

The Blessing of Favour

Teaching given by Peter Warren at FGPC, January – March 2017

1. The Blessing of Favour

Genesis 39.2

"And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian" - (AV)

'The Lord was with' him..

Genesis 39. 1-23

- Verses 1-5 says that 'the Lord was with Joseph' and the blessing made him prosper.
Actually four times in this chapter (vs 2, 3, 21, 23) we read these words
- Verse 5 connects God's presence with the Blessing.
- The Blessing is the favour of God. The Favour of God was on Joseph (vs 4, 21)
- Even when his circumstance changed and things appeared to go wrong (through false allegations and imprisonment) Joseph still knew the presence of God was with him and produced favour and prosperity in his life (vs 19-23)
- After he had been forgotten and left in the prison for two years – still the Lord was with him and the blessing elevated and promoted him (Genesis 40.23; 41.1,14, 37-41, 52)

Compare

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|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Genesis 26.24 | The blessing on Isaac |
| • Genesis 30.43 – Genesis 31.5 | The blessing on Jacob |
| • 1 Samuel 3.19 | The blessing on Samuel |
| • 1 Samuel 18.12,14 | The blessing on David |
| • 2 Kings 18.7 | The blessing on Hezekiah |
| • Acts 10.38 | The blessing on Jesus |
| • Psalm 1.1-3 | The blessing on all godly men |
| • Matthew 28.20 | The blessing on the church |

The Preciousness of the Presence of God

You cannot have the Blessing without God's presence with you - He is the Blesser.
Most folk talk and think about material prosperity, healing, a spiritual gift or some other tangible thing as the blessing.

We must not confuse blessings with the Blessing.

These tangible blessings are only the results and benefits of the Blessing. Most Christians seek the blessings: they seek the healing for their body, they seek the spiritual gifts, they seek the financial miracle to meet a need. They are trying to get the blessings rather than the Blessor.

It is the Blessing that makes rich – and with the blessing there is no sorrow. Sorrow is found where people seek the blessings (the results of the Blessing)

“The blessing of the Lord makes one rich, and He adds no sorrow with it” Proverbs 10.22

Seek God First

- Jesus is Emmanuel – ‘God with us’. (Matthew 1.23)
- Everything God is and has been, is wrapped up in Jesus. Jesus is the fullness of the Godhead and in Him there is completeness [the Blessing] (Colossians 2.9-10)

Matthew 6.31-33

“Therefore do not worry, saying ‘what shall we eat?’ or ‘what shall we drink?’ or ‘what shall we wear?’. For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your Heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you”

- Seek first of all the ‘kingdom of God’ - seek God first, His presence first. Get into that place of fellowship with God, out of which will flow the Fullness of the Blessing. You’ll get the blessings, but they come as a result of the Blessing.

This is why we should get excited when we gather together – because the Lord is with us

“For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them” Matthew 18.20

2. The Glory Will Be Seen Upon You

Isaiah 60.1-7

“Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the LORD will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you.” (vs1-2)

Glory – *kabod* (Hbrw), can mean ‘splendour, copiousness or majesty’. But in it’s rawest form means ‘**heavy** or **weighty**’.

On the negative it carries the thought of ‘**burdensome**’

On the positive it carries the thought of ‘**numerous** or **rich**’

The best one-word definition to encompass everything that *kabod* means is **GREAT**

Manifestations of glory

In the Scriptures the Glory was more than often manifest in some tangible form. It was visible, it could be seen. The verse in Isaiah tells us that the '**glory will be seen upon you**'

Exodus 24.15-18 – the sight of the glory was like a consuming fire and a cloud.

The people followed this cloud wherever it went, it led them in the way they were to go.

Exodus 40.33-38 – when the construction of the Tabernacle was complete, the cloud covered it and the glory of God filled the place. The presence of this glory was so strong that Moses was unable to enter the Tabernacle.

2 Chronicles 5.11-14 – The same thing happened in Solomon's time, after he had built the Temple. At the opening dedication ceremony the cloud came down and the glory of God filled the place, this time preventing the priests from ministering.

Exodus 33.8 – 34.7

(v8-10) Whenever Moses went in to the Tabernacle the cloud came down and stood at the door. When the people saw the cloud they rose up and worshipped.

Reverence should always accompany manifestations of the glory – **when the glory is manifest it is not a time to talk, move about, clock-watch or do anything else other than worship.** We see it in the New Testament when people came into contact with the glory they went away praising God

[Show me Your glory](#) – Moses asks that God would reveal to him His glory.

In response to his request God says that He would pass before him and show him His goodness. (vs19)

God said that His glory would pass before him (vs22)

The glory cloud descended on Mt Sinai (vs5)

The Lord passed before Moses as He promised (vs6)

John 2. 1-11

At this wedding in Cana of Galilee, the hosts had the embarrassing situation that they ran out of wine. Jesus turned plain water into the most wonderful quality wine. His goodness and miraculous power was being manifest.

Verse 11 tells us that through this miracle Jesus manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

John 1.14

["And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."](#)

We beheld His glory – one translation says 'we actually saw His glory'.

His glory – was the manifestation of the fullness of grace (His love, favour, loving-kindness) and the fullness of truth.

“The Word became a human being and lived here with us. We saw his true glory, the glory of the only Son of the Father. **From him all the kindness and all the truth of God have come down to us**” (CEV)

His glory will be seen upon you – there is a time and place where we can physically see the manifestations of the glory

John 11.40

“Jesus said to her [*Martha*], “Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?””

This promise was made to Martha as she was going through a harrowing situation. Her brother Lazarus had died and was buried in the tomb – he had been there 4 days.

The goodness of God was manifest that day and Lazarus came out of the tomb – alive! Jesus said that she would see the glory [and goodness] of God if she believed. She did – she believed, and she saw the manifestation.

Everywhere Jesus went he was manifesting the glory of God, through his words of teaching, towards those He met that were in need – bodily healing, forgiveness, deliverance from devils clutches.

Acts 10.38

“How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him”

The goodness of God was being manifest through Jesus. God was with Him – the glory was upon Him

John 14.21 – Jesus promised to manifest Himself to them that love Him and keep His commandments

“The person who has My commands and keeps them is the one who [*really*] loves Me; and whoever [*really*] loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I [*too*] will love him and will show (reveal, manifest) Myself to him. [*I will let Myself be clearly seen by him and make Myself real to him*]” (Amp)

3. The Fourth-Day Man

John 11.40

“Jesus said to her [*Martha*], “Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?””

Last week I finished my message talking about Mary & Martha and the raising of Lazarus. Let us revisit that passage as we continue to develop this teaching.

- (v1-3) Mary & Martha were close friends of Jesus.

- It was the same Mary that during supper a little while later took the very costly fragrant oil and poured it out on Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. (John 12.1-3)
- The same Mary who on an earlier occasion, sat at Jesus' feet listening intently to Him teach, while Martha was busy and distracted serving the guests (Luke 10.38-42).

- They were going through a tough time. Their brother Lazarus was sick, which would eventually lead to his death, so they called for Jesus.
 - In their hour of need they called on the Lord, they sought his touch, his favour. They sought the blessing from the blesser.

- **(v4)** On hearing that Lazarus was sick, Jesus makes a comment to His disciples, and (I presume) to the messenger as well:

“This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.” (vs4)

 - We know from the passage that Lazarus died – so why did Jesus say that this sickness was ‘not unto death’. Was He just passing a comment, something similar to ‘oh everything is going to be alright’. He wasn’t speaking about natural death here, He was thinking of eternal separation from God.
 - He knew what was going to happen and that this was an opportunity and occasion for a manifestation of the glory and favour of God.
 - I made the comment last week, and I repeat – We do not go through afflictions, trials, difficulties, sickness etc because they bring glory to God. If they did, why would we want to seek help, healing and deliverance. What glorifies God is our attitude toward Him during these times. Like Mary and Martha, when the trouble came they turned to the Lord.

- **(v5-6)** Jesus loved this family. I honestly believe that this family were His closest friends, outside of the apostles with whom He spent every day.

- So why, when Jesus learned that Lazarus was sick, would He stay an extra two days in the place where they were.
 - Was Jesus scared of the Jews? They had recently tried to stone Him
 - Didn't He love the family enough to drop everything and rush to be with him?
 - Were the cries of the sisters not being heard?
 - The Lord's not answering the prayer – must be God's will for Lazarus to suffer
 - What we do know is that God was going to be glorified through it. To our human wisdom and understanding, we may not always know why there is a delay in getting our prayers answered, we may not know if there is a greater purpose – our duty is to stay in faith, even when things look contrary.

“We walk by faith, not by sight” 2 Corinthians 5.7

- **(v7-8)** Two days later Jesus said to the disciples – “Let us go to Judea again”
 - Jesus prepares to start the journey to Bethany. The sisters called for Him and He is on the way

- **(v11-15)** “Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up”
 - Lazarus sleeps? He will get well – the disciples thought that Jesus was referring to natural sleep and they expected Lazarus to recover.
 - When we are sick we are told to rest – it aids our recovery
- Jesus clearly tells them that Lazarus is dead – He was already dead.
- “I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe.....”
 - what a strange statement this is – I was glad – surely it couldn’t be that Jesus was glad his friend Lazarus had died.
 - If Jesus had been there earlier He could have healed him from the sickness.
 - Jesus could have just spoken the word and Lazarus would have been healed – like He did when the nobleman came to Him on behalf of his son (John 4.49-53)
 - These would have been tremendous miracles and worthy of praise, but Jesus had a greater purpose on this occasion – an opportunity for the glory and favour of God.

(Note vs 16 - look at the faith of the one we have named ‘the doubter’)

- **(vs21)** When Jesus arrived just outside the village he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days, and was greeted with the same response that we have just thought of – (Martha) “if You had been here, my brother would not have died”
- **(v23-24)** “..Your brother will rise again... I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day”
 - Jesus is telling her that Lazarus is going to rise from the dead – and straight away she thinks about the resurrection of the dead in the end times
 - But Jesus is talking about now – He knew what He was going to do from the moment he first heard the news.
- **(v25-26)** “Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”
 - Jesus is the resurrection and life – He is the giver of life.
 - Jesus encourages her faith which was beginning to fade and brings her to the point of belief that God’s goodness, favour and blessing is working for her.
 - Martha needed this encouragement, she was different to her sister.
- **(v32)** Mary goes out to meet Jesus and says the same to him – if You had been here my brother would not have died
 - This time instead of repeating the same words to Mary that He spoke to Martha, Jesus was stirred up in His spirit and asked to be taken to the tomb.

- **(v36-37)** These were Jesus' friends –
 - Jesus loved them, they were close to Him, like family
 - The people that gathered knew about Jesus – the miracle worker from Galilee. He healed the lepers, unstopped deaf ears, opened the eyes of the blind. Couldn't he have kept this man dying?
 - Of course, but this was going to be an opportunity for the manifestation of the favour and goodness of God.
 - Notice none of them ask Him to do anything – he is already dead, there was no hope for them except for the resurrection at the last day.

- **(v39)** Take away the stone! Martha protests – Lord there is a stench, he has been dead four days.
 - Take away the stone – if we are to see the glory of God manifest we must remove every stumbling block

- It is probable that Lazarus died on the same day that the sisters sent to Him
 - The custom was to bury the dead the same day they died – he had been dead and probably in the tomb for four days
 - If this is the case why did Jesus still stay an extra two days before coming? If Jesus had left immediately, Lazarus would have still been dead and he could have raised him then.
 - Four days – is significant. The Scripture uses an idiom here – *he is a fourth-day man*.
 - There was a common Jewish tradition from the writings of the Jewish Sages (*Beresh. Rabba*) that the soul hovered around the body for three days hoping to return, but when corruption began on the fourth day, it leaves. (*Lightfoot/Vincent*)
 - Jesus stayed two extra days in order to silence the sceptical Jews who gathered to mourn. In the natural this man was beyond help but Jesus was about to raise and give life to a fourth-day man.

- **(v40)** Jesus appeals to Martha's faith again, to encourage her - "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?"
 - Jesus referred her back to what He had said – (v25) 'even though he dies, he shall live'

- **(v43-44)** Lazarus come forth!
 - Lazarus come out of the tomb – alive

- **(v45)** Many of the Jews believed in Him. This was the whole purpose behind Jesus staying an extra two days

The favour and goodness of God was on this family

Psalm 84.11

“For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD will give grace and glory; No good thing will He withhold From those who walk uprightly.”

The blessing of favour is upon us today. God gives grace and glory – His favour and His goodness.

He will not withhold any good thing from those who walk uprightly (#8549) – in truth and integrity (BDB (1e) in accordance with the truth)

Do you feel like you're in a fourth-day man situation. Don't lose heart but believe – you will see God's goodness and favour

Psalm 27.13

“I would have lost heart, unless I had believed That I would see the goodness of the LORD In the land of the living.”

4. Favour In The Fiery Furnace

Genesis 39.2-4

“The LORD was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD made all he did to prosper in his hand. So Joseph found favour in his sight, and served him. Then he made him overseer of his house, and all *that* he had he put under his authority” - (AV)

A few weeks ago we were looking at the statement found in connection with Joseph - ‘*The Lord was with [him]*’ (Genesis 39.2) – four times in chapter 39 we read those words. We noted that this statement applied to the Blessing of Favour upon him. Because the Lord was with him everything he did, and everything he handled was made to prosper. The favour of God was on him and with him, and it caused him to be promoted.

Last Sunday I finished with a Scripture from **Psalm 84.11**

“For the LORD God *is* a sun and shield; The LORD will give grace and glory; No good *thing* will He withhold From those who walk uprightly”

God gives grace and glory – His favour and His goodness.

He will not withhold any good thing from those who walk uprightly (#8549) – in truth and integrity (BDB (1e) *in accordance with the truth*)

Daniel 1. 3-9

(v6) Four young men from the tribe of Judah were brought before the king: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. These four were captives brought to Babylon from Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (vs1-4).

(v5) They were given royal provisions and appointed a time of training so that they could serve the king.

(v7) we learn that their names are changed by the chief of the eunuchs – they are given Babylonian names

(v8) Daniel and the three others purpose that they are not going to partake of what the king has provided. They would not allow themselves to become defiled by eating food that had been offered to idols. So they requested not to eat of that food.

(v9) We have a similar statement made about Daniel (and the others) that was made of Joseph – God brought them into favour with the chief of eunuchs. The Blessing of Favour was upon them.

(v10) The request not to partake of the king's provisions gave the chief of eunuch a problem. He thought they would look malnourished when they stood before the king and consequently he would be killed for it.

(v11-16) Set a test! - give us just vegetables and water for ten days. Then examine us with the other young men and see how we look. After the test the four Jews appeared better and fatter than all of those who ate of the king's provisions.

(v17-20) God gave them wisdom, knowledge and skill in literature. To Daniel God gave understanding in visions and dreams. The favour of God is on them, blessing them, promoting them and bringing them before the king

Daniel 2.11-19

King Nebuchadnezzar has a dream but does not tell anyone what it is. He promises gifts, rewards and honour to the man who can tell the dream and its interpretation (v6) but no one is found that can tell or interpret the dream.

The king is angry when he is told that the dream is impossible to tell and he orders the execution of all the wise men in the land – which included Daniel and his three friends.

The favour of God is upon them – God reveals the dream and interpretation to Daniel

Why does God reveal the dream to Daniel, not because he is wise among all the men of Babylon but because God has a purpose – to let all of Babylon know that there is a God in heaven and that Heaven rules (v28, Daniel 4.25-26)

The favour of God promotes Daniel and Shadrach, Meshach, Abed-Nego into positions over the affairs of the kingdom.

Daniel 3.13-30

Nebuchadnezzar makes and erects a gold image.

He instructs all in the kingdom to worship this image or suffer the consequences – the fiery furnace

He is told of Shadrach Meshach and Abed-Nego who refuse to bow down

(v14-15) They are given another opportunity to bow down and worship the image. He warns them that they will suffer the consequences if they do not obey, and he adds, there is no god that is able to deliver you.

(v16-17) The decision was easy – there was no need to answer the king. The favour of God was on these boys and they knew it.

If that is the case.. our God is able to deliver us..and He will deliver us.

(v18) But if not... (if you don't throw us in the fire ??) if God doesn't deliver us we still are not going to worship the gold image.

(v23) They were bound and thrown into the fire. Those who were throwing them into the fire were killed by the intensity of the heat

(v24-25) Did we not cast in three? I see four men walking, they are not hurt – the fourth is like the Son of God

(v26-27) They were brought out of the fire – the favour of God was upon them:

- the fire had no power over their bodies – no burns
- their hair was not singed
- the smell of the fire was not even on them
- the only thing that the fire had any power over was the ropes that bound them – they went in bound and were walking around

(v30) The favour of God promoted them

The Blessing of Favour will keep us and deliver us in the midst of trials.

Psalm 34.19

“Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the LORD delivers him out of them all.”

This verse does not exempt Christians from problems and trials but it does promise that God will deliver us when we go through them.

He will be with us, His grace and favour are on us to deliver us.

When we go through the fire we have the confidence of His presence, His favour, His goodness with us.

“But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called *you* by your name; You *are* Mine. (2) When you pass through the waters, I *will be* with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. **When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you. (3) For I *am* the LORD your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Saviour; I gave Egypt for your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in your place. (4) **Since you were precious in My sight, You have been honoured,** And I have loved you; Therefore I will give men for you, And people for your life. (5) **Fear not, for I *am* with you;** I will bring your descendants from the east, And gather you from the west” **Isaiah 43.1-5****

(v4) honoured – this is the root word for glory,

(v5) I am with you – the Blessing in us and on us

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