

The Big Moment

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[0 : 00] Let's turn together now to Genesis chapter 45. We can look at this chapter especially verses 1 to 15.

And then verse 3 we read, And Joseph said to his brothers, I am Joseph. Is my father still alive? But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence.

Well this is the big moment, isn't it, in the story of Joseph? The moment when he came to reveal himself to his brothers, and when they came to realise that yes, this was in fact their brother that they had got rid of, or so they thought.

And maybe had thought had died since then. Or is it the big moment? Well not really, it is a big moment, and it's obviously a big moment in the account we have of Joseph's life, which we have been going through for 9 or 10 weeks or so.

And it's a big moment in the life of these brothers. But in the whole story of Genesis and the unfolding of the way that God is revealing himself, and revealing his plan of salvation, while this is a big moment, it's not the big moment in the story of Joseph, and of his father Jacob, and his brothers.

[1 : 19] Because that awaits, the biggest moment really is, what God is aiming at, as we see, is to bring this family, these people, down to Egypt. To settle them in Egypt, to give them a place in Egypt, so that then that will be followed many, many years afterwards, by what's known as the Exodus.

So you have to really take account of the whole wider clan of God, as you zoom in and look at this big moment in the life of Joseph and his brothers.

Realising that it's part of the story, that it's part of the way that God is working towards settling this family in Egypt, and bringing out of that such a glorious work of redemption, that he himself does through the Exodus.

Now there are four things I want to look at today from this passage, with yourselves just looking at them very briefly. Four things and two points, two main points under each of those.

There's revelation here, because Joseph is revealing himself to his brothers, he's making himself known that that's who he is. There's trepidation, because these brothers are, first of all, surprised, and then they're really afraid.

[2 : 34] Obviously they would be, because they have in mind, well, we know what we did to him, now what's he going to do to us, now that he has control. There's that trepidation.

Then there's reconciliation, because there's this marvellous picture, and account that you have in the passage of Joseph, and his brothers coming to embrace, and his full brother Benjamin, of course, has given prominence to he and Benjamin, Joseph and Benjamin, both the sons of Rachel, Jacob's beloved wife, and they come especially to embrace.

He kisses all his brothers, and that way of reconciliation. Of course that brings us, in a way, to see into the heart of Joseph himself, the kind of man that he was, that would do this kind of thing.

Now that, we'll see, comes to reflect upon the Lord Jesus Christ as well, and our reconciliation, and our embrace by him, in his love.

And fourthly, there's an allocation given, because Joseph, while he says to go back for their father, he makes it clear that there's going to be an allocation of land for them, in Egypt, not just any land, but even Pharaoh himself comes to say, they're going to get the best of the land.

[3 : 51] And Pharaoh obviously, had such a high regard for Joseph, and all that he enabled the Egyptians to do, by his wisdom, by his governorship, that it wasn't too much for Pharaoh to say to Joseph, look, take your father here, and you and all their family, you'll have the best of Egypt, at your disposal.

And we'll see something of, the way that the name Goshen, for the first time, appears here, as the land that these people are going to have, within Egypt. So these four things then. First of all, here's Revelation.

Now you'll notice at the beginning of the chapter, the amount of emotion that's packed into these verses. There's Joseph, and he's been speaking, as we've seen in the previous chapter, to his brother.

She's going over all of this way, that led them back to himself, and all the things that he arranged, so that they would come back, and were there again afraid, because Benjamin, and when he opened the sack, the cup of Joseph, was found there, and it seems that Joseph's now, accusing them of stealing, this cup, well we read, he could not control himself, before all those who stood by him.

He said, make everybody go out from me. And no one stayed with him, when he made himself known to his brothers. That's really so packed with emotion, with all of the movement, of Joseph's own heart, Joseph's love for his brothers, Joseph's desire, to make himself known to them, he just couldn't contain it any longer.

[5 : 19] And this is the moment, the big moment, when they come to embrace each other. Now that really, says a lot to us about, the Lord Jesus Christ as well.

We've been seeing some, of the ways in which Joseph, and his relationship with his brothers, how he deals with them, how all of these things, actually are reflections for us, of things that are prominent, in the ministry of Christ.

And that too, reminds us, of the kind of person, that Christ himself is. Because you never find in the gospels, any evidence whatsoever, that there is any reluctance, at all, on the part of Jesus Christ, to embrace, the likes of you and I.

There's absolutely nothing there, of any reluctance. He doesn't do it grudgingly. He doesn't do it, because he's forced into it. He do it, he does it, because his own heart, is moved.

If you like, it's bursting with, love's emotion, towards those, that he came to save. And there is nothing, more amazing for us, as we look at the gospel, as we hear the gospel, as we read our bibles, than to realize, this about God.

[6 : 30] That this is, the kind of God he is. That this is, the kind of savior, savior Jesus is. A savior, whose heart, as it were, is bursting with emotion, ready to embrace those, who have come, to be reconciled to him.

And, we've stopped our studies, in Luke for, some time, just to tell after the holidays, but, we'll come to that, great parable, of the prodigal son, in Luke 15.

Where you come, you remember, the prodigal son, and the story, very well yourselves. Where the father, having been looking out, for this long lost son, for many, many years, eventually, sees him coming back home.

And he ran towards him. He didn't wait, till he reached home. He ran towards him. And when he reached him, he threw his arms, around his neck, and he kissed him. He didn't wait, for himself to be cleaned up, to have a good bath.

Although he would have been, filthy, and smelly. He just threw his arms, around him, and embraced him. Now, we sometimes, think that, that is a picture, primarily of God, the father, as the father, of that prodigal, that he represents, God the father, casting his arms, around those, that he welcomes, into his own family.

[7 : 46] Well, that is an aspect of God, of course, of God the father. But actually, in that passage, the prodigal's father, is a representation, of Jesus himself.

The whole of that parable, is set in the context, of the Pharisees, and the scribes, as you read at the beginning, of that chapter, who murmured, who complained, about this Jesus, and their complaint, was to the effect, this man, is receiving sinners, and eating with them.

And that's the complaint, that Jesus set out, to answer. Yes, he's saying, that's who I am. That's what I'm like. I'm like this father, who welcomed, this prodigal son, back into his family.

That's what you find, represented here, in this wonderful image, of Joseph, welcoming back, his brothers, into his family. Back to himself, back to, reconciliation.

creation. His heart, just can't wait anymore. He has got to make himself, known to them. And the second thing, you notice there, is the authority, of Joseph, as he does this.

[8 : 59] You see, he says, make everyone, go out from me. So nobody was with him, when Joseph, made himself, known to his brothers. And that tells us, that Joseph, because of his position, of course, in Egypt, he could give the orders, that he's giving here, as well as many other orders, and people would be obliged, to do them.

Only Pharaoh, was more important, more authoritative, in Egypt, than Joseph was. And here, he puts everybody out, so that nobody's there, but himself, and his brothers, when he makes himself, known to them.

Why is that important? Why is that significant? What is there in that, that actually reminds us too, about Christ, and about his relationship, with his people?

Well, it is of course true, that the Lord, is in charge, of all, that happens, when he comes to make himself, known to us. When he reveals himself, to us, it is not somebody else, who's in charge, of the situation.

We're not in charge, of the situation. We don't control, the situation. Whatever is in our hearts, whatever desires we have, we have to acknowledge, that it is God himself, that it is Jesus himself, that it is Christ himself, who takes control, of our lives, of the circumstances, in which he, reveals himself to us.

[10 : 14] They will vary, from one person, to another. But he's the one, who controls them. And, there's also, this, emphasis, that nobody, was there with him, when he made himself, known, to his brothers.

In other words, this, is a very, private, moment. There's no Egyptian, in the room. There's just himself, and these brothers, that are now, going to discover, who he is.

And that is, how it is, when, the Lord, makes himself, known to our hearts, individually, as he does. He comes, in such a way, that you are conscious, of this being, a very personal, and a very private thing.

It's just, yourself, and the Lord, in that room. It's the Savior, and yourself, coming, so that he, reveals himself, to you, and you come, to acknowledge, and accept, and realize, who he is.

What is more private, what is more personal, than, the Lord, and any individual soul, coming, to meet each other, in the embrace, of grace, and of love, and of salvation.

[11 : 33] That's what's represented, there as well, when in the privacy, of their own company, Joseph, and his brothers, go through this, great moment.

And you see, how clearly, he reveals himself, to his brothers. I, am, Joseph. Later on, he said, I am Joseph, whom you, your brother Joseph, whom you sold, into Egypt.

Isn't it like that, too, when the Lord, comes, into your own life? You don't doubt, who it is. Maybe, there are times, when the Lord, works in people's lives, and they're not quite sure, of what's happening.

That happens, particularly, to people, who are maybe, not as familiar, with the gospel, with the teachings, of the gospel, who maybe, come to a service, or to an evangelist, meeting, of whatever kind, and they hear the gospel, maybe for the first time, and something happens, in their life, they don't know, exactly what it is, and they have to, actually then, go to their Bibles, and ask for advice, and come to receive help.

Not saying that, everybody who comes, to have the Lord, working in their lives, is immediately aware, this is Jesus Christ, this is Christ, revealing himself to me, I can see Christ clearly, and how he is, in the gospel.

[12 : 48] But for most of you, who are under the gospel, when the Lord, comes to reveal himself to you, you know what's happening, you know exactly, what it is, that is happening in your heart, you know who's speaking to you, you know whose voice this is, you know whose authority, is behind this, you know who's arranged this moment, and in the privacy of your own heart, in that little room of your heart, the Lord comes, to reveal himself to you, and it's such a personal moment, and it's such a clear moment, even though it may take time, for you fully to understand, what's happening, and certainly to understand, more of his salvation, that's something we work on, all the course of our life, but it's still something, that's very personal, and that's obviously important, to yourself, and to myself, nobody can do this for you, nobody can come, to the Lord Jesus Christ, for me, and say, I'm here to represent, so and so, so that you will save them, and that's it, you come for yourself, you come in the privacy, of your own mind, and your own heart, and your own life, with your own sins, with your own circumstances, with your own personal burdens, with all the things, that are true of you, as an individual human being, and your privilege is, that you come to the Lord, that you come to, the Lord of this gospel, and as you come to, the Lord of this gospel, and as you come to realize, that he is here, in the gospel, revealing himself to us, as the savior, that's the big moment, isn't it?

That's the big moment for us, even if we cannot ever see, as some people can, I remember exactly, what I was doing, I remember the pew, I was sitting in, I remember where I was, when the Lord Jesus, came into my life, bang, that big moment, I'll never forget that moment, it's not like that, for everyone, but for everyone, it is, a very personal thing, a very private thing, a thing that yes, you want to share with others, in terms of its impact, and what it's done, to your life, but nobody else, can go into, that particular moment, when you, and Jesus Christ, met each other, in grace, when you expressed, your sin to him, when you asked him, into your life, when you said, Lord, here I am, save me, that's such a private, personal thing, that's how the Lord, has designed it, for each and all of us, to come, to know him personally, and, he comes of course, to reveal himself to us, so that we will know, this Jesus Christ, for ourselves,

I am Joseph, it's all designed, so that they will know, who he is, you see, it's been hidden, from them up to now, and for many of us, in the gospel, even when we are familiar, with the gospel, it doesn't mean, that we know, Jesus Christ, personally, for ourselves, but when we do come, to know him, then we come into, this living relationship, this bond with him, so that, he is daily, the most important person, in your life, and knowing him, remember how, again in John chapter 4, verse 26, where, Jesus is speaking, to that woman, of Samaria, that unnamed woman, who is so famous, in the gospel, she had this long conversation, with him, or he of course, again, you see the same, as Joseph here, he was in total control, of the conversation, of the situation, of the questions, that were asked, of the answers, that were given, as he responded, to them, he is absolutely, in control of it, and he is steering, towards this one point, where she eventually, comes to say,

I know that the Messiah, the Savior, when he will come, he will reveal, to us all things, silence, and then he speaks, I, the one who is speaking, to you, I am he, that is another, big moment, a big moment, in the experience, of Jesus himself, and of this woman, especially, I, who am speaking to you, I am he, I am the one, you have just mentioned, and now I am here, to tell you, I am here beside you, and of course, that is when it dawned on her, that is when it became, real to her, that is when she came, to know this, Jesus, for herself, as you and I must, in order to be saved, this he said, in John 17, that great prayer, we looked at Wednesday nights, and part of it, this he said, is eternal life, he is praying to God the Father, shortly before he goes out, to die on the cross, and he says,

I have glorified you on the earth, I have finished the work, which you gave me to do, now glorify me, with your own self, with the glory, I had with you, before the world was, he then goes to speak, about his people, and pray for them, and this is what he said, this is eternal life, that they might know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you sent, we come to know, the true God, through coming to know, Jesus Christ, that is the way, to the Father, there is revelation, there is trepidation too, because when the brothers, heard him for the first time here, they could not answer him, for they were dismayed, at his presence, they were absolutely flabbergasted, the last thing in the world, that they would have expected, was that their brother, whom they had arranged, to get rid of, and had been sold on to Egypt, and of whom they had not heard since, the last thing they would expect, was that this man, who seemed so much an Egyptian, and was in charge, of the whole land of Egypt, this was their brother, this was Joseph, just imagine, the impact that must have, no wonder they were stunned, that is really what the passage is saying, they couldn't answer him, they were dismayed, they were just sitting stunned, or standing stunned, in his presence, it hit them, in a way that just completely, took them by surprise, they were taken aback, but they were also afraid, remember all the way through our study, we've been seeing how, as Joseph dealt with them, up to now, it was, yes designed to bring them, to this moment, but it was also designed, to bring home to them, and to bring up to the surface, their sin, their guilt, in what they had done, to him, and that's in the last chapter, what we saw,

[19 : 49] Judah actually coming, to express so fully, that God, had actually brought, their guilt out, God has found out, the guilt of your servants, behold we are my Lord's servants, both we and all, in whose hand the cup, has been found, and their guilt is now, obviously still, very much a thing with them, the question really in mind, I'm sure it was, well, now that we know, who he is, and now that we see, his authority, and his power, and his prestige, and his governorship, of Egypt, there's no limits, to what he could do with us, he could order us out of here, instantly and say, yes I remember, what you did to me, now then, you're going to get, your just desserts, you're going to get, what's coming to you, I'm going to give the command, that you be led out to prison, and that's where you'll remain, maybe that's what was in their mind, something like that, but then Joseph, immediately came to reassure them, don't be distressed, or angry, with yourselves, we'll see that in a minute, but isn't there something, of an element, like that with ourselves, some people, there's an element of fear, an element of uncertainty, in coming to God, yes there's all this emphasis, in the Bible, about a personal relationship, with Jesus Christ, with God through Christ, there's a personal emphasis, on coming to know the Lord, for yourself, that's just what we've been doing, but there's still this deep, this kind of, fear, alarm, uncertainty, that comes to the surface, that says, when you say to yourself, well,

I'm not sure about this, what's that going to mean for me, and I'm not sure about this God anyway, and, if I do go to him, what's that going to actually mean, for me in my life, what's the future going to be, what's it going to mean, for my relationships, with other people, there are a lot of things, that come to mind, when we think about, coming to make peace with God, coming to be reconciled to Christ, coming to know him as our Father, God our Father, but you know, that's what Joseph's response, really represents for us, God's assurance, or reassurance, in the reconciliation, that we see as our third point, where he dismisses their fear, where he puts something else, instead of their fear, where he assures them, they have no need to be afraid, I'm sure you've heard the story, of the little girl, during the time of the reformation, in Europe, when the printing, press was then just beginning, to be used, and used very successfully, and, the story is, as it's told anyway, as it's come down to us, is a little girl, who was the daughter, of a printer, and she found, a little scrap of paper, that had been torn off, and all it said on was, for God, so loved the word, that he gave, and it was torn off, and she ran in, with the paper, to her mum, and she said, do you know, what the rest of this, should say, what did God give, her mother didn't know, she said,

I don't really know, I can't answer you, and the little girl then said, well, it doesn't really matter, I suppose, if he loved us enough, to give us anything, then we don't need, to be afraid of him, if he loved us enough, to give us anything, then we don't need, to be afraid of him, that's how it is, when you come with your sins, it isn't just, that you know, that he loved us so much, that he gave us something, and that if he gave us anything, we don't need to be afraid of him, or going to him, with our sin, or seeking his pardon, you know, that he loved us so much, that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever believes in him, would not perish, but have everlasting life, if he loved us to that extent, why should we be afraid of God, or coming to God, with all our burdens, and coming personally for ourselves, in the privacy of that moment, to say, Lord,

I want you as my God, my Saviour, personally, for myself, to be yours forever, the trepidation, is taken, account of, so that brings us to reconciliation, just briefly, and you see, the first thing that Joseph does, in reassuring the brothers, in putting away their fear, is when he says in verse 4, come near to me please, and they came near, what is God's first step, what is the Lord's first step, in taking away our fears, of coming to him, our fears, of what he might do to us, our fear of giving us, what our sin deserves, what is the first thing, that God does, he invites us to come near to him, because when you come near, to a person, it means, and especially when that person, is inviting you to come near to him, and especially when it's a person, against whom you've done something wrong, and even so, especially with God, when you hear God saying, as Joseph here is saying to his brothers, come near to me please,

I don't want to speak to you, from a distance, I don't want you to be, on the other side of the room, when I've got this very important, message to tell you, I want you to come near to me, and it's one of the, great emphases, in the gospel, that God, draws us near to himself, that God, invites us into his presence, that God, commands through the gospel, for us not to stay at a distance, like the people who stood, a distance from the cross, sitting down, and watching what was happening there, no Christ is saying, come near me please, come into my presence, come right up to me, because that's how, our fear is removed, and it's when you come, in response to that invitation, to draw near to God, the more you do that, and the nearer you get to him, yes there's, an awe, a sense of reverence, with his holiness, and his majesty, and his greatness, nothing wrong with that, but there is also, the realization that, there is just so much, mercy here, there is so much, pardon here, there is just so much, love there, there is so much, regard for lost sinners there, there is so much, provision there, for exactly who we are, that when you come near to him, it then becomes clear to you, why did I stay away so long, and this is the best moment, of my life, when I've drawn near to God, and then when, they've come near to him, he explains to them, the situation, he takes them, in other words, from their own fears, to explain everything, that's happened, as he sees it, and that itself, is such a huge study, if we had time to go into it, more fully, we could do that, this is the way that,

[27 : 25] Joseph himself, had come to realize, and just think of, what this means, you think of all the things, you've seen, that have happened, in Joseph's life, think of all this time, that he spent in prison, the hardships, that he endured, and how that was now, replaced by this, governorship of Egypt, the pomp, the prestige, the power, the place, the position he had, and in all of that, Joseph had come, to study his life, what was it about, why had this happened to him, he brought it, again and again, and again, to God, and God had taught him, actually it wasn't your brothers, in the higher sense, that brought you to Egypt, I did it, it's my plan, it's always been my plan, he overcame, the wrong, that was done to him, by looking at the will of God, for him, and so it must be for us, as well, whatever trials, and difficulties, whatever hurt, people have caused us, you don't actually, deal with that, by hurting them back, you don't deal with that, by letting it fester, in your heart, you deal with it, by bringing it to God, and asking, where does this fit into, your big picture Lord, where does this fit into, your will for me, help me to see it, in a way that can, bring good out of it, in a way that can indeed, bring about reconciliation, and lasting blessing, that's what Joseph, had done in his life, he had prepared, for this moment, in his relationship, with God, and now that the moment, has arrived, he's able to give, this explanation, now there's something here too, that reminds us of Jesus, because, you notice that, he says here, now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, in verse 5, because you sold me here, for God sent me, before you, to preserve, life, you notice, he's saying at the same time, together, you sold me, you're responsible, for your sin, but God sent me, they sold him,

God sent him, you then take that, to the cross of Christ, to Acts chapter 3, verse 23, Acts chapter 2, verse 23, where Peter, is there, preaching on that, great day of Pentecost, that other, big, big moment, in the, history of the church, and you see, Peter there is saying, you crucified this Jesus, to the Jews, to the people, that he's, preaching to, you took him, by wicked hands, you crucified him, your guilt is clear, in what you did, to this innocent Christ, you killed him, you put him to death, you're responsible, for this, but at the same time, he said in that verse, that God, had actually purposed, or foreordained this, as his great plan, of redemption, let's just read the verse, as it is, Acts chapter 2, and in verse 23, men of Israel, hear these words,

Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you, by God, with mighty works, and wonders, and signs, that God did, through him, in your midst, this Jesus delivered up, according to the definite plan, and foreknowledge of God, you crucified, and killed, by the hands of lawful men, see the two things, by the definite, deliberate, foreknowledge, of God, his definite plan, and foreknowledge, and yet, within that, you crucified, and by the hands, of wicked men, you killed him, we can't understand that, we can't understand, it's not to bring, these two great issues together, God's foreordination, God's great plan, God's will, God's purpose, from all eternity, that plan's been in place, everything that happens, is within it, yet, there's no responsibility, in our lives, for our actions, that's what Joseph, is saying here, yes, you sold me, and you have a guilt, attached to that, but actually, overall,

God sent me, God sent me, to preserve life, that's what you see, in the cross as well, you're saved, by a sovereign, you're saved, by somebody, whose greater plan is, a plan, much, much greater, than anything, we ourselves, can possibly conceive of, fourth, there's allocation, let me just finish, with this, it's interesting, isn't it, that, only after, he had explained, to them, all of this, and all of the way, that God was in charge, of it, and he fell upon their neck, and kissed them, and then you see, verse 15, he kissed all his brothers, and wept, upon them, after that, his brothers, talked with him, after that, his brothers, talked with him, it's when God, has embraced us, when we know, of God's embrace, when God has taken away, the fear, the trepidation, the uncertainty, of our hearts, as to what might happen, then we're turned, from silence, we speak to him, and we keep on, speaking to him, from there on, he's then our friend, and our realisation, that he's our friend, means, in that relationship, that we come, to speak to him, as he speaks to us, through his word, and in verse 10,

Joseph says, you shall dwell, in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near, and meet you, and your children, and your children's children, and if I can, direct your minds, forward, to Exodus chapter 10, very briefly, Exodus chapter 10, and at verse 21, this is talking about, the plagues, that God brought, on the land of Egypt, one of them, was the plague of darkness, then the Lord said to Moses, stretch out your hand, towards heaven, that there may be darkness, over the land of Egypt, a darkness to be felt, so Moses stretched out, his hand toward heaven, and there was pitch darkness, in all the land of Egypt, three days, they did not see, one another, nor did anyone, rise from his place, for three days, but all the people of Israel, had light, where they lived, have you ever read, about a darkness, so thick, so complete, in this world, that it's so dark, people can't even get up, and do anything meaningful, in their lives, and their families, that's what it was like, in Egypt, for these days, but the people of Israel, had light, in their places, where they dwelt, they lived in this place, called Goshen, that's what Joseph is saying, you're going to get this, area called Goshen, and Goshen, is a Hebrew word, that means, light, because when you come to know God, he brings you, to live in the land of light, as Paul said to the Ephesians, you were once darkness, not just you were once in darkness, but you were once darkness, but now you are light, in the Lord, walk as the children of light, you come into the light, you know, it's quite possible, for us to think, even under the gospel, that actually, we're already in the light, yes we have the light, of God's truth, but have we come into, the land of the light, have we come into Goshen, have we come to know, this Jesus, so personally, for ourselves, that we now realize, yes, that we live, in the light, we have light, and that even if it's dark, all around, we're still living in the light, as they were in Goshen, and one thing finally, where Joseph here, in the same verse says, you shall dwell, in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, just think of all the years, that they had been apart, of all the years, that they themselves, these brothers, had not known, where Joseph was, and now that he's, governor of Egypt, what is he saying to them, he's not just saying to them, it's good to see you, it's good to be reconciled to you, it's good that you've, drawn near me today, now go away, and leave me in peace, no, he's saying it's good, that you've come near me, that I've explained, all this to you, that we've kissed each other, in reconciliation, but now I want you, to be near me, for the rest of your days, for as long as I, and you live, you shall dwell, in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, listen, to the voice of Christ, because that's, the voice you're hearing today, that's the burden, of his heart, that you and I, will live near, that will be brought, to live, in his fellowship, isn't that what he himself, actually said, in John 14, verse 3, do not let your heart, be troubled, if I have gone, to prepare a place, for you, as he has, then I will come again, and receive you, unto myself, that where I am,

[37 : 33] there, you may also be, and again, in John 17, verse 24, near the end, of that great prayer, Father, I will, he says, this is my will, Father, I will, that those, you have given me, be with me, where I am, that they might, see my glory, which you gave, that's the burden, of grace, that's the burden, of Christ's love, not only, that he will, bring you to know him, bring him near to you, bring you near to him, to know him, as your savior, personally, but that you'll be near him, forever more, because what is heaven, well, among many other things, heaven, his nearness, his nearness, to Christ, his being with Jesus, which is, why he died, what grace begins, in this life, in coming to know Christ, is crowned in glory, in being with, the Lord forever, may you know that, and I know that, for ourselves, let's pray,

O Lord, O God, we give thanks again, for the richness, of your word, when these events, of so long ago, come across, the millennia, with relevance, and with power, to our own hearts, as they have recorded, for us in your word, bless this message, to us we pray, from your word, help us today, to relate it, to ourselves, grant that we may rejoice, in our personal relation, with you, as our Lord, and God, hear us now, and bless us, for Jesus sake, Amen.