

# Returning with Joy and Thanksgiving Quality: Average

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[ 0 : 00 ] I will again read from the book of the prophet Jeremiah chapter 31 verse 12 Jeremiah chapter 31 verse 12 Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord for wheat and for wine and for oil and for the young of the flock and of the herd and their souls shall be as a watered garden and they shall not sorrow any more at all

You dear younger friends may find it difficult to understand a text like this But you know God sent his servants and gave to his people Israel many many warnings because of their sins their iniquities their idolatry And he solemnly warned them that if they did not turn from their evil ways he would severely chasten them We read You know Though the Lord's messengers testified these things many times there was no remedy

Things had got so generally bad that the Lord permitted permitted Nebuchadnezzar to come up and to carry very many of his people into Babylon And great damage was done to their land by their enemies We must not for a moment think They were all ungodly people who went into captivity There were quite a number of godly people For instance Daniel and his three friends And many of them were very troubled

Very cast down Because They were in captivity But the Lord Very mercifully promised That at the end of those seventy years They should return to their own land And our text really informs us how they felt or would feel upon their return For the Lord's wonderful goodness and mercy unto them It would be a time of rejoicing and a time of thanksgiving With joy they would go up to the house of God to praise him and bless him for all his great goodness unto them

And it would appear that various differences would be sunk and that there would be that flowing together to the goodness of the Lord Now we mentioned this afternoon that Israel of old in many instances set forth the true and spiritual Israel of God And so in a state of unregeneracy we are in bondage we are in captivity but we know it not held captive by Satan attracted by the world and its pleasures but the time does come when the dear

[ 5 : 34 ] Holy Spirit convinces his dear people of their true state by nature and then they feel something like Israel felt when they were in captivity they are in trouble they are in distress and they begin to pray that God will have mercy upon them and if his good kind will give them liberty and freedom sometimes the Lord commences this work when we are very young we know not hardly what may be wrong with us yet we feel an inward trouble and distress because of our sins we have to try and pray that the dear

Lord Jesus will in his love and mercy save us fit and prepare us for heaven wonder if any of you dear young friends pray these things and ask God in his love to prepare you will you say I may live to be old and that will be time enough to think about these things but we never know you may die young in years you may not live to be old and that will be a mercy if God blesses your souls and makes you feel your need of his salvation and you know we don't have to be so old as some would suppose to enjoy the liberty of the gospel the

Lord has wonderfully blessed his word sometimes to those who are young and answered their prayers and made them very happy in the Lord whether we are young or old it is a wonderful mercy to have that God to go to to help us and keep us and if we feel he is our God and does bless us then we shall be enabled to sing to sing his praises to bless his holy name for his goodness and mercy to us but we reach this clause and shall flow together to the goodness of the

Lord God's goodness is manifested in his wonderful love towards poor sinners and where God's love flows into a sinner's heart there will be that flowing together unity and a great thing it is to feel that real love to the Lord and that love to his people you may say but I do not feel like one of God's people I hope I love them I pray to be made one of them but I often feel very much unlike one you remember

Ruth when Boaz showed her favour she wondered why though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens for now this flowing together is a secret and the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him I believe some have observed there is a union between certain people a spiritual union to which they themselves are total strangers people are difficult to find words to express this flowing together John says and we know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren then there is that flowing together when the

[ 11 : 53 ] Lord is pleased to bless the means we just mention prayer and very wonderful it is sometimes to feel a flowing together in the hour of prayer to feel perhaps a dear friend expresses before the Lord the very feelings the very exercises of our hearts have you ever been prayed for as you come up to God's house the man may not have known anything about you may not have known a thing and yet you felt that you were prayed for

I remember reading the account of one young woman and she felt like this oh that I knew some godly person could pray for me and a good minister one Sunday evening as they were going home from chapel turned round and said I can pray for you you know that was a wonderful help to that young woman to feel the minister could pray for her ah my dear friends have you felt few times you have really been prayed for then there's been a little flowing together a little union there has been communion and this because of the

Lord's goodness in blessing the means of grace there is sometimes a flowing together under the ministry oh their sermons seem long they seem uninteresting men keep telling us the same things over and over again the clock goes so slow well it did so with some of us years back there was no flowing together there was no real spiritual life in our hearts but afterwards when the dear Lord began to bless the word to us when perhaps we were raised to a little hope through a sentence the minister may have said the

Lord giving us spiritual ears we began to hear differently and we began to feel the sermons were not now too long and as the Lord continued to bless us we may have felt such love and such union to the Lord's servants never having spoken to them they not knowing anything that was going on in our hearts yet there was this secret this secret union this flowing together I remember one

Easter Monday when I was perhaps somewhere about twenty or twenty one years of age I heard a good minister preach I hadn't got that sweet full assurance of faith then but I hope I was seeking for Jesus you know that dear man preached I felt such a love to him and I felt such a love to those things he preached and that blessed Jesus he set forth I said I know that man will get saved to heaven and I believe I shall believe I could believe then you know the time of love will come when I shall clearly see not only that he shed his blood but

[ 17 : 33 ] I shall save for me and so these seasons are very blessed and that is why God has ordained a ministry for the good for the help for the comfort and for the teaching of his dear people they shall flow together secret religion that's what I like those secret things until you can no longer keep them secret you have to say come and hear all ye that fear God and I will declare what he has done for my soul so this flowing together is to the goodness of the

Lord then we have several things set forth in the text in which there is a flowing together and these things have exercised me a good deal but you know wheat is the principal part of our bread and it is said bread is our staff of life and the dear Lord Jesus in his wonderful ministry set forth some of these things in a spiritual way very wonderfully and he said I am that bread of life and we believe that to be the truth and he also set forth his broken body as being that bread of life he said some solemn things sometimes regarding these things except ye the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood ye have no life in you oh how those words have searched me out sometimes tried me as it were to the very quick but the dear

Holy Spirit he creates a hunger in the hearts of his dear people you know when Jesus began to preach he said blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness and so he puts into the hearts of his dear people this spiritual hunger why they like to come to God's house that is why they sometimes search his word to see if there is something for them you ever come to travel hoping there may be something for you will you say

I do try to come that way but I seem often so disappointed I'm afraid I shall never get what I long for well that's just how I used to feel oh perhaps after good deal of praying and seeking and begging come to the sanctuary but nothing for us however don't give up they shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord for we when the dear Lord does come and bless the word then his dear people they find some sweet satisfaction I tell you how I come to chapel tonight with a verse of one of our hymns on my mind a crumb of mercy

Lord I crave unworthy to be fed with dainties such as angels have or with the children's bread you ever come up to chapel like that no there was one dear woman mentioned in the new testament and the Lord answered her never a word he said it is not meat to take of the children's bread and to give it to dogs she said truth Lord yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table she got wonderful faith and she obtained a goodly portion for her soul the Lord said unto her be it unto thee even as thou wilt you see naturally it's often a sign that we are healthy if we are hungry we need something to renew our strength and just so spiritually sometimes the dear

[ 23 : 51 ] Lord is pleased to bless his word to us maybe the reading of it or the preaching of it and we are like Ruth we glean among their sheaves and she beat out that she glean that's profitable to take just a little home with you and to pray over it and to beat it out and to feel the dear Lord has remembered you in his great love and in his mercy there is that wonderful gospel full and free the bread of life really and that just suits these poor hungry sinners the gospel

I love it it is perfectly free it's what often stumbles us perhaps in our early days the fullness and the freeness of the gospel you you read the 55th of Isaiah oh everyone that thirsteth come ye to the waters them that have no money are invited to come what a mercy the gospel is free their bread of life is free but you may say I am unworthy to receive this do you ever think you'll be any different you'll be a poor unworthy sinner all your days we're all unworthy my friends of the

Lord's goodness and mercy and yet he lovingly and freely gives to poor unworthy sinners these wonderful blessings now I believe there's been a little flowing together in the gospel in the word in his precious truth then the Lord has been gracious and merciful to us and I was wondering what we should say about this next clause and for wine my thoughts went to the Lord's supper where we pour out the wine and that signifies really the precious blood of the dear

Lord Jesus that was shed for the remission of sins now when a dear child of God feels their interest in that precious redeeming blood of Jesus there is a flowing together sweet flowing together and this brings joy and peace with it you may feel tonight that is just what you need the dear Lord to come and to bless the word to you that by precious faith you may drink his precious blood earlier in the year there was a good word to me in

Zechariah and in that day there shall be a fountain open and you know to whom you know what fall for sin and for uncleanness and so this wine sets forth the wonderful dying love of the dear Lord Jesus and this is where all God's dear people pray pray they may be brought to feel that Jesus shed his precious blood gave his heart's blood for their sakes blood so some think you know good old Joseph heart he knew what it was to flow together to the goodness of the

[ 29 : 17 ] Lord for wheat and for wine and he says in one of his hymns invaluable blood and that will be so to you now as God may bless a few poor sinners and he gives them to partake of the gospel and enables them to build our hopes upon his precious blood and righteousness there's agreement there is that flowing together and for oil we read a good deal in the scriptures about oil and I like sometimes to think of this as the oil of God's grace and that word grace is a lovely word to the dear people of

God one of our hymn writers says grace is a charming sound harmonious to the ear and it is that which softens a hard heart it is that which brings with it true contrition however we do need some of us more grace grace I was thinking last evening of that word spoken by one of the apostles and he giveth more grace good word to a poor sinner wonderful promise that so we need this holy anointing oil we need the sacred and divine influences of the dear holy spirit in our hearts and he alone can make known to us the preciousness of this heavenly oil oh what there is in that word grace and so there shall be then this flowing together for wheat and for wine and for oil and for the young of the flock and of the herd are the lambs they cannot eat the old sheep's food you know the lambs need things to be broken up to them very old lady years back she said to me she said

I don't want you to preach a lot of doctrine to me I got too old so I want you to tell me the story simply as to a little child that I may take it in never have I forgotten that you may feel some of you younger ones some of you older ones you want the Lord's servants to be blessed with more of the spirit of their master that they may be enabled to graciously break up the word of God that you may have a few crumbs as we have said after all the crumbs are of exactly the same substance and the mercy it is when the young of the flock pick up by

God's grace few of these crumbs if there's no young in the flock soon won't be any flock no the flock will soon come to an end oh that there might be this flowing together that the Lord would again bless his word to the young he'll only bless his truth to them oh you dear young friends beware of the many religious innovations there are in the day in which we live many things set forth in a religious way to please poor fallen nature the Lord mercifully preserve you from these things and give you a gracious appetite for his word of truth and their soul shall be as a watered garden oh how welcome sometimes are the showers we may artificially water our gardens but that doesn't do what the showers do from above does it we don't want anything artificial in our religion why we want divine realities and you may feel tonight your poor little garden seems very withered and dry you need the dear

Lord to come and to give you another spiritual shower he can their soul shall revive as a corn and we may have known some of these sweet reviving times and they shall not sorrow any more at all I nearly read tonight that last chapter in the revelation I felt our text reaches to heaven itself cannot really be said of us whilst we are here below and they shall not sorrow any more at all much to make us sad much that grieves us in many ways but you know

[ 36 : 48 ]    God shall wipe away all tears from off their faces and those who have got safely home they sorrow no more they are forever freed from sin beyond the reach of Satan oh what a mercy sometimes to feel this sweet hope that we shall be found with the dear people of God when time with us is no more then my friends there will be that everlasting flowing together we may have enjoyed this communion and fellowship with some something has come along and marred it ah there will be nothing in heaven to mar that communion and fellowship though many things may cause us sorrow here the

Lord help us to press on amen the collections being taken today are in support of this cause of truth