

# THE LIFE OF JOSEPH – SERMON 20

## ***THE SOVEREIGN AND HIS SUBJECTS***

Genesis 47:13-26

### **INTRODUCTION**

- Selfishness is an integral part of our nature
- But when we look at Joseph, even in his exalted position over all the land of Egypt, he does not act selfishly, but benevolently.
- Now vv.13-26 describe Joseph's administration over the Egyptian nation during the famine.
- Joseph's family came to Egypt after two years of famine (45:6) and there was yet five years remaining.
- As we have seen previously, Joseph is one of the great types of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament. He portrays Christ as Son, Servant, Sovereign and Saviour.
- In these verses we are presented with a picture of Christ the King's relationship to His subjects.
- We understand from Scripture that Christ will be King in the future when He comes to the earth to reign for 1000 years. That is the kingdom we look for and pray for: "Thy kingdom come".
- Yet He is also King at present; firstly in the sense that He is the Almighty, Eternal God who made all things and rules over them; but secondly, He is Lord and King personally over every believer (Colossians 1:13)

### **I. THE REALISATION OF THEIR STATE (13-18)**

A. They were destitute and unable to save themselves

1. They had no bread (13; cf. Amos 8:11-12; John 6:35)

2. They had no money (14-15; cf. Proverbs 23:5; 2 Corinthians 8:9)
3. They had no possessions (16-18; cf. Isaiah 55:1-3)
4. They fainted (13; cf. Matthew 9:36; Romans 5:6)
5. They were under the power of death (15,19; cf. Romans 5:12; 6:23)

B. They understood and confessed their state

1. Few people are willing to acknowledge their true state before God (Revelation 3:17)
2. Yet this is essential before one can be saved (1 John 1:8; Luke 15:14-17)

## **II. THE RESIGNATION TO THE SAVIOUR (19-24)**

A. They surrendered all to Joseph

1. Their purse
2. Their possessions
3. Their property
4. Their person

B. They became willing servants

1. The law made provision for the servant who loved his master to remain with him and serve him forever (Exodus 21:1-6)
2. The believer becomes a willing slave of Jesus Christ (John 12:26)

C. They were a purchased people (19)

1. The Christian is redeemed – bought back for a price (1 Peter 1:18-19)
  2. The Christian is no longer his own, but Christ's possession (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 1 Corinthians 7:23)
- D. Their surrender brought them abundant blessings
1. They were allowed to work the land and taxed at 20%
  2. Joseph set up a sort of feudal system where they were not so much slaves, but tenants
  3. This was for the good of the people, providing stability
  4. This transformation of Egyptian society sets Egypt up to become the dominant world power in years to come.
  5. He made sure their every need was met (23-24; Psalm 34:10; Matthew 6:33; Philippians 4:19)
  6. Those who willingly surrender as servants of Christ receive blessings beyond comprehension

### **III. THE OBLIGATION TO SERVE (25)**

- A. Joseph put the people to work
1. There is dignity in work (Ecclesiastes 5:12)
  2. If any will not work, neither should he eat (2 Thessalonians 3:10)
- B. The Christian is saved to serve
1. It means taking up Christ's yoke (Matthew 11:28-30)
  2. Service is the natural response to Christ's love (2 Corinthians 5:14-15)

3. Those who have received grace (25) respond by gratefully serving (Romans 12:1)

#### C. Praise for salvation

1. "Thou hast saved our lives"
2. "Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy" (Psalm 107:2)
3. Christ is worthy to be eternally praised for what He has done for us (Revelation 5:9-10)

### **CONCLUSION**

1. The Egyptians had a choice: remain as their own masters and die, or surrender to Joseph and live
2. Those who come to Christ will live, those who reject Him will perish (1 John 5:12)
3. Salvation means God becomes the absolute Lord over person (Romans 14:7-9)
4. Many people desire Christ to be Saviour, but not their Lord (Luke 6:46)
5. The rich young thought he could serve both God and money (Matthew 19:16-22)
6. We must be willing for God to use all we are and have for His service and glory