

THE BROTHER'S ENCOUNTER WITH JOSEPH

INTRO: -Joseph promoted. Joseph succeeds. How come? Who is really exalted in this passage and in Joseph's life and testimony?
 -Many today when they succeed are quick to give credit to themselves: "I knew that I could do it. I believed in myself."
 -Over against this boasting in self and pride, we listen to Joseph's humble testimony, "Not I, God..."

I. **A HURTING FAMILY.**

A. Joseph sees his brothers.

1. It is God who sovereignly causes the terrible famine in the lands. It is not by chance (H.C. QA 26,27).
2. Joseph's ten brothers are sent on an urgent errand: to buy food. Benjamin is at home with daddy.
3. The brothers bow down before Joseph with their faces to the earth.
4. Joseph remembered the dreams that he had dreamed.

B. Where is the joyful reunion?

1. Joseph knew his brothers, but they do not know him.
2. Joseph speaks roughly unto them. No embrace, no, "Hi, how are you? So glad to see you again."
3. This is not merely the beginning of the fulfillment of the dreams (pl.).
4. Buts must also be the beginning of the brother's and family's spiritual recovery training.
5. Jacob's family will be reunited only in the way of reconciliation.

C. Issues that need to be dealt with.

1. There is a father who divided his family with favoritism, even now all these years later has his favorite.
2. There is a father who is very harsh and bitter man, still lost in his grieving.
3. There are sons who cannot comfort their father when their sin against him burns in their heart.
4. These brothers look at one another in their various roles in the selling of their brother.
5. These brothers who in selfish, unloving, ungodly hatred sold their brother...have they changed or have they grown colder and harder in their sins? Where is love?

II. **HIDDEN GUILT:**

A. What do we do with our sins?

1. Whether it be our sins against God, or against our fellow human being...
2. Do we hope that over time, the sin will just be forgotten, removed, no longer exist?
3. **Time does not heal** sin: not in Jacob's family, and not in your or my life or family.
4. Shall we pretend that nothing happened, or that it does not matter?
5. Twenty years had passed, and their sin stood between these men and their father, each other, and their God.

B. Sin needs not to be ignored but confessed.

1. Reconciliation is needed.
2. Reconciliation involves the uncovering, confession, and forgiving of sin, not ignoring or sweeping it under the rug!
3. It is our Joseph who realizes this through the dreams (plural) that he remembers.
4. Not just 10 brothers bowing down, but the eleven stars and the sun and moon (father).
5. Our Joseph must bring his family to this point of honest dealing with past sins committed, sorrow & turning from it.

C. Harsh speech.

1. Important for us to see that Joseph is NOT being vindictive here: a pound of flesh for a pound.
2. We may not in our desire for reconciliation be vindictive, sinfully wanting to see the other person grovel.
3. How often the speech: "I will have nothing to do with him until he apologizes!"
4. This is not a matter of principle, but it is a matter of pride and vindictiveness!
5. Look at Joseph as he pedagogically speaks and works with his brothers who have sinned against him.
6. Reconciliation is sweet, but painful. How did God deal with our first parents when they sinned against him?

III. **THE NECESSARY DISTRESS**

A. The severe test given: like the knife of a surgeon!

1. "You are untruthful men (spies).
2. Three days of prison as a taste of three or more years in Joseph's life.
3. "I am a God-fearing man." One man kept in prison: Simeon bound before their eyes.
4. There are those who would accuse Joseph of deception in this drama. Not but necessary role playing:
5. Joseph must bring the brothers to remembrance of their sins, test them to see if there is sorrow and change.

B. Confession is made

1. Guilt of their sin is acknowledged: "We are verily guilty concerning our brother..." "We saw his anguish..."
2. Be sure that your sin will find you out (Numb.32:23). "therefore this distress is come upon us."
3. "Do not sin against the child...his blood is required" (vs. 22)
4. "What is this that God hath done unto us?" (vs. 28).
5. Joseph tests not with desire of revenge, but 'weeping' and love giving them their money back with provisions.

C. Our encounter with One better than Joseph.

1. Joseph could not know his brother's heart. He must test them to find out for himself.
2. Joseph would not be able to change his brothers, but must hope and see if God has done this work.
3. Our Lord Jesus was sold for 30 pieces of silver and died on the cross to pay for our guilt & be corrected by discipline.
4. His work of salvation is the means of converting us.
5. Now by his Word and Spirit he pedagogically works in our lives and families to reconcile us to him and ea. other.
6. Reconciliation is sweet, but painful!