

THE SECRET OF THE REIGNING LIFE OF JOSEPH

Message Six

**Joseph Being Recognized by His Brothers**

Scripture Reading: Gen. 43:1, 15-34; 44:1-34; 45:1-4, 14-15; 2 Cor. 4:15; Luke 24:31a

**I. Joseph tested his brothers further, expecting that they would notice certain indications and thus recognize him:**

- A. It was the severity of the famine that forced Joseph's brothers to come to him again; their need for food forced them to return to him—Gen. 43:1.
- B. Joseph's brothers were ignorant concerning Joseph; they did not know that he was the ruler in Egypt—vv. 18-21.
- C. After his brothers came the second time, Joseph showed them his love by feasting with them in his residence; although they did not recognize him, he wanted to indicate to them that he was intimate with them, even as he was testing them.
- D. Joseph's brothers were still ignorant of his love for them, so Joseph tested his brothers further to induce them to recognize him by more indications—v. 15—44:34:
  1. When Joseph's brothers came back, he did not say a word; rather, he charged his steward to invite his brothers to his home—the ruler of the earth—43:16-17.
  2. They told the steward the last time they had purchased grain the money had been returned in their sacks; the steward said, "Be at peace; do not fear. Your God and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks"—v. 23.
  3. When Joseph came in he asked, "Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?"; no matter how much Joseph disguised himself, there must have been some affection in the way he asked about his father—v. 27.
  4. When Joseph saw his brother Benjamin, he said, "Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me? And he said, God be gracious to you, my son"; after saying this, Joseph ran into his chamber and wept—v. 29.
  5. After Joseph returned, he had his brothers sit before him, "the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth"—v. 33.
  6. Then Joseph "had portions brought to them from before him; however Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of theirs"—v. 34.
  7. Three tables were prepared: one for Joseph, one for the Egyptians, and one for the brothers; Joseph ordered the tables to be set up this way in order to indicate to his brothers that he was a Hebrew—v. 32.
  8. "When Joseph came into the house, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house and bowed down to the ground to him"; when his brothers bowed down to him, they should have remembered his dream—v. 26.

**II. With respect to our knowing the Lord, it is the same today; He has shown Himself to us and we have seen Him, yet we do not know Him; He has done many things for us with a good intention, but we are frightened by what He has done—2 Cor. 4:15; cf. Job 42:5:**

- A. The money and the donkeys were veils that kept Joseph's brothers from recognizing him; the donkeys meant a great deal to them but nothing to Joseph—Gen. 43:18.
- B. In our knowing of the Lord we are exactly like Joseph's brothers; instead of considering Him, we consider our money, possessions, and ourselves—2 Tim. 3:2-4.

**III. Eventually, Joseph acknowledged his ignorant brothers—Gen. 45:1-4, 14-15:**

- A. After the last test, one of Joseph's brothers, Judah, improved as indicated by the way he spoke to him about caring for their father and youngest brother—44:18-34:

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1. When Joseph's brothers sold him, they hated him and did not care for their father or youngest brother; rather, they acted according to their hatred.
2. But Judah's speaking to Joseph about their care for his father and his youngest brother touched Joseph deeply, convincing him that his brothers had learned their lesson.

B. Thus, immediately after this, Joseph acknowledged them.

### **IV. Joseph's brothers eventually recognized him—45:15; Luke 24:31a:**

- A. Because Joseph's dealing with his brothers was full of patience, wisdom, and self-control, the result was so excellent that he did not even need to forgive them.
- B. Realizing God had sovereignly sent him to Egypt to fulfill His purpose, Joseph spontaneously received his brothers, embraced them, and took them in—Gen. 15.