

(Genesis) Genesis 42:19-24

by J. Vernon McGee

Joseph tests his brothers' character and reveals their guilt over their past actions while grappling with his own emotions of forgiveness and reconciliation.

Duration: 4:26

Scripture: Genesis 42:21-25, Genesis 42:28, Genesis 42:36

Topics: "Genesis"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the story of Joseph and his brothers from the book of Genesis. Joseph, who is now in a position of power in Egypt, tests his brothers to see if they have truly changed. He instructs them to leave one of their brothers behind and bring their youngest brother to him. The brothers feel guilty for their past actions and are now faced with a difficult decision. The preacher emphasizes the emotional turmoil Joseph experiences during this test and highlights the fact that Joseph understands Hebrew, even though he has been speaking to his brothers through an interpreter.

Transcript

Now he says to them, though, verse 19, If ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison. Go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses, but bring your youngest brother unto me, so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die, and they did so. Now, the thing is that these men, and that's what they are, some of them, I suppose, 50-some-odd years old, these men now find themselves in a real predicament.

But they are being dealt with by one that fears God, but they are afraid because they don't know what he's going to do. So he has put down this sort of a proposition. He said, and it's on the pretext that he's testing them to see whether they be true men.

He says, now you leave one of your brethren here, and then you bring your younger brother next time, or just don't come back, that's all. He said, that is the way I'm going to verify whether you're telling me the truth or not. Now will you notice, they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and we would not hear.

Therefore is this distress come upon us. So that what's taking place here is quite interesting. They're speaking in Hebrew, and Joseph, he understands them.

But Joseph has been speaking to them through an interpreter. He didn't have to, but he did it, because he is keeping up before them the fact that he's an Egyptian. And they do not think he understands.

And when they are talking this over, Joseph hears them actually, which is really a confession almost. Verse 22, now I'm reading, And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child, and ye would not hear. Therefore, behold, also his blood is required.

Now they feel like what's happening to them is revenge, or the vengeance of God upon them for the way they treated Joseph. And verse 23, And they knew not that Joseph understood them, for he spake unto them by an interpreter. And he turned himself about from them, and wept, and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes.

Now, the thing that happened was this. Joseph heard them, and he heard them how they now are repentant. They really are.

They say, this thing is coming upon us because of the evil that we did to our brother Joseph. And now Joseph hears every bit of it. And Joseph is moved toward them now.

Really, he'd love to have walked up to them and thrown his arm around each one of them and welcomed them and called him, my brother. But he dares not do it because he'd never get Benjamin down there now, and he wants to test them further. And we're going to see that a real test is coming up.

Now, they are going to leave one. They left Simeon. Joseph, when he was so moved, he had to go aside and wept.

And then he washed his face and got rid of the tears, and he came in as if nothing had happened, you see. But he just couldn't refrain from weeping. So emotionally charged was he at this time.

Now, they leave Simeon. And you ask me why. I won't let you in on something.

Don't tell anybody. I don't know. I don't know why they left Simeon, why they didn't leave some other one.

And frankly, if they left any one of the ten, I'd still have said, I don't know why they left him. But this is the one that was chosen. I take it that while Joseph was gone, they made a choice, and Joseph accepted it.

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