

THE SECRET OF THE REIGNING LIFE OF JOSEPH

Message Seven

Reigning in the Kingdom of God

Scripture Reading: Gen. 1:26; 45:24, 3, 5, 7; Matt. 16:24; Rom. 8:28;
1 Cor. 7:24; Prov. 25:28; Rev. 12:11

I. The reign of Joseph was the realization of the kingdom of God, which is for the fulfillment of God's purpose—Gen. 1:26:

- A. Although Joseph was offended by his brothers to the uttermost, he did not seek revenge; with Joseph, there was no thought of revenge.
- B. Joseph denied himself and rendered the adequate and necessary discipline to his brothers, disciplining them not for his own sake but for their sake—45:24.
- C. Joseph was a person who denied himself; whatever he did was based upon the principle of self-denial—Matt. 16:24:
 - 1. When he revealed himself to his brothers, they were terrified; Joseph, however, not only forgave them but also received and comforted them; the offended one comforted the offending ones—Gen. 45:3, 5.
 - 2. Joseph did not blame his brothers for what they had done; rather, he regarded them as God's helpers, for they had helped God to get him to Egypt—v. 7.
 - 3. Joseph was able to comfort his brothers because he realized that God, not they, had sent him to Egypt; whether or not we forgive others depends upon our vision and realization.
 - 4. If we realize that we are here for the Lord's purpose, for the Lord's recovery, then we shall know that whatever happens to us is for God's purpose—Rom. 8:28.
- D. Joseph had the dreams in which he saw his brothers bowing down to him, but in order for this vision to be fulfilled, Joseph had to undergo a great deal of suffering, especially at the hands of those closest to him:
 - 1. Joseph suffered constantly from the time he was seventeen until he was thirty so that he might be perfected and qualified.
 - 2. God sent Joseph to Egypt to preserve life so that a remnant might remain for the fulfillment of His purpose.
 - 3. After suffering for thirteen years, Joseph was enthroned to be the ruler of the earth.
- E. Joseph longed to see his father, and as the ruler of the earth, Joseph had the power and the position to bring his father to Egypt, but he did not do anything:
 - 1. Joseph could have sent chariots from Egypt to bring his father to him; however, it was nine years before he had Jacob brought to him.
 - 2. Joseph preferred to remain under God's sovereign hand and to not initiate anything—1 Cor. 7:24.
 - 3. Although he had been enthroned to be the ruler of the earth, Joseph did nothing for himself or for his own enjoyment; he was wholly for God's interest.
- F. Joseph was a self-denying person who had no self-interest, self-enjoyment, self-feeling, self-ambition, or self-goal; everything was for God and for God's people.

II. Joseph was a person fully under God's restriction; he did not act according to his emotion; because of this, he was able to be the ruler:

- A. If we cannot rule ourselves, we cannot be a good ruler; only by being under God's restriction can we rule others—Prov. 25:28:
 - 1. To be under God's restriction is the best discipline to prepare us for kingship in the coming age; no childish person, no one who has not been restricted, will be a king in the coming kingdom.

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2. In order for the kingdom to be realized in a practical way, there had to be a person who lived under restriction and who denied himself.
- B. To bear the cross means that we refrain from doing what we have the power to do; it means that we are qualified and empowered to do everything necessary to fulfill our desire, yet we refrain from doing so.
 - C. The strongest person is not the one who is able to do something but the one who is able to not do what he has the power to do; this self-denial is the unique way to usher in God's kingdom and to realize the kingdom life—Rev. 12:11.