his brothers or the Egyptians to know these shepherds are his brothers who sold him.

Joseph’s table is the center table, because the table of Egyptians is near Joseph, and the Hebrews seating arrangement, verses 33 & 34, **is before him.**

The whole point is this in the seating arrangement all have a view of Joseph, he is hidden from none who sit at the meal prepared by Him.

And that is significant for this reason, Joseph’s feast is prepared for both his brother being Jews, and the Egyptians being gentile heathens.

Verse 32 the Egyptians which did eat with him. They were not forsaken by Joseph, but welcomed to his table. They were given into his hand to rule over and provide for.

The brothers were guilty, of rejecting Joseph. They didn't deserve to sit at the table, they only deserved, to be condemned to a life of slavery.

Yet Joseph is gracious to them, he welcomes them into his home, to feast at the table prepared for them. He knows all about them though they know nothing of him.

Joseph receives the worst of men, those who are abomination to the Egyptians, who themselves were heathen sinners, hostage to their own gods.

Yet keep before you the main picture, there is a famine throughout all the lands, which have effected all people, and all are subject to perish unless there is provision.

both the Jew and Gentile equally faced the famine throughout all the lands and both needed the provision found in Joseph, the Saviour of the world.

All where to look to Joseph the sovereign ruler for provision.

They are both welcome to eat at Joseph's house.

Joseph has welcomed the worst of sinners, who both naturally despised him, because the Jews rejected their own, and the Egyptians would have viewed him as abominable shepherd. But both are welcomed and fed by him.

See Christ, who welcomes into his presence guilty sinners, both Jew and Gentile from every walk of life, who deserve to remain in spiritual slavery and hell's eternal prison, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Yet Christ the King and head of the church, had prepared the table, and though we didn't know Him, He knew us and seated us according to His sovereign choice, and through His provision we have been saved from eternal death.

The provision for poor and needy sinners is received by looking to Jesus by faith, as the Lord delivered his message through

Isaiah, as he proclaimed in **Isaiah 45:22** ***Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else***

Peter preached in **Acts 4:12** ***“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”*** there is no other name to save Jew and Gentile on earth only Christ. He alone is the power of God unto salvation.

## **2 The provision at Joseph's seating.**

The key meal at the table is bread, **verse 31** ...***set on bread***... because bread fills, sustains and nourishes the hungry.

It also amazing to keep before you that one of the meaning of the name Pharaoh gave to Joseph, **Zaphnathpaaneah**, is not only ***saviour of the world, but also living bread.***

When Joseph was sent out by Pharaoh to save a people from the coming famine by providing food, Joseph was faithful in his role.

**Joseph got straight to work in doing all that needed to be done to secure deliverance for a people from the coming famine. He laboured for the needs of the people facing famine.**

**This task was given to Joseph and to him alone. He must do all things in order and well. He went out a man full of the Holy Spirit, wisdom and understanding.**

**Joseph was ever active and busy. He identified himself with the people of the land. He laboured for the well being of the people.**

He finished the work he was sent to do, He gathered in a bountiful supply, that is out storehouses in various places throughout the land of Egypt that when the poor and needy

famished by the famine came seeking bread there was a storehouse in reach. **Genesis 41:46** **Joseph opened all the storehouses**... They came seeking bread and received bread.

There was enough supply to meet the need for all who came to Joseph seeking bread.

This is the scene as the Hebrews and Egyptian Gentile are seated at Joseph's meal, there is a provision to satisfy and nourish.

The food came from Joseph's table, it was given out from him.

So it is in Christ, our bread of heaven, He is living bread. He is our sufficient Saviour, He alone is able to satisfy both Jew and Gentile.

He is able to meet the need for all who come to Him. **John 6:35**  
***“And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.***

### **3 the purpose of Joseph's seating.**

Joseph's seating arrangement for his brothers at dinner is once again according to his sovereign purpose to test his brothers and examine their confession, recorded in **Genesis 42:21-22** **and 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.***

Once again, the test and examination, centres upon the brothers treatment of Benjamin to cause them to think how they treated Joseph.

For instance, Joseph had them seated as **verse 33** confirms, *the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his birth right...* to this *the men marvelled one at another*. They were **astonished**.

Yet they never brought the signs together and asked themselves, it is not strange that someone knows about us, even our birthright the oldest to the youngest, instead they continued on, their understanding blinded.

Furthermore, when they received their meal, Benjamin received *five times as much as any of theirs*. This doesn't mean that Benjamin ate more than the others, but he did receive more.

Again, it never sunk in, it never seemed odd, they never questioned, Benjamin has received more than any.

They didn't put the facts together and say the ruler has asked for Benjamin, **verse 29** *is this your younger brother of whom ye spake unto me...*"

why was it, we will only receive corn and have acceptance with the ruler, and access to the throne, if we bring Benjamin?

now we are seated according to our ages and Benjamin, received five times more than anyone.

What so special about Benjamin? Why is Benjamin treated a distinguished guest, why is he so favoured by the sovereign?

Why did the sovereign say only to Benjamin at the end of **verse 29** *"God be gracious unto thee my son."*

Joseph is examining their confession. It is the same test only instead of money this it is giving priority, pre-eminence, position, and a great provision.

Just as Joseph's received such from his father, so Joseph does the same with Benjamin.

How will the brothers react? How will they respond and treat Benjamin, because 22 years before, Joseph was singled out, he



received, the father's love and favour, a coat of many colours, a position of leadership.

In Dothan he was the youngest son with his brothers that day, and they hated him, they plotted against him, they cast him into a pit, and sold him into slavery.

Their treatment towards Benjamin was different to how they treated Joseph.

Therefore, believer, day by day, God is examining and testing our growth in grace so that the fruit of the spirit will flourish.

But that test may be in giving another believer blessings, more responsibility, children, finances, job security, bigger house, their own house, cheaper rent, greater health, many talents, how will you respond? This applies to preachers & congregations.

How will you treat that believer? How will a preacher treat another preacher.

Will jealousy rise, will pride take over, will you treat that believer different? Suspicious?! accuse God of not blessing you in such ways?

Or will you bless God and enjoy with that believer the gifts and talents God has given.

Will you thank God, the preachers ministry has been blessed.

How you view and treat your brother and sister is how you treat your Saviour. He and His people are one, as Christ said **John 13:35** ***By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.***

**Gal 5:13 by love serve one another. 1 John 3:15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer. To hate is to murder someone with your heart.**

***To hate another believer is to hate Christ, but to love one another shows a change. That is what Joseph is examining as does Christ.***

***Its amazing, he invites any to his table to feast and fellowship. But in mercy, He calls sinners to dine with Him and rejoice with him, in His presence is fullness of joy and at His right hand are pleasures for evermore.***