

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day Prophesying Message Five : The Reigning Aspect of the Mature Life Seen in the Life of Joseph

I. Overview:

According to spiritual experience, Jacob and Joseph are one person; Joseph represents the reigning aspect of the mature Israel, and Jacob reigned through Joseph. Joseph dreamed that His people are sheaves of wheat full of life and heavenly bodies full of light; Joseph's life under the heavenly vision was fully prepared to reign as a king. Joseph as a fruitful bough typifies Christ as the branch for the branching out of God through His believers and the branches' running over the wall. The record of Joseph's life is a revelation of the rulership of the Spirit, for the rulership of the Spirit is the reigning aspect of a mature saint. Because Joseph suffered and denied himself, he gained the riches of the life supply. In order to receive food from him as a type of Christ, the people had to pay four kinds of prices: their money, their livestock, their land, and themselves. The universal blessing on Joseph consummates in the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth, in which everything will be new as a blessing to Christ and His believers.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Explain what the meaning of Jacob's name being changed to Israel is.

When Jacob was matured, his name was changed. Not only was his disposition transformed, but his name was changed from Jacob, a supplanter, to Israel, a matured prince of God, one who could reign for God. The reigning aspect of the matured Israel is portrayed in the biography of Joseph. Because Joseph represents an aspect of Jacob, we should not consider Joseph a person separate from Jacob.

B. Expound Joseph representing this constituted aspect of a matured saint.

A matured saint who has passed through the experiences represented by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has an aspect that is constituted solely of Christ. Because this aspect of him is the constitution of Christ, it is perfect. Joseph represents this constituted aspect of a matured saint. In each of us there is a part that is constituted of Christ. The process of being constituted of Christ will continue until it reaches its climax.

Day 2 —

A. Expound the vision controlling Joseph's life and directing his behavior.

Joseph behaved so excellently and marvelously because he was directed by the vision he saw in his dreams. Joseph was influenced by the heavenly vision, that he was a sheaf rising up full of life and that he was a star worshipped by all the other stars! The vision of his two dreams controlled his life and directed his behavior. He behaved as the sheaf standing up and full of life, and he conducted himself like a heavenly star.

B. Explain Joseph's life under the heavenly vision.

Joseph's life under the heavenly vision was the life of the kingdom of the heavens described in Matthew 5, 6, and 7. According to the constitution of the heavenly kingdom revealed in these chapters in Matthew, our anger must be subdued and our lust conquered. If we claim to be the kingdom people, we should subdue our anger and conquer our lust. This is the kingdom life.

Day 3 —

A. State Joseph according to his faith interpreted the dreams for others.

During his imprisonment Joseph was joined in his confinement by the chief cupbearer and the baker. They could not understand their dreams, but Joseph was able to interpret them. Although Joseph's dreams had not yet been fulfilled, he had the faith and the boldness to interpret the dreams of his companions. Joseph seemed to be saying, "I had two dreams; although they have not yet been fulfilled, I have the faith to interpret your dreams for you."

B. Explain the issue of speaking according to the faith.

We should speak more according to the vision than according to the fulfillment of the vision. Even if our vision has not been fulfilled, we should still speak of it to others. The time will come when our vision will be fulfilled. Joseph's dreams were eventually fulfilled through his interpretation of the dream of the cupbearer. Joseph's speaking not only released him from prison, but also ushered him to the throne.

Day 4 —

A. State Joseph as a fruitful bough and the branches' running over the wall.

Joseph as a fruitful bough typifies Christ as the branch for the branching out of God through His believers as His branches. In Genesis 49:22 the fountain signifies God, the source of fruitfulness, and the branches' running over the wall signifies that Christ's believers as His branches spread Christ over every restriction, magnifying Him in all circumstances.

B. Explain what Joseph's receiving glory and gifts in his enthronement typifies.

In his receiving glory and gifts in his enthronement, Joseph typifies Christ, who received glory and gifts in His ascension. The ring, the garments, and the gold chain portray the gifts that Christ received in His ascension. The garments signify Christ as our objective righteousness for our justification before God and as our subjective righteousness lived out of us that we may be qualified to participate in the marriage of the Lamb. The golden chain signifies the beauty of the Holy Spirit given for obedience expressed in submission.

Day 5 —

A. Expound Joseph passing through a long period of testing to see the fulfillment of his dreams.

Joseph must have been very happy to see the fulfillment of his dreams. Genesis 42 reveals that his brothers came to him and bowed down to him. Joseph was seventeen years old when he had his dreams. At the age of thirty he was exalted. Joseph would have been probably thirty- nine years of age when his brothers came to him. Thus, about twenty-two years after his dreams, Joseph had to pass through a long period of testing.

B. State the life manifested in the story of Joseph is the resurrection life.

The life manifested in the story of Joseph is not the human life, much less the fallen life. Moreover, it is not even the good natural life. Rather, it is the resurrection life, the life of God. Although Joseph was in an exciting situation, he did not display any looseness. This is life. With Joseph we see not only life but also the way of life.

Day 6 —

A. Expound the words in Romans 8:28, "all things... for good to those who love God."

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. Joseph loved God; therefore, whatever happened to him was for good. To be unwilling to forgive those who have offended you indicates that you are shortsighted.

B. Explain what the words Joseph spoke kindly to his brothers.

Joseph supported his brothers and also comforted them. Joseph's brothers could not forget what they had done to him, and they were afraid that after their father's death Joseph would do something to get revenge. However, Joseph comforted them and spoke kindly to them. Joseph said to his brothers, "I thank you for what you did to me. You helped God to fulfill His purpose and whatever you did to me was of God."

III. Conclusion:

Young people, no matter how long your trials may be, do not lose heart. You need to acknowledge that your tests are of God. No one can ascend to the throne without being tried and tested. Although we would like to ascend to the throne at once, God says, "Not yet. Don't talk to me about thrones. You need to go to the prison first." If you seek the Lord, He will cast you into prison. Without prison, we cannot ascend to the throne. Do not escape from the prison; stay there until you graduate and receive your crown. If you cannot govern yourself, you cannot be a good ruler. Suppose you wanted to lose your temper, just lost it. The Holy Spirit's discipline will be over for you. Only under God's discipline and limitation can we rule over others. To be under the discipline of the Holy Spirit or under the restriction of God is the best training for the next kingdom age.