



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Genesis 45:16 - 46:34

“Surprised, Sustained and Satisfied by the God of Isaac”

TRANSCRIPT

The Scripture reading this morning is found in two chapters of the Book of Genesis, Genesis chapter 45 and 46. Now since we have a section in which there is a long list of names, I will this time and this time only pass over those verses in order to read the entire section.

Now will you turn with me then to Genesis chapter 45 and verse 16, and remember in the context in the preceding section Joseph has finally revealed himself to his brethren, and they have had a reconciliation each falling on one another's neck and weeping over the fact that they have been separated for so many years. Now in verse 16, we read of chapter 45,

“Now when the news was heard in Pharaoh's house that Joseph's brothers had come; it pleased Pharaoh and his servants. Then Pharaoh said to Joseph say to your brothers, ‘Do this: Load your beasts and go to the land of Canaan and take your father and your households and come to me and I would give you the best of the land of Egypt and you shall eat the fat of the land. Now you are ordered, do this; take wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives and bring your father and come. And do not concern yourself with your goods for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours. Then the sons of Israel did so and Joseph gave them wagons according to the command of Pharaoh and gave them provisions for the journey. To each of them, he gave changes of garments, but to Benjamin he gave 300 pieces of Silver and 5 changes of garments. And

to his father, he sent as follows: 10 donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt and 10 female donkeys loaded with grain, bread and sustenance for his father on the journey. So he sent his brothers away and as they departed he said to them do not quarrel on the journey. Then they went up from Egypt and came to the land of Canaan to their father Jacob and they told him saying Joseph is still alive and indeed he is ruler over all the land of Egypt, but he was stunned for he did not believe them. When they told him all the words of Joseph that he had spoken to them and when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of their father Jacob revived then Israel said ‘It is enough! My son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.’

“So Israel set out with all that he had and came to Beersheba and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, ‘Jacob! Jacob!’ He said ‘Here I am’ and he said ‘I am God, the God of your father,’ ‘Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you a great nation there. I will go down with you to Egypt and I will also surely bring you up again and Joseph will close your eyes and then Jacob arose from Beersheba and the sons of Israel carried their father Jacob and their little ones, and their wives, and the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. And they took their livestock and their property which they had acquired in the land of Canaan and came to Egypt. Jacob and all his descendents with him, his sons and his grandsons with him, his daughters and his granddaughters and all his descendents he brought with him to Egypt.”

Now there follow the names of those who went with Jacob into the land of the Egypt inclusive also of those that were already there who had already come. So we will skip to verse 28 and conclude the reading with verse 28 to the end of chapter.

“Now he sent Judah before him to Joseph to point out the way before him to Goshen, that is that Joseph might point out the way before him to Goshen and they came into the land of Goshen and Joseph prepared his chariot and went up to Goshen to meet his father Israel. As soon as he

appeared before him, he fell on his neck and wept on his neck a long time. Then Israel said to Joseph, ‘Now let me die, since I have seen your face that you are still alive.’ Joseph said to his brothers and to his father’s household, I would go up and tell Pharaoh and will say to him my brothers and my father’s household who were in the land of Canaan have come to me. And the men are shepherds for they have been keepers of livestock and they have brought their flocks, and their herds and all that they have. And it shall come about when Pharaoh calls you and says what is your occupation, that you shall say, your servants have been keepers of livestock from our youth, even until now, both we and our fathers that who may live in the land of Goshen, for every shepherd is loathsome to the Egyptians.”

I will not say anything about these last verses because I would like just to say right now this was very wise advice for Joseph to give to them. The Egyptians did not regard very highly shepherds and Joseph was anxious that there be an honest frankness about their occupation. But at the same time he was also anxious that they be able to be isolated in the land of Goshen which was very fertile and would provide them not only with fertility for their flocks, but also would provide them separation from the Egyptians. And he would like to have Pharaoh approve of their being in Goshen. So he very discretely speaks, you must be frank, and we may trust that Pharaoh will be favorable to your being in Goshen because shepherds are loathsome to Egyptians and he would want to please me as well as please the Egyptians. It worked out fine, and that’s where they were, and that’s where they grew into a great nation in numbers.

May the Lord bless this reading of his word.

Last week, I was over at the seminary and while I was looking at some books in one of the stacks, one of the young man that I know came up to me, he is a tall, nice looking young man that I have known for several years and he is a good believer in the doctrines of the grace of God which he calls the doctrines of sovereign grace and he came up and engaged me in conversation. He speaks

the language of Canaan because he is from the Southeast as also I and he has a heavy Southern accent. [Laughter]

And I asked him when he was graduating? He said he was graduating this summer from the seminary and I asked him what he wanted to do and he went on to say what he has been saying all along that he wanted to be an evangelist and travel around in itinerant ministry. I thought also of the young man who went to an older Bible teacher and told him that he wanted to be a platform man, in which he was speaking about such an itinerant ministry, but he was not a very humble young man. And the older preacher said afterwards that God was going to have to tear a plank out of his platform and beat the daylights out of him [laughter] until he became a good preacher. But this young man is not like that and he said he wanted to be an itinerant preacher and that he wanted to preach the doctrines of the grace of God with the fire out of heaven.

And I thought afterwards, a little after that because what he was saying was that he wanted to preach the doctrines of sovereign grace, election, predestination, and the other doctrines that have to do with the grace of God, he wanted to preach them with fervor. And that of course is a worthy motive, but I thought afterwards, well if he preaches the doctrines of the grace of God, he will not only have fire out of heaven that will be the valuable thing, but he also will have some fire come up some below and he will discover too that there will be some fire from others down here on the earth who don't like those doctrines of the grace of God, even in the Christian congregations.

And I didn't realize that on this Sunday morning we would also have some fire from the atmosphere in the congregation. As you can tell something has happened to the air conditioning and if you feel a little hot it is not because the word of God is getting ready to be expounded to you. It's because the air condition is not operating. So get out your programs -- that's right and fan -- [laughter] and good Christians fan also the person next to them as well [more laughter]. So let's turn now to the Book of Genesis chapter 45 and the subject for this morning is “Jacob Surprised, Sustained and Satisfied by the God of Isaac.”

Three of the greatest and most comforting of the themes of the Bible are before us again in the section of the Book of Genesis. And that familiar one which we have seen so often here the sovereign purpose of God is again before us. But there are some further steps revealed in God's dealings with Jacob and his family. Some steps that he apparently did not fully realize though they were implicit in the words that were spoken to Abraham his grandfather many, many years before this.

One of the things that God had said to Abraham was that they were going to have to be out of the land for a while and they would be in another land over a period of centuries until the iniquity of the Amorites should be fulfilled or filled up. And now here, God speaks to Jacob and tells him that he is going to make Jacob and his family a great nation there in Egypt. It illustrates the importance of taking large views of the purpose of God. We should not look at our immediate circumstances and the things that happened to us around a particular time for evidences of the guidance and providence of God, but also look at things from the long view and so over the centuries Israel will be in Egypt in order that there they might be made into a great nation.

We have also illustrated the comforting promises of God and again Jacob is assured of the constant presence of the Lord. And we have the reality of the guidance of God again coming before us, for Jacob seeks guidance from the Lord God as he has been urged to go down into Egypt because he remembered that when Abraham went down into Egypt it evidently was not the will of God and he suffered from it. So he asks for guidance and God gives him guidance.

God gives guidance in many ways, sometimes by circumstances though not always, sometimes circumstances are deceiving actually, but then occasionally in supernatural ways, the ways that are unusual, all guidance I presume we should call supernatural, but in unusual ways and so here, Jacob is given a vision and the Lord appears and speaks to him specifically concerning the trip down into Egypt and says that trip has his approval. Someone has said you can always tell the way of God by the fact that the path is smooth before you because the Scripture say that he will make the crooked places straight and he will make the rough places smooth.

When the Apostle Paul was in trouble in Corinth, God appeared and assured him that the ministry there was in his will, for he had much people in that city, and the apostle even though detained in prison, had the assurance that the Lord was really directing him.

Now all of these themes that we mentioned there contribute to the overall theme of the wisdom of Jacob's great merciful God. For it was a very wise thing that God had them go down into the land of Egypt. They were preserved from the iniquity of the Amorites. So they gave up temporary possession of the land of Canaan in order that in the distant future they might have permanent possession and in a way that would be 100 fold more of blessing than if they had stayed. Further they were isolated in Goshen and that enabled them to grow and also to be prepared -- for they were under a nation that had a measure of law and order -- for their future ministry as a redemptive people among the peoples of the world.

And I think that most of all they went down into Egypt in order that when this friendly Pharaoh passed off of the scene, they might come under the domain of a Pharaoh who was not friendly to them and they might come to know the experience of bondage. And finally the bondage became so heavy that they cried out for deliverance and then they were given those marvelous exhibitions of redemption by blood through the Passover lamb and by power when God brought them by his right hand through the Red Sea, and these experiences of bondage and then redemption by blood and power were designed to prepare them for the future and also to illustrate for us the things that ultimately would be ours through the Lord Jesus Christ.

You know we have in our congregations today, people who are the nicest, kindest, sweetest kind of people, but in our Christian churches there are so few who know what it is to have been under bondage to sin. They do not know the despair of desiring deliverance. They do not know what it is to suffer because they have come to see their sinfulness and wish deliverance from it and they do not know what it is to be saved by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. So this experience was designed to prepare Israel and also afford us an illustration of the way in which God works in

the spiritual sphere. And very often in the Old Testament, Israel was called to remember those days when they were in Egypt and what God did for them in Egypt.

John Newton’s favorite text was Deuteronomy chapter 15 and verse 15 in which the Lord spoke to Israel and said to Israel that they were to remember that they were bondsmen in the land of Egypt and that the Lord their God had redeemed them. And that’s something that we need to constantly remember too that we too spiritually were enslaved to sin but by the grace of God, he has brought us to the knowledge of forgiveness through the Lord Jesus Christ and we have been redeemed and we are never to forget that. It has a practical effect in our daily lives for it means that we are to treat others in the light of the great manifestation of mercy that God has shown to each one of us.

Now we have just read in chapter 45 of that magnificent reconciliation that took place between Joseph and his brethren. Amid many tears, amid loud lamentation, characteristic of the Orientals there had been reconciliation between the brothers who thought perhaps that Joseph was dead and now they were suddenly confronted with the one against whom they had sinned.

Now Joseph must have been very widely esteemed in Egypt and he certainly was a favorite of the Pharaoh of the time, for the moment that Pharaoh came to an understanding of what had taken place, why he demands that Joseph go after Jacob and bring his whole family down into the land of Egypt, and he would give them the fat of the land. I say Joseph must have been widely esteemed for the Pharaoh to do this for him, and furthermore the knowledge of this reconciliation would have increased the status of Joseph in the land because so far as they knew, so far as the text is concerned, he had been simply a former slave who had been taken out of prison because he was able to interpret the dreams of the Pharaoh, and now they know him to have come from an honorable family of free nomads which was a class that was held in high regard among the ancient people.

This is a kind of historical turning point then in the history of Israel, because now they will not only know that they are called of God, but through the experiences in Egypt they will come to know that they have been redeemed as well. So Pharaoh asks for the wagons. Now wagons were

rarer in Palestine then at that time than a jet would have been in the African bush 25 years ago. So when Jacob saw those wagons come filled with things from Egypt, he knew that they really had seen something in Egypt that was different.

And Pharaoh had also said, “Don’t concern yourself with your stuff or with your goods,” in the 20th verse, he says that because he was going to provide them with the fat of the land. That verse incidentally suggests to us the fact that often our materialistic things are really impediments for us. Someone has said this is the Old Testament equivalent of Philippians chapter 3 and verse 13 where the Apostle Paul says that we are to forget the things that are behind and we are to press forward to the things that are before us for the prize of the high calling of God and Christ Jesus. Many of us and many Christians who are affected are interested only in the things that we have, and the things that we may acquire. But more important things exist in this world than that.

Well the brothers depart from Egypt and they go back, and as they go back Joseph gives them a piece of good advice. He says, don’t get into a quarrel on the way. That might seem to be a strange thing to tell the brothers, but reflect on the circumstances now. They have had this marvelous experience of being reconciled to Joseph, and they have acknowledged the iniquity of the way they have treated him, but naturally some of the brothers were more guilty than others and you can imagine that as they made their way back and it was a journey of a number of days that when then sun came out and it was hot when men tend to get a little irritated because of the physical circumstances that they might get irritated and might discuss who particularly was guilty for the selling of Joseph into slavery and the tendency would for them to get into strife over the relative guilt of the brothers. So he said, “Don’t quarrel on the journey.”

When they come to Jacob, they say, Joseph is alive and he is the ruler of Egypt. And these two facts that he is alive and that he is the ruler in Egypt remembering that Jacob didn’t completely believe these brothers because they were not paragons of honest frankness. These two facts stunned the patriarch so much that he did not believe them, and did not until he saw those wagons, come to accept the fact that Joseph was still alive, but when he saw the wagons -- Jacob’s faith is still a kind of

faith that is strengthened by the things that it sees -- but when the wagons are seen he finally says it is enough. Joseph is alive; I will go and see him before I die. One cannot help that reflect on the experiences of Jacob. He was a man who had many, many experiences of adversity. He himself speaks later on of how all of his days have been few and evil.

There is a text in the Psalms that I think is (?) at this point. It is the text that is translated in the Authorized Version and it may be rendered this way, “Thou has known my soul in adversities.” One of the great comforts and assurance of knowing the true God is that the knowledge of God is very thorough. He knows us completely. And when someone has been with us through adversities that individual truly knows us because it is in the adversities of life that we really reveal ourselves to be the kind of person that we truly are.

There is a sonnet written by a man named White in which he develops the thought that were it not for the night, we should never know the beauty of the stars. And he goes on to speak about how in the winter time when the harsh winds blow and the leaves are off of the trees we see things that we never see when the summer fully edges out. There is a revealing power in adversity. And Jacob’s adversities reveal that fundamentally in this man’s life there is a true trust in the Lord God.

One of the expositions of that particular Psalm contains an illustration of an experience that occurred, and it is recorded by a well-known German religious writer. He speaks about a very wealthy man who had fallen on evil days and finally had lost all of his money. And one day the depths of his depression were reached when he walked down the street and one of his old companions passed him by without even giving any token that he had recognized him, and so he spoke to the writer and he told him the experience and the writer took him by the hand and pointed him upward and said, “Thou has known my soul in adversities,” and went on to speak about how it is true that there are rats in our circle of society who makes all haste to leave sinking ships. And furthermore, moralists have always pointed out that the world courts prosperity and shuns adversity, but one of the blessings of the Lord God is that in the adversities of life he is with us, and it is then

that he really comes to know us and sustain us. Jacob would have been able to give a great discourse on the sufferings and adversities of life and the things that God had done for him.

Well now he is called upon to go down into the land of Egypt and incidentally at this point you cannot help, but reflect on all of the things that God has brought to pass in order to bring this about. Just think of the way in which he has had the order history and how he has even had to bring about upheavals in nature itself. There was the jealous hatred of the brethren when Joseph told them of his dreams, there were the dreams of the youth of Joseph and that was the passage of the caravan into Egypt just at the time that he had the experience with his brothers and told them of the dream, so that he could be sold into Egypt, specifically Egypt. They were the strange dreams of those prisoners, the baker and the butler in the prison, and God giving him the ability to interpret them and thus bring him to the knowledge of Pharaoh. There was the experience with Potiphar's wife that put him in the prison in the first place and then God had to deal with changes of rainfall in the upper part of the continent of Africa in order to bring about the famine and the prosperity and all of these things, and finally Pharaoh's dreams themselves in order that he in prison might be given an opportunity to interpret them -- all of the things that God has to do in order to bring about his purposes.

There are occasionally people who do not really believe the word of God when it says, “He works all things according to the counsel of his own will.” They rather think that God is responsible for the big things of life, but he allows the little things to just happen as they may happen and that man is responsible for the little things and God is responsible for the big things.

Well, I think if you will think about this very deeply, you will see that it is necessary for God to think about the little things in order to bring to pass past the big things, but the facts of Scripture are that he works all things according to the counsel of his own will, and all things means precisely that. And so consequently we are to think of the providence of God here in all of these little things. Apparently insignificant things are things that have to do with the providence of God in order that

his purpose might be realized that Jacob and his family might be in Egypt and there prepared for their great future that they have.

Well, Jacob of course has known that God wanted to give Canaan to Israel. And so naturally when he is asked to go down into Egypt, he is a little concerned about it. He wants to have some assurance from God that this trip down into Egypt is his will. And so as one might ordinarily do, he went to Beersheba which had been the place where Isaac had especially identified himself. And there he offered sacrifices verse 1 of chapter 46 says to the God of his father Isaac.

Sacrifices incidentally suggest the humbleness of Jacob. It suggests also his theology. He understood that there is no approach to God except on the basis of blood sacrifice. He knew the truth, without shedding of blood there is no remission, just as there is no salvation today apart from the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ shed on Calvary's cross. And so there he offered the sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac and God responded in the visions of the night and spoke to Jacob and said, “Jacob, Jacob” and after he responded, “Here I am,” he said, “I am God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt for I will make you a great nation there.” That adverb there is the thing that is important because this is the additional factor beyond the promises that God had made to him earlier at Bethel. They are to be isolated down there and they are to be prepared there by the protection of God. They are to experience bondage and they are also to experience redemption.

Frequently on Saturdays, I have usually prepared the message for Sunday in the earlier part of the week and on Saturday I make up a few notes which I use when I preach the message on Sunday morning as I am now. And usually on Friday and Saturday, I will do just do a little reading in which there may be some other things that I may have overlooked or some things that I am just interested in doing that have to do with the exposition of the word of God in a general way, and occasionally I read something that is useful for the Sunday message which is not in that bulletin and that is why incidentally the things that I may say on Sunday not always in the “Believer's Bible Bulletin.”

Well in the past day or two, I have been doing a little reading again and one of my favorite authors -- and this author has a series of books in which he expounds certain texts of the Bible. He has a chapter which is entitled “John Owen’s Text,” and it is a chapter about John Bunyan in the relationship that he had to John Owen and also about John Owen’s favorite text. I did not realize, but Bunyan and Owen were very good friends and as a matter of fact, John Owen who was probably the greatest English theologian and certainly the premiere Puritan theologian, they not only were good friends, but Owen had often listened to Bunyan preach.

And since Owen was the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University and very close to the kings and also to Cromwell, to Parliament and other important leaders, he was recognized as perhaps the most learned man in England at that time. He often went to hear Bunyan preach, and he was chided by the king for listening to Bunyan as a vulgar man, that is as a common man. And Owen said once he would give all of his learning away if he could learn to preach like John Bunyan. Well Bunyan’s favorite text was, “There is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared.” And John Owen’s favorite text probably came to be that. He gave in the 16 volumes of his works there is an exposition of that passage from Psalm 130 verse 4 of 260 pages. There is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared, and in that exposition, he speaks of the truth of the redemption expressed in that word there is forgiveness with Thee.

He comments particularly about the expression, there is forgiveness with Thee and then goes on to explain why we do not have redemption. We do not have redemption or the forgiveness of sins in nature. We do not have redemption or the forgiveness of sins in conscience. The law of Moses has no promises of the forgiveness of sins, and also natural religion has no offer of the forgiveness of sins. There is forgiveness only with the Lord God who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Then Mr. Owen goes on after having labored that point thoroughly. Someone has said about him, Mr. Owen writes 200 pages and the average man might be able to condense it into 10 very clear pages, but nevertheless it is good theology. And he, expounding the latter part of the text

that Thou mayest be feared says, there is forgiveness with Thee that Thou mayest be feared means that we should have a great awe of the Lord God because of the forgiveness that he offers. And further he means a great wonder; that is that we should be astonished at the fact that there is forgiveness with the Lord God. And then also it means admiration that we ought to have admiration for the fact that there is forgiveness with the Lord God. And finally, he said he means a great love and there should be a great love for the fact that there is forgiveness with the Lord God. This is one of the things that Israel learned in the land of Egypt. They learned bondage, and they learnt forgiveness and deliverance, and then they came those that were spiritual in their midst to understand the awe and wonder and admiration and love that should be the response to the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins.

Now in addition to the fact that God is going to prepare them, he gives some other promises to Jacob. He says, I will go down with you to Egypt and I will also surely bring you up again and Joseph will close your eyes. I will go down with you and I will bring you up again. He has the promise of the abiding presence of the Lord God with him. So he will have all of the guidance necessary through those experiences and I love that expression at the end of the fourth verse, “And Joseph will close your eyes.”

Anybody who knows anything about the experiences of death knows that one of the most comforting things that can happen to any individual at the point of death is to have this own family around the bed. And many have known what it is after a loved one has departed to go over to the bed and take one’s finger and close the eyes of the one who has passed out of this existence into the broader and wider existence of the presence of the Lord God. I am speaking about believers of course. And so here Jacob has given the wonderful promise that when the time comes for him to leave this existence Joseph. And that meant a great deal to Jacob because Joseph was the son of Rachel and Rachel was his beloved wife and Joseph is the son over whom he has bewailed and lamented for many years, and it is Joseph that would close his eyes.

Well they traveled down to Egypt and after the description of the family we read in the latter part of chapter 46 of the union of Jacob and Joseph. It’s one of those happy meetings that the Scripture has set forth. In fact, it is one of the most beautiful moments of the Book of Genesis. Jacob is now with Rachel’s firstborn. Notice that no words are spoken. Joseph comes into the presence of Jacob, and he falls upon Jacob’s shoulders and he weeps over Jacob and Jacob weeps on Joseph’s breast. No words are spoken. No words are needed. Feelings are too deep. I have no doubt that those men could not have formed their lips in such a way as to say anything.

Finally, it is Jacob who speaks and he says, “Now let me die since I have seen your face that you are still alive.” Now you cannot help but reflect, if you know much about the terminology of Scripture that those words are reminiscent of some interesting words spoken in the New Testament. They are spoken by Simeon. This man in Jerusalem who was righteous and devout and who was looking for the consolation of Israel and the Holy Spirit was upon him, was in the Spirit, in the temple when the parents of the Lord Jesus brought in the child Jesus. And they wanted to carry out the customs of the Lord for our Lord Jesus lived under the law of Moses. And so he took the child in his arms and he blessed God and Simeon this faithful, devout man said, “Now Lord let Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy word for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.” You cannot help but think that he had reflected upon these words that Jacob spoke when he saw Joseph and said, “Now, let me die since I have seen your face that you are still alive.” Someone has said this in Genesis chapter 46 is the *Nunc dimittis* that means, now let, and we would supply all the words for servant of Thou, now let Thy servant depart, the *Nunc dimittis*, the first words of the Latin translation of those words of Simeon. But someone has said this is the *Nunc dimittis* of the Old Testament.

Incidentally have you noticed this about these accounts here. There is a great deal of stress upon the emotions. There are some evangelicals who think and some people I think accuse us in Believers Chapel of being like that, that the important the only thing in spiritual life is the mind and the spirit. Now we want to say right at the beginning that it is certainly true that it is our mind and our spirit for the mind and the spirit are identified in Scripture as closely related. It is the mind and

the spirit that should determine our relationship to the Lord God. We are related to him not by our feelings, but we are related to him by the understanding that the Holy Spirit gives us of the truths of Holy Scripture. We have in the Bible the propositions of divine truth. These propositions are propositions however of spiritual realities and our minds are to grasp them, and we are to be guided and directed by our minds.

But God has also given us emotions, and it is not only biblical, but it is desirable for our emotions that have free expression under the guidance and direction of our minds and our spirits, and we notice that there is a great deal of weeping and lamentation here as God brings the reconciliation between the brothers and then finally brings Jacob into the presence of Joseph. There is nothing wrong with shedding tears in the experiences of life and if we are to fully understand divine truth and fully appreciate it, there should be some expression in our emotional life and one of the ways I think in which you can see the expression of the emotions is when the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is proclaimed and occasionally you will notice the tears of some in their eyes, their eyes become watery as the grace of God is expounded, and what he has done for us who were in bondage to sin and how by virtue of what he has done, the burden has been rolled off of our shoulder and rolled down into the grave at the foot of the cross.

Some of the greatest experiences in life are the experiences of the emotional appreciation of what the Lord God has done for us. Heaven is going to be a place in which there is a full expression of the emotional life. And the closer I get to it, I must say the more I do long to get there and be there. I am sorry folks, but the company in heaven is more significant and more to be anticipated than even the wonderful company of you saints and of you sinners in Believers Chapel. But the emotional life is part of our life and we should not fear to express it.

Well let me conclude, I know you are warm. I notice that we have almost total use of the hand in the audience. It is very good; I hope you are at least surviving. Let me conclude however by with just a renewed sense of the greatness of the purposes of God that are wise and merciful and sure to be seen when we take the long view of them. The promises of God expressed to Jacob are

marvelous supports, and find their greatest expression in the promises that the Lord Jesus Christ gives us in the New Testament. When God says to Jacob, “I will go down with you to Egypt and I will surely bring you up again,” he is saying just exactly what our Lord Jesus Christ said so beautifully in Matthew 28, “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

That was John G. Paton’s favorite text. Mr. Paton was the great pioneer missionary to the New Hebrides in the middle of the last century. He was a Scottish lad who grew up in Dumfriesshire in a little cottage. His father was a very godly man. He said whenever his mind went back to Dumfriesshire he thought of that little cottage and he thought of his father because the cottage was so small, that he grew up hearing his father prayer. His father would go into a room and he would spend time in the presence of God and he would call upon the name of the Lord God, and he would call upon him so fervently that he could be heard over the house.

And he said my childhood is a childhood redolent with the prayers of my father. He said, I can remember him getting up and coming out of that room and walking out and going out among the village and the people often would wonder about the calmness and the soberness and the general bearing of Mr. Paton’s father. And he said but we learned and we knew that it came because he spent time in that room. And the favorite text that expressed his life to me was “Lo, I am with you always.” Later on, John Paton was called to the New Hebrides. He went out with a young wife. They had just been married, just not too many months before, and had a little baby of just a month or two old.

They have been out in the island which was a cannibal island. He said when he arrived he could not have imagined the kinds of people that greeted him when he was there. But he said that he nevertheless settled down and within just a few days, I think just about a month his wife and also his child had died. And he was forced to know again the experience of, “Lo I am with you always,” and he said that text is the text that sustained me.

Later on he said in the experiences there and he had some wild experiences. One of the chiefs of that particular island on which he was at that time came to him and said, “Mr. Paton we are

having some difficulties and your life is going to be in danger.” And he said, “I want to show you a tree and I want you to go up this tree and I want you to stay there until the moon changes.” And he said that he wisely did what the chief said. And he climbed up a chestnut tree where there was a little spot down in it that he could be and there he stayed until the moon changed. He said he could hear the people coming by, the cannibals with their spears looking for him, and he stayed up there for days.

He said afterwards the text had sustained me through that whole time was, “Lo, I am with you always.” This is the promise that Jacob was given. So we have no fear of entrusting ourselves to the hands of this God who has promised to be with us. And he is with us from the beginning from the redemption in blood on to the completion of salvation in his coming again.

I also was reading yesterday in another little volume and in it there was a little conversation that took place between two people. It was being recorded by the author of the article and two were speaking, a little girl by the name of Rosalie and a little boy by the name of Jinks. And the conversation turned to a picture and this picture was a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ and it was associated with the text that the text in Luke chapter 19 and verse 10, where the Lord Jesus says, “The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which is lost.” And the picture was of a picture of sheep.

And the woman speaking to the little boy said, “You know Jinks, there are only three kinds of sheep. There are the ninety-nine who never went astray. And there is the sheep that the shepherd found and is bringing back on his shoulders and then the sheep that are lost.” And the little boy said, Is that all the kinds of sheep? And she said yes, why? And he said, “Well, you see I can’t be one of the ninety-nine because I have done lots of bad things in my life and so consequently I am not one of the ninety-nine who need no saving. I have got into tempers and I have sworn I have done heaps of wicked things, he says so that’s out of the question. And I can’t be a found sheep because I don’t love the Good Shepherd, I never think about him at all. So I must be one of the lost sheep. That’s a dreadful thing to be isn’t it?”

Yes, she said that’s very bad, and then with a sudden flash of illumination, But, she went on to say, if you are a lost sheep, you are the very sheep that Jesus came to save for the text says the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which is lost.

Well, Israel came to know bondage and they came to know what it is to be saved and in the New Testament times, the ultimate experience is to know that we are lost sheep and knowing that we are lost sheep to know that it is those very kinds of sheep that very kind for which the Lord Jesus Christ came.

So if you are here in the audience and you are not one of the ninety-nine righteous sheep, you are not one of those already saved by the shepherd, and brought back to the flock, you are one of the lost sheep, but it is for the lost sheep that he has come. May God speak to your heart, “May I come?” Let’s stand for the benediction.

[Prayer] Father, we are so grateful to Thee for the privilege and the opportunity to hear the word of God, to respond to it, to become one of the sheep brought home by the shepherd. We praise Thee that there was a day when we were wandering sheep from the fold because Lord we have come to know what it is to be lost. We know the despair of our lost condition and we thank Thee that through that we have to come to appreciate what it is to be one of the saved sheep.

O Father, if there is some in this audience who does not know him as the shepherd who saves lost sheep, by the Holy Spirit bring conviction, repentance, and faith we do pray. Guide and direct our steps and may this week we please our Great Shepherd of the sheep, the Lord Jesus Christ. Go with us now. For his name’s sake. Amen.