

Making confession and intercession before God

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- [0 : 00] The Lord's help will speak from the 44th chapter in the book of Genesis and verse 18. Genesis 44 and verse 18. And Judah came near unto him and said, O my Lord, yet to thy servant I pray thee speak a word in my Lord's ears. And let not thine anger burn against thy servant, for thou art even as peril. So, this is the second point we had in mind this morning. In speaking from the first occasion in the earlier chapter where the brethren came and bowed down to Joseph. And we said this morning that they were in great distress and very guilty. And yet there was before them a time of greater pressure.
- [1 : 28] And they would be in a tighter corner, so to speak. And they were in the first visit. And how this was accomplished, we have read. We are in no position to examine what Joseph did or how he did it. But it cannot be said that they were verily guilty of this matter, taking not only the money but the silver cup. But it was the means in Joseph's wisdom, undoubtedly given him by God, by the whole man who was clean. And every door of hope was closed against them. And they were convicted as Judah himself admits by the law. They had that knowledge that the hand of God was in this matter somewhere. So, as we said this morning, the famine didn't do anything like this.
- [3 : 00] They could have stayed in Cahemian and died of famine as many did. But their coming to Egypt for sustenance was the means in which God had to propose they should be safely settled in the land of Goshen. This is how God did it. And this is how his servant Joseph was divinely led to behave roughly, strangely, put them in a position from which they could not escape. We liken this to the Lord's gracious dealings with his people and bringing them down to their knees. Which may sound religious enough and may be inclined to meet with the answer. Well, we do. The question is, do we? Do we know what it is to be brought down absolutely into the dust of self-abasement?
- [4 : 26] Because this is God's purpose. Such as much as it was in Egypt, though it is now the Gospel. And without this, there is no right entering at all into the realities of the Gospel and the liberty that is in Christ Jesus. The great thing missing in the religious world today is the knowledge of sin. This isn't the first time this has been said, and it won't be the last.

The truth is the truth. And this is what is so essential. And how blessed is that company where there are those who feel their native condition, their lost condition.

So that what we said this morning will not meet with opposition from you, that it is a very wonderful chapter and history that shows how God deals with men.

[5 : 45] And how he brought these ten brethren in the first instance to say, we are very guilty in that we saw our brothers distress.

And that had stayed with them. We mentioned their hard consciences and said how they needed to be broken, which is an exact figure and type of the work of grace and the breaking of the heart.

And that was a wonderful thing to shed tears, to be brought down to a basement before the Lord Jesus.

And there had been no comfort in the Gospel for any. There was no large something in this degree that God had caused them of the plague of their own heart.

Much as they may criticise it and hate the word that you sang in your hymn just now, wretched. On the other hand, it is the language of a saint.

[7 : 12] O wretched man that I am. And it is this distress that brings about such a confession.

To start in some place higher than this is to start to miss. To seek to avoid the rudiments of Gospel teaching, the elementary pathway of the beginning of grace is to avoid and indeed to lose blessings of the Gospel and never to know them.

Strive to enter in at the straight gate. These are the words of the Lord Jesus. And although they are rejected and unbelief, the Lord Jesus.

And the Lord Jesus says all manner of things about them. They are proven to be the very golden gate to the kingdom. And be not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.

For it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. And such enter in at the straight gate which our Lord spoke.

[8 : 47] It may not be an earthly, desirable, happy place. But it is an essential one.

In this we have then a parallel. And we have the kindly Judah in this text.

The brother Judah. Coming forward under great pressure. And personally interceding on the behalf of Benjamin.

Benjamin. They have committed themselves. Benjamin is to be their servant. Joseph's servant. They sadly turned back as you would have thought when you read the chapter.

When the silver cup was found. They turned round. And they go back to the Lord of the country.

[10 : 01] As yet unknown to them. The rejoicing of this is the power of God to bring his people to his footstool in a right spirit.

Therefore, this is the second time. The second time. The second place. But what a lot is going on at home. And how Jacob. was at last pressed to pass. The second time. The second place. The second place. But what a lot is going on at home.

And how Jacob. was at last pressed to pass. The beloved Benjamin. The last idol of his heart. Everything there found upon Benjamin. Jacob made. The second place. The second place. The second place. But what a lot is going on at home.

And how Jacob. Was at last pressed to pass. The beloved Benjamin. The last idol of his heart. Everything there found upon Benjamin. Jacob made several mistakes in his family.

With his affection. He was too fond of Joseph. Far too fond of him. And how Jacob. And how Jacob. Was at last pressed to pass.

[11 : 02] The beloved Benjamin. The beloved Benjamin. The last idol of his heart. Everything there found upon Benjamin. Jacob made several mistakes in his family. With his affection. He was too fond of Joseph. Far too fond of him.

He made. A spectacle of him. With his coat of many colors. What a lesson to parents. Not to make an idol of any one of their children.

Oh no. And now. There's Benjamin left. And he is the idol. And he won't be part of him. And he won't be part of him. But he has to be.

And thus. God will separate you and me. From our idol. We shall short to replace one. If we can. But he takes one away. Sad work is. When God removes the idol. And he is the idol. And he won't be parted with. But he has to be.

And thus. God will separate you and me. From our idol. We shall short to replace one. If we can. When he takes one away. If we can. When he takes one away. Sad work is. When God removes the idol.

[12 : 02] Of your life. And your next thought. May you like to. Jacob's be. To hang on. To another one. And be sure of the. The idolatry. Whatever it is. That it may not be a child.

You may not have a child. To make an idol. Of. And idols. Grow. Like weeds.

And. Are to be found. Very plentifully. And. God will. Deal with them. At last. Under pressure. Jacob. Is. To be found.

In a place. To be found. In a place. In a place. In a place. And. God will. To be found. In a place. In a place. In a place.

In a place. In a place. In a place. In a place. You can read that. At your letter. As I hope you will. And. He says. If it must be so. If this is got to come.

[13 : 05] Then. Arise. Take the best fruits. Of the land. You may say. How could he have had. Any best fruits. They were dried fruits. When they were such a family. I don't know. If they had work.

If it had ever worked. But it would have worked. There's a place. For not. Wild, it was a place. As a place. And if it had to be found. It would have tried. It would have had. To be found. To be found a place.

such a family. Yes. Take the best fruits of the land, empty the cupboard out, take back the money that was in the sack on your first outing. Poor Jacob. His heart was scoured.

And take Benjamin and go again to the man, the unknown distant man. And thus we leave the scene in Kenya. And the patriarch reaping what he had sowed. Only recently I was speaking to you of the necessity of observing the Lord's dealing with us. And seeing why he deals with us as he does.

So is Jacob. One cannot but feel their heart go after him, being of like kindred and passions with him. But there he is, entirely alone as regards his idols.

[14 : 56] He got other members of other families by other wives, but none so dear to him as the beloved Benjamin.

Judah knew this, and so did the others. Now that it should come to pass that Benjamin's axe would have the silver carp and therefore he be the one that apparently most guilty puts the whole matter in that lie that God would have it.

And it is this that lays Benjamin where we find him. Now the intercessor steps in. His heart is moved. His responsibility is great.

He is not the eldest. He is not the eldest. Reuben, whom we mentioned this morning was the eldest of Jacob's sons.

But Judah is catching. I do not see any intentional link here whatsoever with the tribe of Judah as such, out of which the Lord Jesus Christ sprang.

[16 : 27] Later in the revelation to be known as the lion of the tribe of Judah. But I do see this in it, that here is an intercessor standing in the breach. One who ventures to this mighty Joseph, still unknown.

And pleads with him, and pleads with him, and pleads with him, on behalf, not only of his brother, but of his father. He is.

Well now consider for a moment. Well now consider for a moment. Judah's heart. Conscience. Well we must not get away from this.

Their conscience was not yet cleared of the deed they did to Joseph. And as far as they knew there was still no knowledge of where Joseph was.

All they knew was, or hoped, that he was alive. Because they had sold them to the Ishmaelites. But as to his whereabouts, no one knew.

[17 : 53] Therefore, the whole matter was still deeply mysterious. And yet, Judah, little realizing what he is doing, he pleads for present circumstances in which lie as in the bowels of the earth, the purposes of God.

Little did he know what he was doing. And oh, how beautiful this is, when we consider the great intercessor of Christ Jesus, and a poor stricken sinner at his feet.

How little does that guilty sinner realize exactly what he is doing. Now, the approach is beautiful.

I don't want to play on words, but where you get these two letters together, O, H, O, my Lord.

Do you ever find, let us put it this way, have you ever found the urgency of your prayer that squeezes out of your heart a petition, O Lord?

[19 : 29] And if you ever find the same way, to take for me, to quote one scripture, I won't pray. The prayer of Hezekiah. Because there are such prayers.

And in your distress, you will be pressed into them. And I will so wide with you that you won't mix your words.

And brevity will be the beauty of your prayer. So it was with Judah.

Oh, my Lord. How God's dream is come true in a deeper, fuller meaning.

This brethren are going to bow down to me. And this is not, as you know, the only time.

[20 : 35] It is the only time comparable with the one we spoke of this morning. When they are brought down to deep distress and there is nowhere to escape.

A guilty, weak and helpless one in thy kind arms I fall. Is the language most suitable to such a circumstance as this.

As we are permitted to view it through Gentile eyes and the gospel. Here, there is nothing to be done.

But the whole story to be told out. Now, Joseph was not aware of what had transpired at home.

So here is information for him. Straight from Judah. The reaction of his father.

[21 : 47] When they told him about their first visit. And now, Joseph is to listen to the petition of Judah.

The letter which is so comprehensive, though brief, considering the circumstances. And it's going to do one thing.

It's going to melt Joseph's heart. We thought of reading a few verses in the next chapter.

Joseph could not refrain himself. Beautiful scene, isn't it?

You cannot begin to put all the story together. As you see the way that it unfolds.

[22 : 53] And have we faith in such a history as this to believe that this is the outworking of divine grace in a sinner's heart?

Is this story merely for the interest of the mind? It is certainly a most intriguing account.

One of the most. You would have a job to find one to equal it. In the interminable windings of the whole matter.

Oh, what blessedness when viewed in the eyes of the gospel or through the eyes of the gospel.

That this is exactly what the Lord Jesus does to his people. And that he gains the upper hand of the victory and brings them down to their knees.

[24 : 08] And that they, powerless to resist successfully his power. Truly this is a remarkable instance of the outworking of divine grace.

So Judah pleads, O my Lord. And this is the beginning of the Lord. And then he goes through to outline the events.

First of all, with all due reverence to Joseph, I pray thee, let thy servant speak a word in my Lord's ear.

And let not thine anger burn against thyself. We must try and put ourselves in this position.

And see how if Joseph's anger did burn, they very well knew that there would be no way out whatsoever.

[25 : 23] It all depended upon a friendly reception. And is not this so?

Is your unworthiness, the burning anger of God that you feel? How many have been kept away from the heavenly intercessor because they knew that there was no other way out?

But they couldn't put into words their desire. They were too ungodly.

This is an experience of itself. This destroys all flowing language at the throat of race.

Does away with carnal formality. When the Lord puts pith, substance and marrow into your prayers, this will be somewhat of the standard of it.

[26 : 36] He will be a great God whose anger can burn against sin. Judah therefore approaches with great tenderness and speaking after the manner of men, reverence.

and it is this that is so effective. The method of approach.

There is such vital importance in this, you know, in everyday life, the method of approach.

No rushing with high sounding phrases and a glib tongue before the Almighty.

No vain repetition. The gate is narrow, the throne of grace. Words are simple, but we can never emphasize too much the necessity of such humble beginnings and approaches which are not only acceptable to God's people.

[28 : 20] Especially when it's a public prayer meeting. The beginning can so often prove one way or the other as regards fellowship in the gospel.

Those who speak publicly in prayer need to be very, very careful as to their manner of approach.

And happy are they when God sees to them for them. Look at the woman who was handled roughly by Jesus.

When he said to her, the dog does not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dog.

She was a gentile. She was a gentile. But when she came, did she remonstrate or take offense?

- [29 : 27] In that wonderful case, very, very comparable with this one. That woman approached the Lord Jesus with, Lord help me.
- And I know of no narrower or more blessed gate to the throne of grace than this one.
- No. Be what it may, here lies one of the scriptural doors to the mercy of the Lord.
- And her petition was, Lord help me. Judah, therefore, is enabled to approach Joseph, who after all was his brother, with this tender and reverent expression as man to man.
- Let not thine anger burn against thy servant, for thou art even as peril. Now he comes to an outline of the position of Philip.
- [30 : 55] We had a father that Joseph already knew. An old man. A child of his old age.
- A little one. A little one, said Judah. Of course, the elder is permitted to speak of the younger like this.
- He wasn't a little one then, was he? Could Judah but know who this little one was?
- How different would have been his language? And what must he have felt afterwards? It's no good looking back over your prayers and wishing that you could alter them.
- The need and blessing is to have things right beforehand. He was a little one in Judah's eyes.
- [32 : 03] And his brother is dead. And he alone is left with his mother. Benjamin was the little one.
- And the other is dead. Now is this a clear prayer and explanation of the circumstances?
- How better to be absolutely plain, clear in your confession.
- Not seek to cover anything up whatsoever. And he goes on then to speak of what his father said. And tell Joseph how they in turn had said that they wouldn't see Joseph's face again except they brought Benjamin with them.
- And Joseph listens to this and father said go again and buy us a little food and so on.
- [33 : 19] And then we come to the pathetic petition that Jacob had said and if ye take this also from me, that Benjamin and mischief before him, ye shall bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave, seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life.
- And all this gradually softens the heart of Joseph.
- And Joseph begins to see the outworking of God's purpose to him. The travail of his soul.
- What he couldn't understand in prison. What the dream meant. Why he had it. Why he had been sold.
- Everything begins to piece itself together at the throne of grace. Have you ever felt it so? That burden that you carried tonight.
- [34 : 36] You can't and haven't laid before the Lord. Think you it may as well be pieced together by your confession and running through these circumstances that bring it about, a confession and an admission of it.
- Think you there's any other way of peace? Or pardon for that matter. So that it isn't wasted words or wasted time.
- Judah then pleads himself. He said, Now therefore let thy servant abide instead of the left.
- This emphasizes the absolute genuineness of Judah. He's ready to stay abonded in Egyptian service.
- If so be that Benjamin may be returned to his father to save his father. The pain and anguish of losing the beloved Benjamin.
- [36 : 04] Ruben had made such a point as this earlier on. When he had said, Slay my two sons. If I bring him not back to them.

But here is not only an excessor. But one who stands as a substitute. Who offers freely and willingly.

To subject his whole life to the service of this unknown man in Egypt. A beautiful hymn with regard to this.

Paul has a beautiful exhortation with regard to a sinner. I beseech you therefore brethren.

That you present your body as a living sacrifice. Holy. Acceptable unto God. Which is your reasonable servant.

[37 : 12] Do you think it's a strange thing. That a guilty sinner. Broke down to nothing. Empty handed.

Should be willing to devote himself. To the service of him who has done so much for him.

Is it unreasonable or reasonable? Is it one of those scriptures which admit of the use in spiritual things of the word reasonable.

Which of it do you think it is reasonable? Did the apostle use the wrong word?

Wrong argument? Or was he pressing home the force of these things upon the church of Rome? And when Judas offers to stand thus as a substitute.

[38 : 24] May we not cast our eyes forward to see in the far distance as we now know it.

And with the hindsight that we have. That this is exactly what the Lord Jesus did. That he stoodeth in the breach.

That he stoodeth a substitute for his people. Is it not clear? Does it not enhance the ancient history which otherwise would remain but a beautiful story?

Now, for how shall I go up to my father and the Lord be not with me? Let's bear adventure. I see the evil that shall come on my father.

I think it was last Sabbath, I'm not sure. I was speaking of Daniel's prayer. When the angel came to him at the end of it.

[39 : 42] And he said to him, At the beginning of thy salvation the commandment came forth. And undoubtedly, Luke had naturalness.

At the beginning of Judah stepping forth on the path of this intricate matter. And pleading with brother Joseph.

There began the very work that God intended there should begin. And so it is that Joseph could refrain himself no longer.

Now here is the culmination of two things. One a gross act of sin.

Jealousy as I said this morning. Against Joseph. That jealousy which was as cruel as the grave.

[41 : 07] And the other thing was the culmination of the trial of Joseph.

When he suffered as he did. And was led through that torturous pathway. In order that he might come out.

As we see him partly here. But what is so striking about it all. Is immediate forgiveness.

It takes a lot to forgive. Oh forgiveness. Among us creatures. Is a precious thing you know.

Is it? I wonder how many of us tonight. Are owe a forgiving spirit to another.

[42 : 08] The beauty of this. At this stage. In the history of Joseph. Is that. He says.

Now therefore. Be not grieved. Nor angry with yourselves. Verse 5. In the next chapter. That she sold me hither.

For God did send me before you. To preserve life. What shall we say to these things? Is this second pathway of distress.

Pressure. Humbling. Forgiveness. Open compassion. Is it worth it? Truly it is. It leads to restoration. It leads to a full understanding.

A clearance away of. So much. Which was called. For fear. This is not. For fear.

[43 : 07] All the pain. For fear. It's not. For fear. For fear. For fear. which was called in the days of the building of the second temple, rubble.

We read there was much rubble. And is there not great need for Joseph's manifested spirit here when he spontaneously said, I am Joseph, does my father yet live?

And his brethren could not answer him, for they were troubled at his presence. And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you.

What an invitation. Come near to me. Don't stand now like you've been standing on your first and second visit. Look at this huge area spread with famine.

The whole world, we're told. And seven years of it too. And is all this in the hand of Jehovah?

[44 : 25] Come dear to me. Don't stand a long way away. Does not this bring to your mind the words of the Lord Jesus?

Come unto me. Come unto me. You get this in your heart, you'll come, sure enough. I hope you may come unto me.

Tell me exactly what it's all about. I know already, but come unto me. Don't stand at a distance.

Only that labor, that heavy laden, the glorious words of the Lord's lips, isn't it? An encouraging word that ties in with all this.

Does it strike you as a veritable impossibility that you, such as you, can come?

[45 : 32] What is the answer to this? Be not grieved nor angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither, for God did send me before you.

What for? Ah, to preserve life. The travel of Joseph's soul, the travel of the Lord Jesus' soul, run upon parallel life.

We are told that Jesus, we are seen, look back over, review the travel of his soul.

Psalm 16. You shall see the travel of his soul, what he went through, for the sake of his people, and shall be satisfied.

There are pleasures with God's right hand forevermore. And it is the pleasure that the Redeemer had in dealing with the sins of his people.

[46 : 50] Oh, if only this subject today should bring one sinner to repentance, break one heart, soften one spirit.

How happy a Sabbath it will be that there, it's in the Lord's hand, isn't it? Here is what to me is the truth.

It is my privilege to set before you that the rest lies in God's hand.

And should he exert this gracious pressure upon you, these things were bound to come about. He doesn't work in vain.

It is to preserve life. And the story goes on to tell us exactly how God did it.

[48 : 01] So that we do not regard distress, confession, emptiness, unworthiness as something against us.

rather do we regard it as something for us. And the open way to the throne of grace, as I have said, is through the narrow door, the low gate, the place, as the good woman found it, where she cried, yea, yea, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the master's table.

O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee, even as thou wilt. Judas' prayer plea, intercession, succeeded.

Joseph could not refrain himself and the whole matter was brought together at this structure as far as we can go now.

The Lord owned his truth and blessed his word. Amen. Amen.