

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Afternoon

Date 9th October 2022

Preacher: Rev Philip Knowles Ps/Hymns Ps 85v1-8 1st version T-Fountain, 5 260.

Read: Genesis 40:1-8 Text Genesis 40:1-8

Series: Joseph Title: Joseph's service, sympathy and sense

When Joseph was put into prison, he was then joined by Pharaoh's two chief officers, the chief Butler and Baker.

The two men having offended their King, had now fallen from the position they held and were viewed and treated by Pharaoh as guilty for their offence.

Having been put into the same prison as Joseph, all three were prisoners, and condemned as guilty.

Yet we must never forget that Joseph himself was not guilty of any crime, however, having been falsely accused, he was put into prison.

The Butler and Baker were naturally offenders of the King, and deserved to face the full wrath of Pharaoh.

However, Joseph, did not deserve his punishment, yet to fulfil God's plan of redemption to save the nation from death by famine, and preserve the promised seed line to which messiah would be born, Joseph must endure his sentence, and did so submissively to the will of God.

Joseph was in prison for the spiritual well being of the nation.

There is a view of Calvary, Christ and the two Thieves. Both men deserved to be on the cross for their crimes, but Christ had done nothing amiss, nothing out of place.

Acts 13:28 "they found no cause of death in Him, yet desired they Pilate that He should be slain."

Christ didn't die for any sin of His own. On the cross, Christ was viewed and treated by God and man as guilty, accountable for all the sins of all His people.

When God providently brought the Butler and Baker into prison did was working according to His divine pleasure. God was working many ways to fulfil one plan and purpose.

For instance, God will use the Butler to bring about the release of Joseph from prison.

But for today God has placed both men in the same prison with Joseph to understand the message each one received.

The message was one of restoration for the Butler and ruination for the Baker, one of life and death.

Again, on the cross, Christ's message for the two men on either side, confirmed restoration for one, and the ruination of another, one to full pardon and the other to full damnation.

There are many lines thought, God has brought you here today as part of His purpose to hear and understand the message He has for you, will it be your restoration or ruination.

Notice the lead up to the message.

I FIRST JOSEPH'S SERVICE

When the Chief Butler and Baker were put into prison, we read in **verse 4** *And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them...*" The word **charged**, *means to appoint, attend to, and to visit.*

The keeper of the prison has charged, appointed Joseph to attend to the needs of the Chief Butler and Baker.

When Joseph was brought into Egypt, he served Potiphar. He had responsibility of the affairs of Pharaoh's house.

Now in prison, Joseph is serving again.

The Chief Butler and Baker are put under Joseph's care, to attend to them, wait on them, as a servant does his master.

This is brought by the words, ***and he served them...***" The word **served** means ***to minister***.

Joseph was not ministered unto, but he ministered, served them. Joseph's service involved lower tasks, whatever was required. He was a lowly servant.

Once again Joseph is viewed as a servant above servants. He ministered to others in his own suffering and sorrows.

Gaze your minds higher to a greater than Joseph the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, the one to all power belongs yet who humbles Himself, takes upon Him the form of a servant.

Christ the perfect servant, a servant of servants, carried out His servant's role on earth, by ministering to others during His humiliation.

We have a picture of Christ serving others in **John 13**. Once supper had finished, **verses 5** Christ ***began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.***

To wash another's feet was the task of a servant, it was a lowly role belonging the servant of the house.

Here we have Christ the supreme one fulfilling the role of the servant in His humiliation.

Serving others comes from a life that is surrendered to the Lord's will, a heart that is willing and submissive.

Christ was training His disciples, those He would do His work through are His servants.

But before they could lead they must first serve. Before exaltation they must experience humility.

Before more is given, there must be faithfulness & obedience to the little in front.

On this occasion it was Peter who needed to learn this lesson of serving others.

The life of a servant and the task of serving is about others.

The Lord washed the disciples feet and He came to wash Peter's feet, **verse 8** *Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet...* such a rejection, was an unwillingness to follow Christ's example in serving.

However, Peter did surrender to the Lord's word. Christ will have His people conformed to His image, shaped and moulded like Himself.

Therefore, Christ said in **verses 14-15** *"if I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.*

The Lord was using the lowly illustration of foot washing, to teach it takes humility, dying to self, to serve others.

Peter having learned the lesson, he taught it to believers, **1 Peter 5:6** *Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due season.*

Throughout Christ's ministry He taught by word and example the role of servant and what it means to serve others.

In Matthew 20, two disciples are more concerned about high positions in heaven than serving on earth.

Christ answered by using Himself as the supreme example of service. He begins to reveal His mission of serving sinners He came to save. **Matthew 20:27-28** *"And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: ²⁸ Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*

Paul learned Christ's example of serving, when Christ revealed it to him. ***Christ did the greatest good, in serving sinners,***

Acts 10:38 ***How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.***

Paul writes in **Galatians 6:10** ***“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.***

Notice, there is, doing good, serving in the general sense, do good unto all men, then there is the particular sense, especially unto them who are of the household of faith, they are the family of God.

By serving others we are in fact serving Christ. By ministering to others we reflect the person and gospel ministry of Christ, when we serve your brother and sister in Christ, out of love, we reflect Christ's love for them in service.

Equally true believer, if like Peter you don't allow others to serve you, minister to you, you are not following Christ's example, you reject His word, and hinder the one serving in receiving a blessing for following Christ.

Believer, we are saved, our sins forgiven because Christ ministered, served us in His life and as His death. Yeh, in heaven He continues to serve us by praying for us.

Therefore, serve and pray for one another. There are many ways to serve Christ in this ministry, youth and children's work, music ministry, audio ministry, help bring refreshments for Sunday afternoon, attend the meetings, that's serving others, that's helping others, that's serving Christ, and when faithful in the small things, He will bless with greater.

I Joseph's service.

II SECOND, JOSEPH'S SYMPATHY.

The Butler and Baker have a dream which troubles them, the reason being, **verse 8** show there was no interpreter of their dreams.

However, in the morning when Joseph sees them, he can tell something is not right. He senses they are burdened. He sees their expressions, notice, **verse 6** *And Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, and, behold, they were sad.*

Look at the end of **verse 7** "...*Wherefore look ye so sadly to day?*" now Joseph could have just walked past them. He could have seen their expressions and said nothing.

He could have thought, not my problem, or I have enough already without adding your situation.

But he didn't.

Rather, Joseph intervenes, he comes along side them. Joseph identifies with them, and concerned for them. He too is in prison. He shares in their sufferings, sorrows and sentencing.

Joseph sympathizes with the Butler and Baker. He understands, their feelings.

Even though he is experiencing sorrow, yet he acquaints and familiarises himself with the grief, sadness of others.

Once again what a view we have of Christ the Great High Priest, the sympathizing and compassionate Saviour.

Remember in **Matthew 9**, when the Saviour was teaching His disciples, about His harvest field, and the need to pray, asking God to send forth labourers into His field, **verse 36** *But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.*

The words *moved with compassion* mean **His heart yearned**. They are strong words, a strong desire. Christ was a man of

great feeling. He was “moved with compassion,” and He acted upon it.

Matthew 9 is in reference to spiritual needs, showing Christ's compassion for fallen humanity because of the ruin that sin has brought. He could see the effects of sin in the lives of multitudes.

The Saviour having taken our humanity unto Himself, identifies with our sorrows, and sufferings. He endured every sorrow known to humanity. He knew what it was to be to be hungry, tired, examined, forsaken, condemned as guilty, feel pain, tempted, experience the death of a loved one and to weep.

Hebrews 2:18 ***For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted.***

Our heavenly Joseph, the Lord Jesus doesn't pass us by, rather He comes quickly to help in times of sorrow.

He sees the expressions; He understands the worries. He knows the heat break, He keeps record of the tears, He is compassionate.

There's not a friend like the lowly Jesus, He cares all about your struggles and troubles. When the two disciples walked the Emmas Road, Christ asked why they were sad.

Luke 24:15 ***Jesus Himself drew near and went with them.***

Therefore, believer we are to follow's Christs pattern, show an interest, a concern for those who are saddened for whatever reason.

Be compassionate toward the discouraged, come alongside the the troubled one, Help the sick, Sympathize with broken hearted.

That's what Joseph did, what Christ did, drew near to them.

There may a be certain, situation, sickness, that means you can't draw near physically, but you can draw near by

sending a helpful text, speaking on the phone, sending supplies.

Its all part of serving. That is to have the mind of Christ, and a heart that feels for all.

Some are hurting, some are wounded, some like the Butler and Baker don't understand what it all means.

Ask the questions, wait for answers, offer prayer, and point them heavenward.

III THIRD, JOSEPH'S SENSE.

In **verse 8**, When the Butler and Baker answered Joseph, ***We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you.***

Each tell Joseph their dreams and then Joseph gives the sense, the meaning of the dream. Joseph didn't give his opinion, or might could happen, rather what will happen according to God's word, which as a lamp and light to guide him. Joseph expounded the word of God as it was revealed to him.

Just as Ezra the scribe, when he ***stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose*** he opened the word of God along with other officers. We read **Nehemiah 8:8** ***“So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.*** The word **sense** has the idea **to explain, to give the true meaning.**

Not what they think it could mean, hopefully mean, or I want to it mean, no, Joseph gave the meaning so they understood, here is what God has said and this what God's wants you to know and to do. There was, no open discussion or debate.

This minister of the word, must give the sense of the word.

Back to Joseph.

The Butler's dream is from **verses 9-11**, and the sense given is from **verses 12-13**

The Bakers dream from **verses 16-17** and the sense given is from **verses 18-19**

Joseph's words comes with truth and authority, because he is giving God's word. This was God's message for the two men.

Therefore, it was God's inspired, truthful and authoritative. All that Joseph interpreted, the sense he gave came to pass. He happened as he said.

Notice, the language Joseph uses, there preciseness, exactness, in **verse 13 thou shalt**, **verse 19 within three days shall Pharaoh**. There are no, if's, but's maybe.

These things took place as **verse 22** states **as Joseph had interpreted**. Joseph's was to be trusted because it was the word of God.

See our greater Joseph, the Saviour Himself who said in **John 7:16** "**...My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me.** **Mark 1:22** "**He taught them as one that had authority**" His words came by power. His words are faithful and truth, and shall never pass away.

Christ always gave the sense of God's word, remember in **Luke 4:16-19** **And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.**

17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the

captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

¹⁹ To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. ²⁰ And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down.

Therefore, believer, when you serve and sympathise with others, and they ask questions, give them the word of God.

I know at times we say here is what I would do, or in my opinion I think, such terminology fails when lined beside God's word.

Let God answer for Himself, give them the meaning of the word. His word will not return to Him void but will accomplish His good pleasure.

May God by the power of the Holy Spirit and the by the prayers of God's people keep this preacher, this pulpit and this place, true to the word of God.

Believer you can trust the word of God, to live for God

Unsaved you can trust God's word for salvation. God's word will never fail.