



LESSON 10

JOSEPH REVEALS HIS IDENTITY

Scripture Text: *Genesis 45*

The brothers' subjection to Joseph is nearly completed. Judah showed surrender, acknowledgment of sin and helplessness, and willingness to give up all. These are attitudes necessary to salvation.

Judah had finished his plea to Joseph with a request to stay as a slave in Benjamin's place. Now Joseph knew that his brothers were faithful to their trust.

MEMORY VERSE: *"Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart."*

Psalm 26:2

Forgiveness

Genesis 45:1-8 Joseph's heart was touched. He could no longer control his emotions. He sent the Egyptian servants out of his presence and broke into loud weeping. Great love for his father is shown in his repeated asking, "**I am Joseph; doth my father yet live?**" This news left his brothers speechless. First, they were surprised to find Joseph here. Second, they were **troubled**. They drew back. What would Joseph do in revenge for this sin against him? But Joseph called them nearer. He saw their fear and hastened to calm it. **Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves.** Here is kindness and forgiveness. **God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity . . . and to save your lives** When a guilty conscience causes us to shrink away from Christ, He calls us closer to Him. Here we find trust in God and deep reverence. He acknowledged God in all of his ways and God blessed him. All of his promotion in Egypt he attributed to God. At the same time, he generously took all blame from his brothers.

Joseph had been greatly wronged—sold into slavery by his own brothers. Christ was wronged by His own people (John 1:11). Joseph held no bitterness in his heart toward them or Potiphar's wife or the butler. Joseph had many happenings in his life where it would have been very easy for him to give in to resentment which, if left alone, will always grow into bitterness. He forgave them before they asked. He wished them to have no sorrow or regret (anger with themselves). Joseph loved his brothers. Christ forgives sinners (1 John 1:9). Joseph counted it a blessing to be used of God to preserve their lives. His forgiveness was not in words only, but complete and from the heart. This is the kind of forgiveness we get from God. It is the kind we must have for others if we are to receive it.

Joseph came into Egypt to save physical lives. Christ came into the world to save souls (1 Timothy 1:15).

Something for the Brothers to Do

9-15 Joseph had something for his brothers to do. They were to carry an invitation to their father. They were to tell him that Joseph was **lord of all Egypt**—made so by God. They were to tell him to move to Egypt with all of his family and possessions. They were to make a home in Goshen, a rich section of Egypt, and Joseph would see that they were provided for through the remaining years of famine. Joseph gave his father and brothers a home where he was. Christ will take His people to an eternal home with Him (John 14:3). When Christ saves us, He

always gives us something to do. We all have a part in taking the message to others that they, too, can come to Him and be fed at His storehouse.

After giving them this message, Joseph embraced and kissed his brothers and wept upon them, beginning with Benjamin. Then the brothers felt more at ease. Do you remember how much more at ease you felt toward Christ when He forgave you? They sat down and talked with Joseph. Oh! How much each of them had to talk about. After Christ saves us, we have much to talk to Him about in prayer every day.

All Things Are Made Ready

16-20 The message went to Pharaoh that Joseph's brethren were there. He was glad and sent invitation to all of them to come to Egypt. He did good things for them because of his love and respect for Joseph. God saves us for Christ's sake. Pharaoh wanted them to have the best of everything. He promised wagons to move them and new furnishings so they need not move theirs. "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

How could any of them refuse the invitation? Everything they would need was being supplied by Joseph. Christ never sends a messenger out until He has supplied all he will need for the work he has been called upon to do.

An Unusual Scene

21-28 The plan was carried out. Joseph sent wagons and provided his brothers with food and animal feed for the way and changes of clothing for themselves. Christ does this for us when we are saved. He takes our old garment and gives us a white robe. The first trip, they returned with **sacks** full. This trip, they go home with **wagons** full. Cautioning them to be careful, he sent them on their happy mission. Try to visualize this group homeward bound. When they told their father the news that Joseph still lived and ruled in Egypt and sent for him, Jacob could not believe it. Only when he saw the wagons sent by Joseph did he believe and prepare to go to see him. The way we believe or disbelieve a message determines our response to it.

It is doubtful that anywhere in history there is another story such as this. For a foreigner, slave, and prisoner to immediately and directly be raised to a position of such great power and trust is strange indeed. But this is just what happens to each one who comes to Christ and is saved from sin. It was more than perfect coincidence of a number of occurrences. It could never have come about except by the work of God. He caused the chain of events. How was He able to accomplish it? Because His servant, Joseph, trusted Him and obeyed Him, even when all looked hopeless. He went to extremes in it, holding back nothing. If we will trust and obey, God will work through us in a marvelous way too. We have His promise.

JUST A THOUGHT

To err is human; to remain in error is stupid.