

THE LIFE OF JOSEPH – SERMON 2

JOSEPH'S FOUNDATION OF FAITH – PART 1

Genesis 37

INTRODUCTION

- The final fourteen chapters of Genesis (37-50) deal with the life of Joseph
- The earlier part of Genesis covers huge amount of time
- But when we come to Joseph, it is as if the Holy Spirit puts the brakes on and slows everything down
- These events are not to be rushed through or glossed over
- Although not specifically declared in Scripture to be a type of Christ, there are so many parallels, that it cannot be denied
- A W Pink found over 100 characteristics of Joseph that picture the Messiah
- Joseph provides not only a contrast with his brethren, but also with his father
- The flaws which we find in Jacob's character are not to be found in Joseph:
 - ✓ Jacob offended his brother by trickery, Joseph offended his brothers by truthfulness
 - ✓ Jacob was a pessimist, Joseph was an optimist
 - ✓ Jacob was a polygamist, Joseph was a monogamist
 - ✓ Jacob's story features rocks and schemes; Joseph's story features robes and dreams
 - ✓ Jacob is a character we look at and say, "Yes, that's me."; but Joseph is someone we look at and say, "That's who I want to be."

- The use of the name “Israel” seems to indicate the spiritual aspect of the man, as well as relating to Israel in the national sense
- Note also that Isaac was still alive at this time – he died when Joseph was 30 years old, about the time of Joseph’s exaltation (Genesis 41:46)
- Genesis 37 begins with Joseph at home with his family in Canaan and concludes with him as a slave in Egypt

I. HIS OBSERVING OF HEAVENLY COMMUNICATION

A. God, in ancient times, spake through dreams and visions

1. To both the godly and ungodly; in both the Old and New Testaments
2. The message of dreams was always to be tested by God’s word (Deuteronomy 13:1-3; cf. Job 4:12-21)
3. God’s complete revelation today is contained in the Holy Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:19)

B. Joseph’s dreams were clearly of a prophetic nature

1. Jacob was himself a recipient of dreams from God (Genesis 28:12; 31:10)
2. The clear symbolism and repetition gave certainty as to the divine origin of the dreams (Genesis 41:32)

C. All understood the meaning of the dreams

1. The first indicates his brethren humbly and gratefully receiving sustenance from Joseph
2. The second indicates his authority over them
 - a. Jacob interpreted this to mean Joseph’s father, mother and brethren bowing to him

- b. Joseph's mother may refer to the late Rachel; to Leah; to Bilhah, Rachel's maid; or may be a general reference to give completeness to the symbol (sun & moon)
- c. This same imagery is used in Revelation 12:1-6 describing Israel during the Tribulation

D. Proper attentiveness is given to the divine revelation

- 1. That Joseph not only received prophetic dreams, but had the gift of interpreting them, indicates he was a man of deep contemplation and perception
- 2. The description "son of his old age" (v.3) is literally, "son of old age to him", and may be understood to refer to Joseph's wisdom beyond his years – an old head on young shoulders (cf. Job 32:8-9)
- 3. After his initial rebuke, Jacob "observed the saying" (11)
- 4. If Joseph and Jacob carefully observed God's message through dreams, how much more ought we to carefully take heed to the written words of God? (2 Peter 1:19)
- 5. Remembrance of God's promises sustained Joseph throughout his trials (Genesis 42:9cf. Hebrews 11:13; 12:2; Romans 8:18)

II. THE OBEDIENCE OF HIS HUMBLE CONVERSATION

A. Faithfully dealing with others' sins (2)

- 1. He exposed the evil behaviour of his brothers
- 2. When we see sin among others, especially among the brethren, we must do our duty to confront it (cf. 1 Corinthians 5)
- 3. But with much self-examination (Luke 6:41-42)

B. Faithfully declaring God's revealed will (6-10)

1. Joseph has been labelled as arrogant and proud for recounting his dream to his brethren, and that his trial was, in part, designed to rid him of his pride
2. But Joseph understood these dreams to be prophetic, and his recounting of them was evidence of his faith
3. Those who have received God's word have a responsibility to pass it on to others
4. Even to those who will be hostile to it (Ezekiel 3:4-10; Mark 14:62-65)

III. THE OPPOSITION TO HIS HOLY CONSECRATION

CONCLUSION

1. Joseph, like Daniel, shows us that the young can and should devote their lives to God's glory (Ecclesiastes 12:1)
2. Wisdom is not the product of age, but the gift of God (James 3:17)
3. The soul that delights in the LORD, and seeks its happiness in Him will find its desires in harmony with God's will (Psalm 37:4)
4. Only those who fear God more than man will be willing to speak God's truth, regardless of the consequences (Matthew 10:28)

JACOB'S 12 SONS IN BIRTH ORDER	
MOTHER	SON
LEAH	REUBEN
	SIMEON
	LEVI
	JUDAH
BILHAH	DAN
	NAPHTALI
ZILPAH	GAD
	ASHER
LEAH	ISSACHAR
	ZEBULUN
RACHEL	JOSEPH
	BENJAMIN