

Many of us know the story of Joseph. We know he was one of Jacob's sons, deeply loved by his father. But once he began to dream those prophetic dreams, his brothers grew jealous and, in the end, sold him as a slave to foreigners the Egyptians.

As we read, we find that while in Egypt, God was with Joseph and caused him to prosper in everything he did. Eventually, he became second in command to Pharaoh, ruler of Egypt. No one could approach Pharaoh without going through Joseph. Pharaoh entrusted all the wealth and affairs of Egypt to him. [Remember, Egypt was then the strongest empire on earth just as the United States might be seen today.]

But Joseph's life story carries a profound spiritual mystery and message for the Church. Joseph represents our Lord Jesus Christ, and Pharaoh represents our Heavenly Father. The eleven brothers of Joseph symbolize the Jews (Israel), while Egypt, the foreign land where Joseph found refuge, represents the Church among the Gentiles. Joseph's wife, Asenath, an Egyptian woman given to him from Pharaoh's royal household, symbolizes the pure Bride of Christ.

Just as Joseph was envied and rejected by his own brothers and sold into slavery, so too was the Lord Jesus rejected by His own people, the Jews. He came to them as their long-awaited Messiah, but when He declared

Himself to be the Son of God, they despised Him, plotted against Him, and handed Him over to the Romans to be crucified. That act was, in essence, the selling of Christ to the Gentiles.

That is why, in the book of Acts, we find Paul and Barnabas saying to the Jews:

Acts 13:46-49

Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: "We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles.

For this is what the Lord has commanded us:

'I have made you a light for the Gentiles,

that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.'"

When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed. The word

of the Lord spread through the whole region.

You see, Christ came first for His own people, but they rejected Him. Until that time, God had not revealed Himself to the Gentiles; grace was given only to Israel. That is why Jesus said in Matthew 15:24,

“I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.”

But because they rejected Him just as Joseph’s brothers rejected him the grace was extended to us, the Gentiles (symbolized by Egypt).

Another hidden truth in Joseph’s story is that not all Egyptians truly believed in Joseph, even though Pharaoh did. During the seven years of plenty, Joseph labored to prepare for the famine he foresaw, but most Egyptians didn’t take his warning seriously.

If they had, when the famine struck, they would not have been forced to sell their land and possessions for food. As citizens of Egypt, Joseph would have freely provided for them. But their lack of faith cost them dearly.

This reflects the state of many Christians today. They have received

Christ, yet they ignore His warnings about the spiritual famine to come the time of great tribulation.

The only person who did not suffer during that famine was Joseph's wife, for she lived with him in the royal palace. She knew his heart and shared in his secrets. Notice that Joseph did not find his wife on his own; Pharaoh himself gave her to him. This beautifully illustrates that the Bride of Christ the chosen ones is given to Christ by the Father Himself.

Remember, among those who call themselves Christians, there are two groups: the Bride of Christ (the true Wife) and the companions or attendants. They are like the wise and foolish virgins in Matthew 25. Both groups exist in the end times, but only the wise virgins the true Brimiwill be taken in the rapture.

Just as Joseph ruled over all of Egypt, providing food to those who came to him during the famine, so will Jesus Christ reign supreme. During the coming Great Tribulation, lukewarm Christians vijthose who should have been ready will face that period of distress, while the Bride will be rejoicing in heaven with the Bridegroom at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

When Joseph's brothers began their journey to Egypt in search of food, it

was a sign that the famine had truly begun. In the same way, today we see a growing spiritual hunger for the true Word of God. The Jews, who for centuries have waited for their Messiah, are now gradually realizing their mistake that there is no other Messiah to come. They are beginning to recognize that the One they rejected is the hope of the whole world.

When that day comes when Israel truly repents know that the Great Tribulation has begun, and the door of grace will be closed to the Gentiles. Just as Joseph's brothers wept before him, so will Israel weep for Christ.

Zechariah 12:10-11

"And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son.

On that day the weeping in Jerusalem will be as great as the weeping of Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo."

After that, only a few short years will remain until the final seven years come to an end and the world as we know it will be finished. During that time, there will be unprecedented tribulation on earth. Then all nations will finally recognize that Jesus Christ is the Chief Cornerstone the One rejected by the builders. Every tongue will confess that all authority in heaven and on earth belongs to Him, and that there is no salvation or eternal life outside of Him just as all of Egypt came to understand that every resource and all authority had been given to Joseph.

You can see the times we are living in. The nation of Israel is rising again. Soon their eyes will be fully opened to recognize Jesus Christ as Lord.

So, my friend, ask yourself: Will you be among the Bride of Christ who is taken up before the Great Tribulation begins? How do you see the Lord Jesus just as an ordinary man, or as your King? Remember, Joseph in the prison was not the same as Joseph in the palace. Likewise, Jesus on the cross is not the same as the glorified Lord today. The Bible says He now sits in unapproachable light, and His words are truth and life.

If you have not yet become part of His royal family if you have not been born again of water and the Spirit you will not escape the coming tribulation nor enter the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

Why miss such glory? Repent today. Turn to the Lord and let Him wash away your sins. He will give you the grace to be counted among His Bride.

The Rapture could happen any day now.

May God bless you!

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