

What God is about to do

Part 1

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[00:00:01] I've got a note here to read also Philippians chapter 2, but it's so well known. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, things in heaven, things on earth, things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess, Jesus is Lord, to God the Father's glory.

The things that God is shortly going to do.

We read in John 5, that it is the Father's will that all men should honour the Son.

Beloved brethren, I want to start with that which is probably paramount.

That which I believe is paramount in the heart of the Father. [00:01:05] And that is that shortly, dear brethren, God will motivate the whole universe, heavens and earth, in order to give glory to his Son.

The man that hung upon the cross of Calvary will soon come forth, and that day as Peter wrote to Timothy at the end of his first epistle, isn't it?

That day will declare who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

He will come forth and the day will manifest that the man who hung on the cross of Calvary, God's Son, is the supreme ruler of the universe.

[00:02:06] Those are wonderful things, beloved brethren.

It should speak to our hearts in a very powerful way.

Not only the story of the love that took him to Calvary, but the greatness and the glory of the person who has done it.

The verses that I have read, John chapter 5, and I'll try and illustrate one or two of the glories of the Lord Jesus that come out in those few verses by reference to the three pairs of dreams in the history of Joseph. These scriptures, beloved brethren, are replete with the glory of the Son of God.

[00:03:05] I don't know whether you've ever sat down and thought about the dreams that are in the book of Genesis. Joseph is a delightful character.

You may have to check these things out, but he is probably the only servant of God in the Old Testament of whom no actual act of sin is recorded.

In that respect, he is unique. We do not read of any failure in Joseph. And the reason is that he comes upon the page of the Word of God toward the end of the book of Genesis, particularly as that person who, in a remarkable way, speaks of the one who came forth from the Father and came into this world, and left the world and has gone back to the Father in exaltation, [00:04:05] in whose hands everything has been committed.

I never read the verses, did I? It's in John chapter 3. The Father loveth the Son and has given all things into his hand.

They were his creatorially. He was the one who brought them into being. Out of the power of himself flowed his dynamic power in creation, and the universe was brought into being, an expression of himself, to be the platform whereby he would affect the counsel and purpose of God, in order to bring to light the revealed mind of God, in order that there should be established throughout eternity God's glory in men, and a divine person stooped into manhood in order to bring it into accomplishment.

[00:05:02] And that person, beloved friends, is our Saviour, the one who died for our sins.

As Peter says, who bore our sins, those individual things that we had done wrong, in his body on the tree, sacrificially, when substitutionally he took my and your place, individually, such was his love, but such is his greatness, that he will fill the universe. Think of it, beloved brethren. It's not mere man and what he is going to do that's going to fill this world. You and I have received into our hearts by the power of the Spirit and the revelation of God, the choices, thoughts of God, what God is about to do. And God is going to dispense from this scene everything that man has done, [00:06:01] and will establish in this scene his beloved Son, that in all things he might have the preeminence. And I say it again, he will move everything in order to give honour and glory to his Son.

Let's just go back into the book of Genesis to try and now put into three different headings particular glories that I have in mind of the Lord Jesus Christ, they're not very easy to speak about. We can look at the person of the Lord Jesus and speak together, as we already have done at some length this afternoon, about his lordship and his supremacy. We can look at him as the one who will be the judge. And we can look at him as the life giver and all that that involves. [00:07:01] Now that's just briefly three things that one wants to develop a little bit this afternoon. His supremacy, his lordship, the fact that into his hands judgment has been committed, and the fact that he is the giver, the sustainer of life, the quickener, the exalted man, the one that God has given glory, and the one who is the head of the body, the one who has been given a bride. We may touch on these things together. Now then, just for a moment, I've not read anything in detail of the story of Joseph in the book of Genesis. I'll rely upon your memory, and I trust later on your reading of them in detail. But Joseph is unique in this respect, that there is none other man in the scriptures [00:08:06] in the course of whose history the Spirit of God has laid down on record six dreams, or three pairs of dreams.

And Joseph himself gives us the reason why these dreams are doubled or coupled together. He tells us that this is established of God. God has established these things, and God is going to shortly bring them to pass. Get hold of that, beloved brethren. We're going to speak this afternoon of things that God has established. And when God establishes a thing, that means that there is no created power, infernal, heavenly or earthly, that can overthrow what God establishes. This is what God is going to

do. And until the coming into this world of the Son and the giving of the Spirit of God, [00:09:03] these things were a mystery. They were secret. They were unrevealed. But they are not secret or unrevealed any longer. The Spirit of God in Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, speaks of the capacity that we have because God has given us of His Spirit. Think of that, beloved brethren. God has given us of His Spirit.

And the Spirit of God can plumb even the depths of God. You know, that is a profound statement. I'll just make one comment on it that you should consider. And it was an illumination to me when a dear brother said this. The Apostle in that chapter speaks about the fact that no man knoweth the Spirit of a man except that man himself. What that means is that you do not know what is in my mind. Only I know what is in my mind.

[00:10:03] I cannot give you my Spirit.

I wouldn't want to. If I could give you my Spirit, you would know everything that was in my mind. You would know me as I know myself.

Have you got that, beloved brethren? It's true. If I could give you my Spirit, you would know me as I know myself.

God has given us of His Spirit.

It's a profound consideration, beloved brethren. God is not unknown.

God has been revealed by His Son.

And God has given us His Spirit who plumbs even the depths of God that we might understand and know the things that are freely given us of God, what God is about to do. [00:11:01] We're looking at these things this afternoon. So we've got these dreams. Let me briefly put them together. The sheaves bowing down to one sheaf.

Obviously an earthly picture.

Sun and moon and the stars bowing down. A heavenly picture.

We've got the dream of the butler.

Three days.

Three days.

That puts us into the ground of resurrection. We've got the dream of the baker. Three days.

What Joseph said came to pass.

He was the one who brought out the mystery of three days. Marvel not at this.

The day is coming when they that are in the grave shall hear the voice of the Son of God and shall

come forth. [00:12:02] In those two dreams, beloved brethren, we have typified, I believe, the resurrection of the good unto life and the resurrection of they that have done evil unto a resurrection of damnation. And what Joseph said came to pass.

And then there is the dreams of Pharaoh himself. You remember the kind, thin, and the kind, fat-fleshed, and the stalks of wheat, thin and wasted, and the full ones.

You know the dream.

What is the question here, beloved brethren? Psalm 105 tells us.

God was going to break the staff of bread. The staff of bread in Scripture speaks of that which, naturally speaking, sustains life. In other words, we're talking about death [00:13:06] and all its consequences.

But there was a man who could reveal secrets.

There was a man who knew what God was going to do.

And there was a glorious person who in manhood, here on earth, said these words, I am come that they might have life in abundance. That's briefly what we want to look at this afternoon. So very quickly, let's deal with the first one. Where I began to read, we have the little story that Joseph, that Isaac, Jacob loved Joseph more than all his brethren, gave him a coat of many colors.

[00:14:04] You know, as you read that verse, you cannot but help think again of those verses that we read out of John's Gospel, can you? The Father loveth the Son.

The Father loveth the Son.

And there the Spirit of God brings Joseph before us. In first of all, that which is perhaps above everything else. We might speak, as the Spirit of God gives us utterance and understanding, of the glories of the Lord Jesus, personal, moral, and official.

But there is something above perhaps all these things.

Particularly that which he is personally. The Father loveth the Son.

Here is the person who came from the Father's bosom, came out from that scene, Joseph, [00:15:02] with the story as so replete, is it not, with typical illustrations, sent out of the veil of Hebron, that place of intimacy and fellowship.

And we speak together this afternoon, dear brethren, of one who came from the Father's bosom to make known what laid in that bosom, in order that you and I might find a part there too.

Beloved brethren, we must lay hold more on these truths.

There is nothing more wonderful than this, that a person so great and glorious has come forth from the bosom of eternity, the bosom of the Father, and has done a work at the cross, but in the doing of

it has revealed the Father, [00:16:04] and laid that foundation whereby that you and I, as receiving from himself life, being quickened, that we might, throughout the ages of eternity, share in that circle of divine love and fellowship. We sing about it in our hymns, you know, brethren, these wonderful words, are they not, brought to rest within the circle, where love's treasures are revealed.

That's our portion, beloved brethren. That's where God the Father would have us, in order that we might share in all the glory that he has given his Son, in order that we might know the blessedness of knowing God, in all the sweetness and intimacy of relationship, knowing him as Father. You know, I've said it before from this platform, but I understand that almost at the end of Mr. Derby's life, [00:17:05] he was asked the question, what was the greatest thing that he had come to know and appreciate? And his answer simply was this, God is my Father.

God is my Father.

There's nothing greater than that, beloved brethren. That is what we shall enjoy eternally, and all the blessing that it involves, knowing God in such a way.

Well, Joseph comes forth thus, and was hated of his brethren, I can't go into that, there is no time, but we read, did we not, of what that hatred led to, shot at by the archers, sorely afflicted, hated, and that peculiar expression in Psalm 105, [00:18:03] that his feet were put in fetters, and the real meaning of the next expression is, that his soul came into iron.

There, beloved brethren, are words that describe, I believe, on the one hand, the outward sufferings of Christ, in regard to what men did to him, the fetters, they curtailed his life, they curtailed his pathway, the things concerning me have an end, and that end, that in that verse refers to the cross, when in regard to that pathway of perfect manhood, it came to an end.

But on the other hand, when we read of that verse, that his soul came into iron, do you know, if you look up the word for iron in a concordance, you'll find that in its root it means to pierce, [00:19:03] to pierce, the hardest of all elements, but it is that element that the Spirit of God takes up to depict the piercing of his soul, the sorrow, the agony of the cross, and all that it involved, his soul came into iron.

We can't go into that, we thought of it previously. But Joseph comes before us in his pathway as the one who came forth from the Father and came into this world and was hated. They hated me, he could say, causelessly.

Well, he has two dreams.

You'll notice that the two dreams that Joseph had are not actually interpreted.

It's worth taking a note of these things, beloved brethren, and think about them. Jacob, I believe, gave a partial interpretation [00:20:03] to the second one, but I think it was inadequate.

These first two dreams of Joseph, we might say, is that which, should we say, is nearest to the heart of God.

And I read to you those verses in Ephesians. When, in the fullness of times, when the present course

of events has run its full course, and it's come to the end, the end of the age.

I might be wrong here, but I believe we've got to the end of the millennium. The full course of the present age, it's run its course.

And what does God say? He's gathered together in one all things in Christ, things which are in heaven, things which are in earth.

[00:21:02] The gathering together of the wealth of the ages, all that God has been doing through the course of time, coming together in one vortex, at one point.

Think of it, beloved brethren, from the Garden of Eden, all that has come in, God moving before him through the ages of time.

God has never deviated from this. God has ever had it before him. The moment when at the end of the age his son will come forth and manifestly will be the head, will be supreme.

Things which are in heaven, things which are in earth, the bounty and glory of his person will flood the whole thing.

We can't imagine what it will be like.

Man has his displays, [00:22:01] God will have his.

And when God displays his son manifestly as the head, the whole universe, the whole universe will bow at his blessed feet. And throughout the vault of ages, that loud, our men will respond to glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Well, I must pass on. Joseph goes down into Egypt and there is rejected of his brethren and committed into the hands of the Gentiles from whom he suffers and is cast into prison.

And we have with him then the butler and the baker. You know, I cannot go into the details of the dreams, you know them.

[00:23:01] But you remember the butler sees in his dream this vine and he goes to it and he squeezes the fruit of the vine into Pharaoh's cup that's in his hand and he gives it to Pharaoh. And likewise the baker, that which probably is the work of his own hands, I don't know, I don't want to stretch the typology of it, but I believe the vine would speak of that which is the product of the work of God. Whereas that which the baker produced, it's not bread, you know. It's not bread that he had upon his head. It was fancy meats, fancy cakes. That which we would say was the product of his own hands. And he lost it all.

It was all taken from him.

You know, and if you read in the margin, you'll find that [00:24:01] Joseph uses the words that in three days Pharaoh shall reckon up.

Reckon up.

That's the expression.

The one who can reckon up according to God.

And in three days, which was Pharaoh's birthday, Pharaoh lifted up the head of the butler and restored him to his place.

And he lifted up the head of the baker and hanged him on a tree.

Now I just want to turn you to John chapter 5. I've already referred to this.

Verse 27 of John chapter 5 says, And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, a reckoning, because he is son of man.

[00:25:07] This beloved brethren is the man who stands between the dead and the living.

He ever does.

He stands between the dead and the living.

He is the one who at the cross in manhood endured all that was involved in death.

And he is the one who in glorious resurrection has come forth into life.

And he is the one on account of that all judgment has been committed into his hand.

I think, you know, we could probably, you will find that these glories that I'm speaking of overlap.

[00:26:02] Think again of that verse that I read and one of those verses that we all ought to learn and understand, John 5 and 24.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed. Now note the difference. Note carefully the different translation of this verse.

And is passed out of death into life.

What that means is that the person who believes has life and has been taken out of that condition to which because of sin death had attached itself. It's all been answered to at the cross. And has been placed into that condition [00:27:04] of life to which death and judgment can never have anything to say. He that heareth my word.

He stands between the dead and the living. What a glory is his.

He goes on to say, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming and now is. This is the present epoch in the ways of God. When the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, that's dead spiritually, of course.

In order to understand John 5, we must see clearly that there is a difference in verse 25 when it speaks about the dead. And in verse 24, 28.

They that are in the graves.

They that are dead spiritually shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live. For simplicity this afternoon we might say [00:28:01] that to do good, they that have done good in verse 29 is they that have heard the voice of the Son of God. And it has been received into the soul by faith, by believing, because they have been born of God. And on account of that, they live. I am come, I say again, that they might have life in abundance.

We have heard the voice of the Son of God speaking of love beyond all human thought, the hymn writer says.

That love which emanated in the heart of the Father that sent the Son into this world and that glorious person because the words that he spoke were the Father's words, are words of life.

Words which we take into our souls by faith and belief and because of that come into life, [00:29:02] pass out of death into life in abundance, the giver of life. But he goes on to say, for as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself. Life is inherent in the Father because of who he is as the source, as the origin. And this person who came from God, likewise, because he is God. Life is inherent in himself.

The wonderful thing is, beloved brethren, I believe this verse emphasizes the fact that when that person took up manhood, he never lost anything that attributed to him in Godhead.

It is only of God that it can be said he hath life in himself. But this verse says the Son hath life in himself. What does that mean? That the Son is God.

[00:30:05] Life in himself and it is that person.

Because it has been made manifest that all things have been committed into his hand and it is this person who can give eternal life unto those that the Father has given him.

Then he goes on to say, marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice.

This hour has not yet arrived.

When he speaks about an hour here, of course, it doesn't mean a specific moment of time, although that is, of course, true. But, of course, this hour is characteristic. In any case, the two resurrections do not happen simultaneously. But there is an hour coming [00:31:02] that will be characteristic of the resurrecting power of the voice of the Son of God. We read of it, do we not, in Thessalonians, Archangel like voice, when the dead in Christ shall rise.

It is his voice that will bring them forth. All that are in the graves shall come forth.

You know, again, we read these verses, do we not, but I wonder how often we sit and pause at the

solemnity and the wonder of what these words are saying. Think of it, beloved brethren, the millions going right back to Adam.

And yet there is a moment coming when the voice of the Son of God shall go forth.

And at the first resurrection, the dead in Christ shall rise.

[00:32:01] Wonderful moment.

We which are alive and remain caught up together with them in the cloud, so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Words of comfort, words of cheer, true words, real words.

It could happen today.

We could be caught up together with them, glorified into his presence, to be eternally with him, to see his face, and learn the riches there of his grace. They shall come forth, because judgment has been committed unto him.

But it says also, not only they that have done good coming forth unto a resurrection of life, but it speaks about those that have practiced evil, [00:33:02] a slightly different word, practiced evil.

Unto a resurrection, it doesn't say they shall live.

John says, I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, but it doesn't say they shall live. They couldn't, because they've never passed out of death. They're still in all its power and its condemnation. They are still called the dead.

And at the end of that awesome chapter, John says, and death, and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

And who is the one that does it? Who is the one that stands between the dead and the living?

We can't help but thinking of the cross, can we? [00:34:01] Golgotha's hill.

Three crosses.

On the one side, the dead.

On the one side, the living.

Yes, dear friend, there's a person in this room that doesn't know the Lord yet as their savior. There were three crosses on Golgotha's hill.

On one side was a man who will come forth unto a resurrection of life.

And on the other side, there's a man who shall come forth unto a resurrection of damnation.

And on the central cross was the man who determined the eternal destiny of the one and the other. You can't pass by the cross of Christ.

You can't pass by the one who hung upon the cross of Christ. You'll come forth.

Well, all judgment has been committed [00:35:02] into his hand. Well, finally, the time has gone.

Pharaoh's dream.

Obviously, it's a matter of sustaining life. The staff of bread was to be broken. I suppose if we think of cattle and of wheat, we have to consider that which naturally speaks of that which sustains natural life, but it's figurative.

And Joseph comes forth out of the place of the dungeon. He moves into his fifth changes of raiment.

You look him up.

His fifth changes of raiment. And he takes the throne. And he is given a name, Zaphnath, Pioneer, which has two meanings.

As far as the Coptic is concerned, the sustainer of life. That was how Pharaoh, I believe, looked upon him. [00:36:03] That was how Pharaoh looked upon him, the one who saved them, who had the answer to the problem of the famine and the breaking of the staff of life. But you know, that name's got a different meaning in the Hebrew. The Coptic refers to what he was as far as men is concerned. But when you look at that name in the Hebrew, you see him as the one who has come forth and has made known the mystery of what God is about to do, the revealer of secrets.

Beloved brethren, you and I have been brought to know. To us has been revealed the mystery of God. We read of it, did we not, in Ephesians? The mystery of his will, that which he purposed in himself, that which has involved his eternal pleasure. We've considered it. The heading up, the gathering together of all things in Christ. [00:37:02] But you know where we read.

We thought of the great working of God's power. That the present moment has taken that person out of death and exalted him far above all things in order that he might be the head.

And has given to him a body, the assembly, that which is the complement of him that filleth all things.

And how typical it is to read that in that exaltation of Joseph there was one given to him to be by his side, a mystical person.

We're not told anything else about her. It's not the subject. But when we come to Ephesians, we are let into that secret as well. When, by the power of the Spirit, by the energy of faith, we look into the future and into the glory [00:38:04] and see there God's beloved son in all his glory and one by his side, his complement, his counterpart.

One who is able to share in all his glory. The glory that thou hast given me, I have given them. Mark's words, John 17.

The glory that thou hast given me in manhood, I have given them in order that they might share with him in all the glory of that scene. Beloved brethren, you and I, by infinite grace, by sovereign grace, form part of that body, that company that will be by his side.

That which God himself will use to fill out the whole universe with his glory. It will be by the assembly. Well, I just commend these things to you. [00:39:02] Just quickly go over them again. The will of God is that all men should honour the Son. The day soon is coming when God will bring him forth. We say these things, beloved brethren, again and again. But we say it because they mean much to us. He who bore the cross will bear the glory. The one who was rejected by this world and cast out and still is, God will come bring forth and he will be supreme. He is the one into whose hand all judgment is committed. The matter of life and the matter of death is in his hands.

And you and I, beloved brethren, by infinite grace, in this day have been called to himself in order that we might form part of that glory scene. [00:40:01] When God will display the riches of his grace, when you and I shall be with him there by his side to share in that glory scene. Well, may the Spirit of God encourage our hearts and endear the Lord Jesus Christ more to us in order that the wonder of what God is about to do might more fill our souls and form our hearts and our lives and govern our footsteps through this world until that moment when we should hear his voice and see his face and be caught up to be with him forever.