

Christ is the Mystery no 129

Christian Life no 10

A Prisoner of Christ

October 27, 2013

Philemon 1:1 Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellow-laborer, And then in verse 9 Paul again says, *Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.*

Notice Paul calls himself **a prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ**. Now, the word prisoner used here in the Greek is the Greek word **desmios**, which means *to be bound to*, or *captive to*.

Paul was not saying he is a prisoner as though he has done wrong and is in prison for it. And he is not saying his captivity is against his will. But what he is alluding to here is that **he has bound Himself to the Lord**.

Just as we would say in speaking of a person who held to their convictions strongly, They are captive to their conscience.

The same with Paul, he made Himself **a captive audience** to what God was doing. In other words, **his entire focus was** not on the world nor the things of the world but **on what God is doing in his hour**. Therefore Paul could earnestly proclaim that he was **a captive of the Lord**, and **bound to what God was doing**.

And even to the Ephesian church which Paul pastored for some time he said, **Ephesians 3:1 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles**, Notice, not for himself, but for you gentiles.

And again in **Ephesians 4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,**

So we hear Paul declare in Ephesians 4, **I beseech you**, which means **I exhort you and I encourage you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called.**

In his 2nd letter to Timothy, the Apostle Paul said, **2 Timothy 1:8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;**

Then in the book of Acts we see that Paul was actually made not just a prisoner of Christ but as he acted out His role openly, He was also fulfilling that role in the flesh. **Acts 23:18 So he took him, and brought him to the chief captain, and said, Paul the prisoner called me unto him, and prayed me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee.**

And again in **Acts 28:17 And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.**

Now, this morning I would like to go back over paragraph **204** which we read last Wednesday up through **208**. But this morning, I would like to focus on the thoughts of Brother Branham from paragraph 204 because brother Branham speaks here concerning our becoming a prisoner to Christ Jesus as Paul had been a prisoner himself. And the form of prisoner he speaks of he calls a ***love prisoner to our Lord Jesus Christ.***

204 (441-book) *And see, God Himself making Himself known and pulsating Himself through the Life that you're a prisoner to Him now.*

Notice what a beautiful description brother Branham uses here, God Himself in making Himself known pulsates His own Life through you making you a prisoner, a love prisoner to Him. You women know what I'm talking about, when you first hear that little pulse or that heart beat from that little life whose heart is beating in unison with your heart. When I first heard the little heart beat of my children and then my grandchild Ella, and not only hearing her little heart beat but her mother, my daughter's heart beating in unison with her own daughter.

Oh, how it makes me realize when Paul said, "*I am crucified with Christ,*" he was saying, *I have willingly died to myself, and the Life I am now living in this flesh*, can not be my own, because I am dead to myself, but *there is another Life pulsating through my veins*, and *it pulsates within me, giving me life*. And the Life I now live in this flesh, I am living by the Life of Christ. So *my heart in beating in unison with His heart, and when His heart beats, my beats in response to his*, and the life that is pulsating through me is the one that is conforming to the Image of the first born son, and that same image is coming forth in me.

Let's read it again and continue...*And see, God Himself making Himself known and pulsating Himself through the Life that you're a prisoner to Him now. You are His love prisoner. The world can laugh, make fun them, say, "Come on out." You could go, but you're a prisoner. The other women can act Hollywood, but not you; you're a prisoner. Amen. See, you're a prisoner to Christ. Other men can smoke and drink and carry on if they want to and call themselves Christians, deacons, and even preachers, but not you; you're a prisoner, a prisoner to the Word.* Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

In his sermon, **Paul A Prisoner Of Christ 63-0717 26-4** brother Branham tells us how that Paul was able to become willingly a prisoner of Christ. He said, "*Forsake his own, he had to forsake everything that he knewed, forget all of his training and everything in order to know the will of God and to follow God. He can't follow anything that man's got to do and God, the same time. It's too contrary, one to another. You can't be going east*

and west at the same time; you can't be going right and left at the same time; you can't be doing right and wrong at the same time; you can't be following man and God at the same time. No, sir, you're either following God or following man. Now, then if you're following God and have submitted yourself to God, then you become a prisoner to that God, to that Word, to that will. No matter what anything else is, you become a prisoner to it. You've got to check your will with God's will, then you will do the right thing.

In other words, the purpose of God's breathing forth His Word into your Soul, is to transfix your Soul with a pre-occupation of His Word, and purpose. God fills you with His own Breathe and Life and thus takes over your soul which then takes over your entire being. You become possessed with God Life, and thus you no longer are capable of living for yourself, but **you are a prisoner**, yielded only to the Life and power which has taken over your being.

Philippians 2:1 *If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, 2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. 3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. 4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. 5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:*

He said, *let this mind be in you that was in Christ*. And we know through our studies that this word mind here is a word that is also translated attitude. Let this attitude that was in Christ be in you. And what is this attitude? It is an unselfish love which prefers your brother before your own self.

Look at the beautiful wording of the new version called **The Message** uses here for **Philippians 2¹⁻⁴** *If you've gotten anything at all out of following Christ, if his love has made any difference in your life, if being in a community of the Spirit means anything to you, if you have a heart, if you care—then do me a favor: Agree with each other, love each other, be deep-spirited friends. Don't push your way to the front; don't sweet-talk your way to the top. Put yourself aside, and help others get ahead. Don't be obsessed with getting your own advantage. Forget yourselves long enough to lend a helping hand.*

⁵⁻⁸ *Think of yourselves the way Christ Jesus thought of himself. He had equal status with God but didn't think so much of himself that he had to cling to the advantages of that status no matter what. Not at all. When the time came, he set aside the privileges of deity and took on the status of a slave, became human! Having become human, he stayed human. It was an incredibly humbling process. He didn't claim special privileges. Instead, he lived a selfless, obedient life and then died a selfless, obedient death—and the worst kind of death at that—a crucifixion.*

Now let's skip ahead to **Philippians 3:15** *Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, (as many as have come to full maturity) be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.*

And then **Philippians 3:20** *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*

Therefore, remember, it's an attitude, His attitude becoming our attitude. *Let this attitude be in you that was in Christ Jesus.* And what attitude was that? It was a totally surrendered attitude to His father, because **His Words were not his own**, but His Fathers. **His Doctrine was not His Own**, but His Fathers that sent Him. **His works were not his own** original idea, but He simply did what he saw the Father do. And let's face it, **his own life was not his Own**. For the Father not only dwelt in Him, but did so pre-eminently. As Paul said, "*I am a prisoner of the Lord.*" He did not even bring forth His Own Will, for He said, "*I came not to do my own will but the Fathers Who sent me.*" And Paul quoting the Old Testament prophecy of Christ, said, "*for it is written in the Book, I have come to do Thy Will O God.*"

Therefore when we read In **Colossians 3:4** *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.* We know that this speaks of the end time appearing or manifesting of Christ in this hour, and at that time when He manifests in His true character we are also to manifest in our true character with Him in the same Glory, the same opinions, the same values. Because it is Life that is appearing in a form. Life that is manifesting itself in our form.

When Christ who is our Life shall appear, we shall also appear, because it is the same life doing the appearing or manifesting in both forms. **That is why Paul himself was a prisoner of Jesus Christ** because He had emptied himself of everything contrary to Christ, and allowed God in the form of the Holy Ghost working through the Pillar of Fire to refocus His entire life around the Good news, and thus he could say in **Galatians 2:20** *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

Not the life I am aspiring to live, not the life I am hoping to live, or the life I would like to live, but **the Life I am now living in this flesh** I am living by His Life actually living itself out through me. Therefore it is the same very life that was in Christ Himself, that is the Life that I am living by in this flesh. Therefore, when His heart pulsates my heart pulsates the same.

Now, this speaking of our being a prisoner is not just spoken of by Brother Branham in this paragraph **204**, but seems to be a central theme throughout this sermon, of Christ is the Mystery of God Revealed, for we first come across it in paragraph **82** (147-Book) where brother Branham says, "*And the other night... If you didn't get the tape that I preached here one night on "A Prisoner of Jesus Christ, Paul, a Prisoner..." See? When God gets you to be His prisoner, then you can't do nothing but what the Spirit says do.*" *Paul, with all of his great intellects... He was taught by Gamaliel to be a great priest or rabbi someday. And he had high ambitions. He was intellectually a great man: great*

authority, great man in the nation. But he had to sacrifice every bit of it (See?) to become part of the Word, to express Jesus Christ. He knew what it was to say... He had a notion to go to some place (some brethren had called him), but he was forbidden by the Spirit to do his own will. Oh, if people half spiritual can pick that up... See? He was forbidden to do his own will. He only could do... "The Spirit forbid me." See? He was a prisoner to Christ.

83 (149) *Then, this little fortuneteller one day, who he knowed... Paul knowed he had power to cast that devil out, but he could only do it as God willed it. Day after day she followed him, crying out after him, but one day the Spirit give him permission. Then he rebuked her, the spirit that was in her. See? He knowed what it was to be a prisoner.*

And look people, being a prisoner of the lord Jesus Christ is not just a new testament principle but there are brethren all through the Bible who actually were thrown in prison and became prisoners because of their testimony.

There was Joseph and Moses and Daniel, and Shadrack, Meshak and Abednigo, and Samson, and Micaiah the prophet, and even David was a prisoner and had to flee for his life. And that is to just name a few of the Old Testament Believers. Then in the New testament there was John the Baptist, and Jesus, and Stephen, and James, and John and Peter and Paul to name but a few.

In fact in the next few paragraphs brother Branham begins to name some of them, as we see in paragraph 84 (150) *Moses: his intellectuals, he had to lose them in order to find Christ, to be a prisoner. Then when God got all the world beat out of him and all the mighty man that he was, and stand in the Presence of that Pillar of Fire that day, he was found just speechless. He couldn't even talk, he said. God had a prisoner then. See? You won't try after your own searching. Then God had to endue this man, endow him with power enough that he could go down there. And he said, "Lord, I told Pharaoh what You said, and he wouldn't do it." He said, "Then take this, thy rod (God speaking; that's God's Word); go out there and point it toward the east and call for flies." And flies come into creation, because He had a prisoner that Pharaoh couldn't pay off with nothing. Nobody else could turn him no way. He was a complete prisoner in the chains of God's Word, bound up wholly to THUS SAITH THE LORD. Oh, if God can get His prisoners like that.*

85 (153) *Now, that's when He can express the preeminences. You see? He's got the man or the person so that he knows nothing but Christ. You get what I mean? All right. That's secondly. First, to express Hissself completely: God in Christ. Second, to have the preeminences by this in His Church (which is His Body, Bride) to... He could have the preeminence to express Himself through them. All right. And thirdly, to restore the Kingdom to its rightly position that fell by sin by the first Adam, back to where He walked in the cool of the evening with His people, talked with them, fellowshipped with them. And now sin and death had separated them from His Presence and His entire expression. Do you read it? Before the foundation of the world to express all of His attributes, what He was...*

102 (190) "If ye abide in Me (the Word), My Word abide in you, then you ask what you will." because you and the Word are the same. He has the preeminence. He's got the rulership. You're a prisoner to Him. The world is dead. You have nothing more... You see the rest of the people living the way they do, but yet you do not do it. You're a prisoner; you're yoked with Him. "My yoke is easy." (Yoked with Christ, with His Word.) "I do that only which pleases the Father. And if you can't believe that I am He, then believe the Word." So perfect...

And then we see him name Joseph in paragraph 104 (194) where he says, "He expressed Himself in Joseph: born amongst denomination, his brethren. They hated him without a cause because he was spiritual. He saw visions; God was with him; he could interpret dreams, and his brothers hated him. He was sold for all--by his brethren by almost thirty pieces of silver just exactly like He was sold by Judas Iscariot, one of His brethren, by thirty pieces of silver. He was throwed into a ditch and supposed to been dead. That's right. The father and them was told that be was dead. And throwed into this ditch, taken up and went to the right hand of Pharaoh. In the dungeon how he suffered there, and--and there was two saved, the butler and the baker: one of them lost and one of them saved, rather. And the butler... One of them was lost and the other one was saved. Just as on the cross, when He was in His prison house, a tacked to the cross for our sins (we become a prisoner), one thief was lost and one was saved (See?), just exactly.

Next we jump a little bit ahead to paragraph 115 (217) where he says, "But that wasn't what He asked. He said, "Who do you think that I am, now?" Now, there's the church He's talking to. See? "What does man think that I am?" Today: "He's a philosopher" this social religion. "He's a good man. We believe His teaching's right. It's a subject to be lived by. I think it'd make us all better if we did. We ought to have our churches, our so forth." That's a Santa Claus, like a Santa Claus story. It's not an expression of some church that we should express something. It's a life that you don't live yourself, but He comes in you and lives by Himself, and you become a prisoner to any human intellectual being at all. You're led by the Spirit. And how do you know?

And then in paragraph 116 (219) brother Branham says, "Now, you say, "I might know I was losing my mind. Maybe a man that loses his mind does that." But if you have the mind of Christ, Christ expresses Himself through you. Shows that it's Him and not you, you've not lost your mind. Some people under illusions of things goes out and becomes insane. Well, that... We know that's wrong. That's the devil trying to impersonate the real thing before it gets here. See? There's always a bogus. See? But a real man is a lose his own thoughts and his own thinking, not come up blindly like that. No, sir. You come up with your right senses and Christ takes you over and expresses Himself. And now, to the world you're an insane person. Now, if you're insane, you're actually insane, then there's nothing... The devil can't take you in complete control. He will make you do everything contrary to this Word, but when Christ takes you over, He will express that Word right through, because it's Him. He is the Word. See? And then you can see the expression of

Christ, not some illusion of some sort, but a real genuine Christ, expressing Himself right through you. How beautiful.

Now, turn with me all the way to paragraph 169 (359) where he says, "Why? **He was a predestinated Seed.** God said, *"I have chose him. And I'm going to show him what great things he'll suffer for My Name's sake. I'll send him to the Gentiles and disgrace him in every way that they can be disgraced,* but yet he'll bare My Name." Paul went down there till he got all of his ecclesiastical stuff cut off of him, down at the backside of the desert for three years and a half, down there in Arabia, until **he learned the Word and the Word become he, and he become a prisoner. Here he come back in chains of love,** "All my seminary experience is gone. *I'm a prisoner to Jesus Christ. (Amen!) Philemon, my brother, I'm a prisoner of Jesus Christ. I only can speak and say what He tells me.*"

Then he adds in paragraph 170 (361) **God needs prisoners today that'll prison yourself to His will, to His Word.** That's what Paul was. No matter how much intellectual he'd learned, **he'd known God by revelation.** Yes, sir. **The intellectual went all the way out of the business then when the revelation come,** which upon the rock the Church is built. Yes, sir. Notice, he was a predestinated Seed. **The Holy Ghost alone shows you Who He is.** There's no man... They'll make you Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and everything else out of it. See? But the Holy Ghost will reveal Him as the Lord God of heaven made manifest, that that is (oh,) Him.

And then let's turn way over to paragraph 218 (466) ***How do you know? 'Cause you're a church member? Because Christ is living through you, So pregnant with His Spirit that you're a prisoner to anything else. You're confined (oh, my.) to the Gospel, confined to the Word. And all the children that you can bring forth is that, 'cause you're a prisoner. You can't commit adultery; you're already pregnant. Glory. He can't take a hold. The womb of life is closed to anything else. You're already His by predestination. That Seed has come to Life. No world can get in. Oh. Oh, how we'd like to stay on this for about a hour. I'm sure you understand. See? Christ and His alone... already finished; the Seed was there. The Seed was already... When was it put there? Before the foundation of the world, has predestinated us unto Eternal Life. And as soon as the Life-giving flow, that Seed laying there... Other seed's that just would come in wouldn't take hold, just couldn't do it (like). But when that Seed come in, quickly it stopped up the womb; all the rest of the seed was drove out (see, like that), and you become a prisoner surrounded in Christ, Christ in you, His Life bringing forth His evidence, His signs. Oh, my, my, my. Look, bringing His signs of Life as an evident of His resurrection, proving to the world that Eternal Life, vindicates to the world that we're alive in Him.*** And think of it. Alive with God our Redeemer, Who created us for the very same purpose (the Church) and His creative Life in us. That is... Moses could said by the Word of God, "Let there come..." and there come flies. A God can make flies can make squirrels. See? He can do whatever He wants to...?... God.

And in the next paragraph 219 (470) he continues, *"The very same God (that creative Life--you see?) that's in you can... You're a prisoner; you can't speak it till He says, "Speak it;" but when it gets spoke, it's God's Word. He's a-vindicated to be so; everything else is right, and he knows when that's spoke it's got to be so. See? Moses took his rod and said, "Let there come frogs" 'cause God said, "Let there come frogs." He just transmit it on out. That's right. And frogs was in everything; everywhere was frogs. Where'd they come from? Nobody knows; they wasn't there before. But the Creator, God working through a man created things--a living species. The very God that made the first frog can make the second frog. He makes all frogs. Oh, my. You see what I mean? Made the first squirrel, makes the second squirrel, make any squirrel, can make squirrels where there is no squirrel. He can do anything He wants to. He's God. He's God. His Life... Oh, my.*

And then we jump ahead again to paragraph 228 (489) where he says, *"It goes right by them, and they don't recognize it till it's gone. It only picks up the predestinated seed that God predestinated before the foundation of the earth. The same thing come through in the days of Noah. Same thing come through in the days of Moses, days of Elijah, days of the prophets, days of Jesus, on down through and to this very hour. The pregnated person with the seed of God, the Word in there manifesting Itself, so surrendered to the will of God that the Word and the Word alone manifests Itself and this person's a prisoner, to an individual.*

Why do you think everyone has fought us so hard on John 14:12. Why do you think God has made me stick to it, and dig deeper and deeper into the promise of John 14:12-13. We've seen one individual for certain in these days, but I believe there are more than just that one who will reflect the very life of Christ before we are out of here, because brother Branham is speaking of the Bride who is the very body of the Lord Jesus Christ. God's bride will all have to come the very same way that Jesus came, and Paul came, and William Branham himself had to come, because that is the pattern in every age as we have seen here all throughout this sermon, and all throughout the Bible.

Look I am so thankful that the brothers put up all that fuss over John 14:12 because had they not, we would not have entered into this wonderful understanding of how the God-Life that expressed itself in Jesus is the same God-Life that expressed itself in William Branham is the same God-Life that is expressing itself in us, the body of Christ.

Therefore, I am just as thankful as Joseph was that His brothers sold him into Egypt, or else how would he have gotten there to save his own flesh and blood and the rest of mankind?

Just look at the story of Joseph, and you will see that trail of adoption, and the attitude of Christ, the very mind of Christ that developed in Joseph through the trials he suffered.

What we see in Genesis 42 through 45 is a transformation of the very brethren that had mistreated their younger brother Joseph and sold him into slavery, but now through trials of their own, they also have come to maturity. maturity enough to

Genesis 42:5 *And the sons of Israel came to buy corn among those that came: for the famine was in the land of Canaan. 6 And Joseph was the governor over the land, and he it was that sold to all the people of the land: and Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth. 7 And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them; and he said unto them, Whence come ye? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food. 8 And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him. 9 And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, and said unto them, "Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come."*

19 "If ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison: go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses: 20 But bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die. And they did so". 21 And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us. 22 And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required. 23 And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for he spake unto them by an interpreter. 24 And he turned himself about from them, and wept; and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes.

Now, let's skip ahead to verse *36 And Jacob their father said unto them, Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me. 37 And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again. 38 And he said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.*

And now let's skip forward to **Genesis 43:3** *And Judah spake unto him, saying, The man did solemnly protest unto us, saying, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you. 4 If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food: 5 But if thou wilt not send him, we will not go down: for the man said unto us, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you. 6 And Israel said, Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me, as to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother? 7 And they said, The man asked us straitly of our state, and of our kindred, saying, Is your father yet alive? have ye another brother? and we told him according to the tenor of these words: could we certainly know that he would say, Bring your brother down? 8 And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones. 9 I will be surely for him: of my*

hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever:

Now, let's skip forward to verse 29 where we see Joseph meet his brothers again. 29 *And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son.* 30 *And Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn* (sadly, tenderly, compassionately) **upon his brother:** and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there. 31 *And he washed his face, and went out, and refrained himself, and said, Set on bread.*

Look at the emotion he was feeling for his brothers. Look at all the years of pain that he endured knowing his brothers cared not for him, then to see them, and to know that God had set the whole thing up, and he saw it all before any of it ever happened.

And finally let's skip up to **Genesis 45:1 Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me.** And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. 2 **And he wept so loud: that the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard.**

The Message translation says, "But his sobbing was so violent that the Egyptians couldn't help but hear him."

3 *And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence.* (they actually trembled) 4 *And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.* 5 *Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.* 6 *For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earring nor harvest.* 7 *And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.* 8 **So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.** 9 *Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not:* 10 *And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast:* 11 *And there will I nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty.* 12 **And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you.** 13 *And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.* 14 *And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck.* 15 *Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him.* 16 *And the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, Joseph's brethren are come: and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants.*

he didn't hold a grudge with his brothers. That was Christ in Joseph. That is why brother Branham said perfection in Joseph. Perfection, full maturity to look to the promise instead of the circumstances, and not hold grudges when someone caused him to suffer.

Look at David when he was put out from his own thrown by his own son. A rejected King, and as he walked down the lane away from His own Kingdom, rejected by His son, rejected by his own people, and Shimei came up and spat on him, and when one of his guards saw it, he drew his sword to cut the man's head off, and David said, "*no, don't do that, let him alone, God told him to do that.*" That's the nature of Christ, the son of God, and that nature was in Joseph and in David and was in Christ when he hung on the cross and said, "*Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.*"

Notice how that Reuben and Judah have come such a long way in their sonship. They no longer were the selfish young men who conspired with their brothers to sell Joseph into slavery (**37:26–27**). Though they knew their decision would have a devastating effect on their father, Judah did not seem to care at the time. Nor was Judah any longer the lustful man who propositioned the prostitute not knowing it was his own daughter-in-law who was just trying to receive seed by one of her husbands brothers but was refused by them all. **Genesis 38:1–30**. But now we see these brothers are now different. Their spirit has changed. They have become responsible, Their priorities have changed and they have become mature and selfless. They both are willing to sacrifice their own freedom and their own futures to save their father from any further grief of possibly losing Benjamin. But the transformation of these brothers was not immediate; for it had taken years to accomplish. But their place in the family and their self-less example impacted the children of Israel for generations to come.

So you can see that whatever suffering our brethren have caused us because of what God has shown us, just as he had shown Joseph, we need not look at the suffering, but at the greater picture and we need to stay focused on God's purpose and plan in all of this, and we must recognize that one of these days, we will have the same opportunity as Joseph did to forgive our brethren as Joseph did, and as Jesus did on the cross when he cried out, "father forgive them, for they know not what they have done." And one day we will truly understand what the promise is that tells us that "*all things do work together for the Good of them that Love God and are the called according to His purpose.*"

In closing let us jump all the way down to paragraph 252 (537) which is the last paragraph in this sermon, where brother Branham speaks of our being a prisoner of Jesus Christ. And in this paragraph he is letting us know that we are the body of Christ, no different than his own physical body, for we are flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone. And He is the head of the body. And we are the physical body of Christ.

Notice he says, "*His body was not held in the grave, but was recognized with Him in the resurrection. Do you get it? Then* (if that was so) the Body of His believing children will not be held in the grave when He comes, but will be recognized with Him, because He died for the purpose to resurrect His Bride, the Body. Recognize, because it is His Body,

*because it's the Word. It's so completely yielded from denominations and things to Him, and He is the Word. See? And it's recognized with Him because now we have the first-fruit of our resurrection by know that we've passed from death unto Life, become prisoners of His, and God proving to us by His personal Headship that He is the same yesterday, today, and forever, **by doing the same things through the Church that He did then.** He in me, and I in Him, and you know, and so forth. That's right. His body was not held in the grave, recognized with Him in the resurrection, same as He is now.*

Let us pray...