



WEEKLY SERMON

Volume No. 2022 Issue No. 40
October 30, 2022

Sunday October 30, 2022

Pastor David Miklas

Message: Book of Philemon - #7

Phone: 717-715-3317

E-mail: pastormiklas@aol.com

Text: Philemon Verses 16-18

“The Haven of Rest”

Henry Lake Gilmour went to sea at the age of 16 to learn navigation. When the ship reached Philadelphia, he decided to seek his fortune in America. He became a house painter, and served during the Civil War with the 1st New Jersey Cavalry. During a battle, he was captured, and spent months in a Confederate prison. After the war, Gilmour trained as a dentist, an occupation he had for many years.

In 1869 he moved to Wenonah, New Jersey, where a Methodist church was organized with the first meeting in his home. He served the church for years as a Sunday School superintendent and choir director.

However, Gilmour is best remembered as a gospel musician. He was in great demand as a song leader in the camp meetings of the day. For four decades, he directed the choir at the Pitman Grove Camp Meeting. He also worked at camp meetings and revivals in Maryland, and Pennsylvania. In addition, he was a frequent visitor to the Ocean Grove Camp in New Jersey, and through these activities gained personal acquaintance with many writers and composers of gospel hymns.

Gilmour himself wrote many gospel songs and published more than 16 song compilations. Though likely produced in 1889, the most familiar song of Henry Gilmour's today is “**The Haven of Rest.**” In it he pictures the sinner seeking a safe harbor, and he presents the Lord Jesus Himself as that harbor. Though it cannot be verified, the nautical metaphor makes sense, since Henry had spent weeks on the open sea, and the campground was on the ocean. The tune itself (Haven of Rest) was composed by George D. Moore.

In the first verse of this hymn Gilmour pictures the soul as being in exile on life's sea. Many people we know are in that condition today, burdened and distressed with the load of sin, needing a safe haven. So were we until we yielded to Jesus and entered His haven.

In the second verse the soul is pictured as yielding to the Lord.

In the third verse it shows the yielded soul giving praise to the Lord, as we who are saved should be doing today.

In the fourth verse the soul is at rest and secure with the Lord while in the fifth verse, we see the resting soul calling to others.

If your soul has never entered the haven of rest, now is the time to do so. The Savior patiently waits and will save by His power divine. In Hebrews 6:19 we read, “**Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast...**” I can say that, can you? “**I've anchored my soul in**

the Haven of Rest, I'll sail the wide seas no more; The tempest may sweep over wild, stormy, deep.
In Jesus I'm safe evermore."

**First: My soul in sad exile was out on life's sea,
So burdened with sin and distressed,
Till I heard a sweet voice, saying, "Make Me your choice";
And I entered the "Haven of Rest"!**

**Second: I yielded myself to His tender embrace,
In faith taking hold of the Word,
My fetters fell off, and I anchored my soul;
The "Haven of Rest" is my Lord.**

**Third: The song of my soul, since the Lord made me whole,
Has been the old story so blest,
Of Jesus, who'll save whosoever will have
A home in the "Haven of Rest."**

**Fourth: How precious the thought that we all may recline,
Like John, the beloved so blest,
On Jesus' strong arm, where no tempest can harm,
Secure in the "Haven of Rest."**

**Sixth: Oh, come to the Savior, He patiently waits
To save by His power divine;
Come, anchor your soul in the "Haven of Rest,"
And say, "My Beloved is mine."**

**Refrain: I've anchored my soul in the "Haven of Rest,"
I'll sail the wide seas no more;
The tempest may sweep over wild, stormy, deep,
In Jesus I'm safe evermore.**

In Psalm 34, 1:10 we read, "I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. (2) My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. (3) O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together. (4) I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. (5) They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. (6) This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. (7) The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. (8) O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. (9) O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him. (10) The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing."

In His Amazing Grace,

Pastor David Miklas

“Elevation, Restoration, Substitution”

INTRODUCTION: Returning to the one-chapter book of Philemon, we take note of our message text in verses 16-18,

“Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord? (17) If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself. (18) If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account;...”

In every field of science there are certain laws and principles that have to be observed and applied. When you come to the Bible we are discussing the field of THEOLOGY.

When we come to the **Doctrine of Salvation** there are three principles that should be noted by the child of God. These three principles are found in our text in the life of this slave called Ominous.

However before we get into our text let me give you a little background. Slavery forms the backdrop to Philemon, and it is impossible to fully appreciate the book without some understanding of slavery in the Roman Empire.

Slavery was taken for granted as a normal part of life in the ancient world. Indeed, the whole structure of Roman society was based on it. During the period of the wars of conquest, most slaves were war captives. By the time of the New Testament, however, most slaves were born into slavery. The number of slaves was enormous, making up as much as one third of the population of the Empire.

Slaves were not actually considered persons under the law, but the chattel property of their owners. They could be sold, exchanged, given away, or seized to pay their master's debt. A slave had no legal right to marriage, and slave cohabitation was regulated by their masters. As already noted, masters had almost unlimited power to punish their slaves.

By the New Testament era, however, slavery was changing. Treatment of slaves was improving, in part because masters came to realize that contented slaves worked better. Although not legally recognized as persons, slaves began to acquire some legal rights.

The Apostle Paul does not order Philemon to free Onesimus, or teach that slavery is evil. But by ordering Philemon to treat Onesimus as a brother, the Apostle Paul eliminated the abuses of slavery.

As noted in verse 16, **“Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved...”**

As noted in Ephesians 6:9 where we read, **“And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.”**

As noted in Colossians 4:1 where we read, **“Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.”**

One writer summed up the importance of Philemon in relation to slavery in these words:

The Epistle brings into vivid focus the whole problem of slavery in the Christian Church. There is no thought of denunciation even in principle. The apostle deals with the situation as it then exists. He takes it for granted that Philemon has a claim of ownership on Onesimus and leaves the position unchallenged. Yet in one significant phrase Paul transforms the character of the master-slave relationship. Onesimus is returning no longer as a slave but as a brother

beloved (verse 16). It is clearly incongruous for a Christian master to “own” a brother in Christ in the contemporary sense of the word, and although the existing order of society could not be immediately changed by Christianity without a political revolution (which was clearly contrary to Christian principles), the Christian master-slave relationship was so transformed from within that it was bound to lead ultimately to the abolition of the system.

Again verse 16 we read, “Not now as a servant, but above a servant a brother beloved, ...” Please notice what the Apostle Paul does not say. He does not say, Philemon is not to receive him as a slave. It appears that is what he is saying, but that is not what he is saying. No one stops in the middle of a sentence. What Paul does say is Philemon is to receive him not now as a servant, but he is to receive him as above a servant – now as a beloved brother.

Now when we come to the doctrine of Salvation there are three principles that should be noted by the child of God.

Principle Number ONE – ELEVATION: Wherever the gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed and received it has an elevating influence – **IT LIFTS**.

The gospel doesn’t just lift and change people spiritually, it also lifts and changes them **morally, educationally, economically, mentally, medically, and socially**. Its penetration has an elevating influence behind it.

Here I want to point out the elevation of the gospel from a SPIRITUAL standpoint. In so doing consider these three passages of scripture,

First: In Isaiah 51:1 we read, “**Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.**” Here Isaiah is telling us we are to remember what God has brought us from. David said in Psalm 51:5, “**Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.**”

Second: In I Samuel 2:6-8 we read, “**The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. (7) The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. (8) He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the LORD's, and he hath set the world upon them.**”

Here you have an insight into the sovereignty of God into the everlasting influence of His grace. Those who have been born into the family of God now possess Royal blood. We have an eternal inheritance because of the everlasting grace and mercy of God.

Third: In II Thessalonians 2:13 we read, “**But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:**” We have been elevated from that of a beggar to that of being a brother in the Lord.

Back in Philemon, Ominous for a period of time found himself as being nothing but a slave. But then he has an encounter with Jesus Christ and now he sees himself as a brother with the saints.

We are to see ourselves in the same light not only as brothers of the saints we are also a brother with the Lord Himself. The hymn writer Charles H. Gabriel wrote,

In loving kindness Jesus came
my soul in mercy to reclaim

And from the depths of sin and shame
through grace He lifted me.

He called me long before I heard
before my sinful heart was stirred
But when I took Him at His word
forgiven He lifted me.

Now on a higher plain I dwell –
and with my soul I know tis well
Yet how or why I cannot tell
through grace He lifted me.

Refrain: From sinking sand He lifted me
with tender hand, he lifted me
From shades of night to plains of light
O praise His name, he lifted me!

What would you be, and where would you be, if it were not for the Grace of God?

Principle Number TWO – RESTORATION: Again in verse 17 we read, **If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself.**”

When we talk about a partnership, we are talking about a situation in which two parties have a common interest, common ideas, common principles, common purposes, and common work.

The Apostle Paul is saying to Philemon – our interest is the same. Our purpose is the same. Our principles are the same; everything is the same. Is that not so? If it is so and we are partners, then I am asking you, Philemon, to receive this man Onesimus as you would receive me, myself.

How did things turn out? No doubt Philemon forgave Onesimus. Three things that lead me to this conclusion:

First: Remember Philemon was from Colossi and the church was in his home so in Colossians 4:7-9a we read, **“All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellowservant in the Lord: (8) Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts; (9) With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you.”**

Second: It is extremely unlikely that the book would have found its way into the New Testament canon if he had not taken Onesimus back. If Philemon had not forgiven Onesimus, including the book in the canon would have left a false impression for all history. If he were not the godly, virtuous man Paul describes in this letter, there would have been no purpose in the Holy Spirit’s adding it to the New Testament. Further, as a part of the canon, this book would have circulated widely in the early church.

Third: Half a century later the church Father Ignatius, in Smyrna on his way to martyrdom in Rome, wrote a letter to the Ephesian church. In that letter he writes, **“I received your large congregation in the person of Onesimus, your bishop [pastor] in this world, a man whose love is beyond words.” (#1)** Could this be the same man? Perhaps not, because Onesimus would have had to be very old. But if so, it would be a fitting conclusion to one of the great stories of the apostolic age.

Verse 16 provides us with a principle of **ELEVATION**. We are raised from our lowly sinful estate to being the child of God.

Verse 17 provides us with the principle of **RESTORATION**. Here we have the Apostle Paul's request of Philemon for the repentant Onesimus is one of the most dramatic and beautiful pictures of the entire Bible of our Saviour's words to the Father over us - over me, over you – when he said, "**Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.**" And God did forgive them when He received His son as our savior.

Principle Number THREE – SUBSTITUTION: Again in verse 18 we read, "**If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account;...**" Under the guise of wrong, sin assumes many different forms. For example:

Lying is a sin	Swearing is a sin
Fornication is a sin	Coveting is a sin
Murdering is a sin	Bearing false witness is a sin

The wrong in this passage is that of stealing. But you notice the Apostle Paul does not go into the detail of that sin like we often do when we hear about another's sin. We want to hear all the gory details. But here in **mercy** and **grace** you find a quality that is much different. Here is the desire to cover the sin, to pay for the sin. Paul says, Philemon, Onesimus has wronged thee, "**Put what he owes thee to my account, I will for pay it.**"

Our wrongs, our sins are so great and so many. Our debt of sins before God are impossible to repay. We don't come close to having the means to pay for our sins.

So, the question is, what do we do? Like Ominous, what was he to do? He chose to throw himself on the mercy of the Apostle Paul, who said he would pay for all of it. Frances Ridgley Havergal wrote in her poem,

**Nothing to pay! The debt is so great;
What will you do with the awful weight?
How shall the way of escape be made?
Nothing to pay! yet it must be paid!
Hear the voice of Jesus say,
"Verily thou hast nothing to pay!
All has been put to My account,
I have paid the full amount."**

**Nothing to pay; yes, nothing to pay!
Jesus has cleared all the debt away;
Blotted it out with His bleeding hand!
Free and forgiven and loved you stand.
Hear the voice of Jesus say,
"Verily thou hast nothing to pay!
Paid is the debt, and the debtor free!
Now I ask *thee*, lovest thou Me?"**

Perhaps one of the best ways to remember the price that was paid for our sins by our Lord and Saviour on the CROSS is by remembering the cup during a communion service. Every time we have communion, it is a reminder of the blood of Jesus that was shed on our behalf.

In I Corinthians 11:25 we read of the cup, "**After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped saying, This cup is the new Testament in MY BLOOD; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.**"

In Hebrews 9:22 we read, “...without the shedding of blood is no remission.”

In Peter 1:18-19 we read, “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers. But with the precious BLOOD of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

The only way a man can be saved is through the blood of Jesus Christ.

It is the BLOOD that saves.

It is the BLOOD that makes atonement.

It is through the BLOOD that we have remission of sin.

Think of all the hymns that teach us of the **BLOOD**. We sing,

**There is a fountain filled with BLOOD
Drawn from Immanuel’s veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains.
Dear dying lamb, thy precious BLOOD shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God be saved to sin no more.**

Here is another hymn to ponder on the price that was paid for our debt of sins entitled, “**By His Stripes We are Healed.**” Here are the 1st, 3rd and 5th stanzas.

**My sin laid open to the rod
The back which from the law was free;
And the Eternal Son of God
Received the stripes once due to me.**

**I pierced those sacred hands and feet
That never touched or walked in sin;
I broke the heart that only beat,
the souls of sinful men to win.**

**And yet His blood was shed for me,
To be of sin the double cure;
And balm there flows from Calvary’s tree
That heals my guilt and makes me pure.**

If God has spoken to your heart, after reading the sermon “**Elevation, Restoration, Substitution**” right now talk to God about what He has spoken to you.

Do you have the assurance that one day you will go to heaven? If you have no assurance that you know Jesus Christ, then I trust you will decide to accept Him as your personal Savior. The Bible tells us in

Acts 16:31, “...**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...**”

Romans 10:13, “**For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**”

This prayer is here for those who need to ask Jesus to be their personal Savior: “**I do want to go to Heaven. I know I am a sinner, and I do believe Jesus Christ died for me. I realize I cannot buy this great salvation, nor can I earn it. Knowing Jesus died on the cross and arose from the grave to pay my sin debt and to purchase my salvation, I do now trust Him as my Savior, and from this moment on I am completely depending on Him for my salvation.**”

If you made the decision to accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, please let me know. Please send an e-mail to pastormiklas@aol.com and I will send you some literature that will help you in your Christian life.

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