

POPULAR STORIES

CHAPTER 30

CHRIST'S HAND UPON OUR EYES

Genesis 46: 1-29

Genesis 46: 1: And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac. 2: And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here *am* I. 3: And he said, I *am* God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: 4: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up *again*: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.

A few weeks ago, the first Sunday of 2016, I received a very pleasant surprise—Abigail Lutter expressed to me her desire to follow her Redeemer in believer's baptism. As Abby and I talked, I told her that when you are baptized you are confessing that you are now following the Lord in newness of life. And I warned her that her warfare with sin and trials and suffering is just beginning.

Surely, when God calls a sinner to Christ they have no more trials, no more struggles with doubts and fears, no more terrible sliding's into sin. God called David a man after God's own heart. Yet, David was overcome by his sinful flesh and sinned grievously. He confessed to God, saying, "I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin *is* ever before me." (Ps 51: 3)

God has seen fit to leave us in these sinful bodies of flesh, to allow us to fall on our face, to teach us we must continually look to Christ to deliver us every step even through the grave!

Our Lord Jesus Christ said, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (Jn 16: 33)

We need "Christ's Hand upon our Eyes" constantly.

Jacob is 130 years old. Yet, God has sent this old believer another trial. Last time we saw God strengthen him in faith. So Israel began leaving Canaan full of vigor to go see Joseph in Egypt.

Yet, sixteen miles later, by the time these slow-moving wagons reached Beer-sheba, Israel has become Jacob again, full of fear and doubts. So what did he do? What do we do when we face trials and fears and doubts creep in?

DRAW NEAR TO GOD

Joseph did the wisest thing a child of God can do—**Genesis 46: 1: [he] came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac.**

This is the wisest thing a child of God can do. No matter what new beginning: be it the very beginning of the life of faith, be it some new troublesome trial that fills us with doubts and fears, be it something momentous as leaving your homeland for a strange land or as common as beginning each new day, God tells his children, in everything at all times, Christ must have the Preeminence—"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." (Mt 6: 33)

We begin the life of faith coming to Christ—to Beersheba, the well of the oath. And we never cease coming to Christ. Peter said, “To whom coming, *as unto* a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, *and precious*,” (1Pe 2:4)

It took time to prepare these sacrifices. Yet, Jacob made all wait as he drew near to the Lord. But this was not delaying their journey. This was seeking the only One who could deliver them through the journey.

SACRIFICES TO GOD

The sacrifices Jacob offered represent the believer coming to God through faith in Christ—**Genesis 46: 1: [he] came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac.**

We must approach the Holy and Righteous God only in Christ our Altar. “We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.” (Heb 13: 10) Christ makes all our feeble, sinful sacrifices accepted to God.

Christ is our Lamb. He is the one sacrifice in whom God is well-pleased because in him justice is satisfied, and the law honored on behalf of his people. Therefore, Christ is our only righteousness.

The risen GodMan is our High Priest within the holiest of holies in the presence of God. He is our Advocate with the Father. “But this *man*, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. 25: Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” (Heb 7: 24-25)

OUR PRAYER TO GOD

What do you think Jacob prayed as he drew near to God through Christ? I am sure he thanked God that his son was alive, that God provided all this provision for him through Joseph. First, and foremost, we thank God that his Son is alive, that God has provided us perfect righteousness and holiness and made us accepted in the Beloved.

I am sure Jacob confessed his sins and asked God for forgiveness for the sake of Christ. God has forgiven all who believe, through Christ’s blood. He has cast our sins behind his back, never to remember them again. Yet, God will have his child continually confess our sin and ask God for free forgiveness. “Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause *you* to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded... Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will yet *for* this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do *it* for them;” (Eze 36: 33, 37)

I am sure Jacob asked God’s will, asked God to be their Guide, their Protector, their Provider to deliver them. We will see that God promises his child he will do so.

Believer, are you facing something you have never faced before? Is the trial heavy right now? Whether you just began in faith or, like Jacob, you have you been walking by faith for many, many year, come to Christ, never stop. “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin. 16: Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” (Heb 4:15-16)

GOD’S WILL ANSWER

Our gracious heavenly Father will surely give us grace in time of need. God is faithful to answer all who call upon him through Christ—**Genesis 46: 2: And God spake unto Israel....**

In our day, no regenerated child of God will hear God speak in an audible voice. But we hear God speak through his gospel continually. We see God answer in his providence. God promised, “And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.” (Is 65: 24)

Believer, do you believe God hears you when you pray in Christ’s name? Since this is true of Christ, it is true of all who God draws to himself through Christ, God said, “Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I *will be* with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.” (Ps 91: 14-16)

Believer, when you call upon God through Christ’s name, God really, truly hears you and God answers! How?

ACCORDING TO OUR NEED

Our faithful heavenly Father answers his child according to our need—**Genesis 46: 2: And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here *am* I.”**

God did not say “Israel, Israel” but “Jacob, Jacob.” “Israel” was his new name given by Christ which fit his holy nature; “Jacob” was the name that fit his fleshly nature. The Lord addressed him according to his current condition. And Jacob owned his weakness—“And he said, Here am I.”

Can you own your inability? What will God do for a sinner when we confess we are absolutely, total unable to do one thing to save ourselves? When your child is hurting, no strength, full of sorrow, do you have compassion on them? How much more God toward you who confess total, complete helplessness! “Like as a father pitieth *his* children, *so* the LORD pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we *are* dust. (Ps 103:13-14) My downcast brethren, God has an answer exactly suitable to your present condition. What answer is that? “My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” (2 Cor 12: 9)

THE EVERLASTING COVENANT GOD

God answers his child by reminding us who he is—**Genesis 46: 3: And he said, I am God, the God of thy father.”**

The true and living God is God with all power in heaven and in earth. He is the LORD of hosts, absolutely sovereign to use all things to work his will. He is God who changes not, whose love for his people is from everlasting to everlasting.

Therefore, God answers his child by reminding us of his everlasting covenant grace in Christ. Remember, this is a word to believers in our day the same as it was a word to Jacob. How so? Isaac is the spiritual father of every chosen child of God the same as Abraham is our father. “Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.” (Gal 3: 7)

Remember, God promised “In Isaac shall thy seed be called.” (Gen 21: 12; Rom 9: 7; Heb 11: 8) That is why God called you who are his elect. It was according to God’s promise. It was not according to our works but according to his electing grace. By this, God assures us he shall call all his elect and lose none, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand. (Jn 10: 28-29)

Also by this God reminds us that he promised that through Isaac, thy father, the Messiah would come and save his people from our sins. God brought it to pass; Christ finished the work. So God assures us that his holy satisfied justice demands that we shall never be separated from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

FEAR NOT, I WILL

God answers his child by commanding us not to fear because God has and shall make good on his word—**Genesis 46: 3...fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation:**

Jacob was an old man. He knew if it depended upon his strength he had great reason to fear. He would never make it across that “waste howling wilderness” to Egypt. We know that, too! But we have no cause to fear if God is our Strength!

They went to Egypt with 70 people. The more they were afflicted, the more God made them increase. They came out with 600,000 men, plus women and children. Christ began this gospel age with 12 men. When he gets done there will be a multitude no man can number and not one elect child shall be lost. (Jn 6: 39)

GOD’S ABIDING PRESENCE

God answers his child assuring his child of his abiding presence—**Genesis 46: 4: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again:**

God’s presence is how his elect are preserved and kept separate from this ungodly world. Moses said, “For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? *is it* not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that *are* upon the face of the earth.” (Ex 33: 16)

God went down into Egypt with them so that they all arrived as God said. Then at the time appointed, God provided a lamb and delivered them out of Egypt. Then Christ the Rock, the Pillar of Fire by night and the Cloud by day, lead them through the waste hollowing wilderness. Then he delivered his people safely right back into the land of Canaan just as he promised Jacob in our text.

Brethren, God shall preserve all those who are his as we journey through this Egypt on our way to that heavenly city in glory with Christ forever!

TILL THE END

God answers his child assuring us that Christ shall keep us till the day we put off this sinful flesh—**Genesis 46: 4:...and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.**

The very first time Christ comes to his child, it is Christ who makes us see by putting his hand upon our eyes. Remember the blind man that Christ separated by leading him out of town? Christ spat upon his eyes. “And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees walking. After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up; and he was restored, and saw every man clearly.” All along the way, when we begin to turn our focus to the waves of tribulation, Christ puts his hands upon our eyes and makes us look up to him so that we can see clearly.

Yet, our text gives us great assurance. It refers to a custom and privilege of the nearest kin. When they died, the nearest kin closed their eyes by putting their hands upon their eyes. God promised that when Jacob died, Joseph would be the one to put his hand upon his eyes and close them.

Likewise, God promises that Christ shall keep us till the time appointed for us to go down to that Egypt of dust called the grave. It will be Christ our near Kinsmen Redeemer who closes our eyes in death and it will be Christ who shall surely bring thee up again and put his hands upon thy eyes opening them in glory.

Brethren, “having loved his own which were in the world,” Christ shall “love them till the end.” (Jn 13: 1)

GOD’S SUFFICIENT GRACE

Is God’s grace sufficient? Is God’s strength manifest perfectly in our utter weakness?—**Genesis 46: 5: And Jacob rose up from Beersheba: and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. 6: And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him: 7: His sons, and his sons’ sons with him, his daughters, and his sons’ daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt.**

God lists each one by name showing us not one was left behind. So shall it be with his elect! (Gen 46: 8-27) So God delivered them all according to his covenant promise—**Genesis 46: 28: And he sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to direct his face unto Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen. 29: And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while.**

Imagine what a sweet, sweet reunion that was between father and son!—he “wept on his neck a good while.”

Brethren, God shall make good on this promise to us. Christ shall go with us and before us and shall deliver us even through the grave and bring us up again to glory. He will draw us near and present himself to us and us to him. There will be nothing that compares to the sweet embrace when Christ falls on our neck in glory. But there will be no tears, only rejoicing “a good while.” (Rev 21: 4)

Oh, brethren, in good time or in trouble be always coming to Christ to God your Father. He hears and shall answer. Is he answering you petition now through his word? When he answers he assures us so that we can say with David, “He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all *things*, and sure: for *this is* all my salvation, and all *my* desire...” (2 Sam 23: 5)

Amen!