

Joseph - Preparing the Body for Burial Joseph Herrin (04-23-08)

Have you heard the phrase “the Joseph Company?” Do you know who this company is, what is their calling, and whether you are a part of it? In this last hour of the church all overcoming saints will either be a part of the Joseph Company, or they will be ministered unto by those so designated.

First, let me assure you that “the Joseph Company” is not a reference to myself personally, or those in league with me. Yes, my name happens to be Joseph, and the Spirit bears witness that I am called to be a member of this company that shares this name. However, I was not the first to use this term to describe the activity of a chosen people at this late hour, nor am I the only one writing about them. I have come across many others who are being given profound insights into this end of the age group of saints and their specific calling.

There are a variety of things that this Joseph Company will do in coming days. I have written previously of their calling to open up the storehouses of God containing the precious truths of the Kingdom, and with this vast supply to feed the starving masses in coming days. This work is typified in Joseph, the son of Jacob, storing up grain in Egypt and feeding the world in the years of famine. Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Zaphenath Paneah, which the Latin Vulgate rendered as Revelator Occulti, being translated “Revealer of Hidden Things.” There is a company of people who have been learning many things, storing up treasures received from the Spirit of Christ, in preparation for a day when mankind will seek out the truths of the Kingdom with a great hunger.

I have also written of the preparation of this Joseph Company. Even as the son of Jacob was rejected by his brothers, among whom were those who spoke of killing him, so too have the members of the Joseph Company found that they have had no place among the sheep and shepherds belonging to their Father. Even in Egypt, Joseph was alone. When he called his brothers to dine with him they all sat at one table, the Egyptians sat at another, while Joseph dined at a table by himself. Such is the price to be borne by those who are members of the Joseph Company. The food belongs to them, and it is distributed by them to others, even as Joseph took food from his table and had it served to his brothers. Yet, the Joseph’s of this hour dine alone. You can read more of this aspect of the Joseph Company in the writing *Parables*, found on the Heart4God website.

More recently I have been led to focus on another aspect of the ministry of the Joseph Company. This is their role as forerunners and pioneers in embracing the cross and having their flesh crucified in order that they might be used as guides to a great company who soon must take this same road. Joseph, the son of Jacob, went before his brothers to Egypt. The day came, however, when it was necessary that they follow in his steps. If they refused to go to Egypt they would die, for great was the famine in the land.

Yahweh has had a group of sons and daughters who have willingly embraced the cross, and have submitted their flesh to be cut away in order that they might arise as spiritual creatures. They have understood that this work is necessary, and cannot be avoided by any. They have also discerned that there is a greater grace given to those who present themselves as a free will offering for their flesh to be consumed upon the fiery altar of purification. Therefore they have asked Christ to bind them to the horns of the altar until His fiery work be accomplished, and He has willingly done so.

A much larger group of Yahweh's people have remained at home, content to sit among the shepherds and the sheep, even though an evil report of their activity has come to the ears of their father (Genesis 37:2). These have not submitted themselves to the grinding wheels and threshing instruments of Egypt. There is a process of crushing, breaking, and spiritual release that must come to all of Yahweh's children. It is pictured in the following words of the prophet Isaiah:

Isaiah 28:27-29

For dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge, nor is the cartwheel driven over cummin; But dill is beaten out with a rod, and cummin with a club. Grain for bread is crushed, indeed, he does not continue to thresh it forever. Because the wheel of his cart and his horses eventually damage it, he does not thresh it longer. This also comes from Yahweh of hosts, Who has made His counsel wonderful and His wisdom great.

The children of God are to be as food to feed the world, yet all grain must be prepared. The hard outer shell of the flesh must be broken in order that the Spirit within, Who brings life, might come forth to feed a starving world. The higher the purposes of God in your life, the more intense will be the breaking and refining. The greatest baked delicacies are made from flour that has been reduced to the finest powder. Your usefulness in God's kingdom is determined by your willingness to suffer.

Joseph went to Egypt before his brethren and was a slave from the day he arrived. Later he entered the double refinement of an even more intense subjugation as he became a slave in prison. His brothers were to follow, and upon the death of Joseph they too became slaves in Egypt. Even as Joseph suffered many things, they too were placed under cruel taskmasters, and they remained there until the day appointed for their release.

Why did Joseph have to go first? To prepare a place for his brothers; to save many from perishing, and being impoverished.

Genesis 45:7, 11

And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance... There I will also provide for you, for there are still five years of famine to come, lest you and your household and all that you have be impoverished.

The children of God will enter into the age to come with many being cast into the Lake of Fire, and many suffering loss, unless they too go down to Egypt and allow Yahweh to deal with their flesh as He has dealt with Joseph.

I Corinthians 3:12-15

Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire.

Thus far, most Christians have been building with that which will not stand the fire. Their works will be burned up and they will suffer loss. It is therefore necessary that they follow the Joseph Company and also present their flesh to be crucified that they might receive reward and be passed over by the second death, which is the Lake of Fire. We will either go through the fire as a free will offering, and receive reward, or as a mandatory offering where reward is absent.

It is this work of the Joseph Company that I would focus upon in this writing. It is a work of preparing the body of Christ for burial, and it is found typified in both Old and New Testaments. Let us begin by observing the work of this company as it is found foreshadowed in the Old Testament.

Genesis 46:1-4

So Israel set out with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. And God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, "Jacob, Jacob." And he said, "Here I am." And He said, "I am God, the God of your father; *do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you a great nation there.* I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up again; *and Joseph will close your eyes.*"

We observe here a great parable, for every detail is pregnant with spiritual truth. Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel, was the progenitor of the nation which bore his name. Out of Jacob came twelve sons who gave rise to the twelve tribes of Israel. Therefore, the words spoken to Jacob in this encounter can be observed as a parable of the entire nation. It is a revelation of that which ALL of God's people must pass through in order to become the "great nation" which is their destiny.

Notice that there is fear in going down to Egypt, and this fear must be overcome. Yahweh would also say to all of His children, "Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you a great nation there." What is the method of this preparation? It will entail 400 years of slavery where the flesh is roughly treated. Yet at the end of this period of refinement there will not be a sick or infirm person among their numbers. It will be a healthy and strong people who emerge from Egypt.

This process of crucifying the flesh is something that all of the children of God must pass through. If they refuse it they will not attain to the stature of a mighty nation. They will find themselves impoverished in the same sense that the church of Laodicea was impoverished. They had the world's goods, and much ease and pleasure, but in the eyes of their Savior and Lord they were "wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked." So are all those who remain in bondage to the flesh.

What was Joseph's role in this? Joseph was the son who was appointed to "close the eyes" of Israel. Joseph was to be there at his death and to prepare his body for burial.

Genesis 50:1-3

Then Joseph fell on his father's face, and wept over him and kissed him. And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the

physicians embalmed Israel. Now forty days were required for it, for such is the period required for embalming.

Is it not evident that this is a spiritual parable? Notice how long it required to prepare the body for burial. Forty is a number everywhere seen throughout Scriptures bearing great significance. It is the number of trials and testing, even as the Israelites wandered forty years in the wilderness until all who belonged to the generation of unbelief died out. During these forty years they ate manna every day, being called to fast from all that they formerly ate in Egypt. It is the number of days that Yahshua spent in the wilderness fasting, and being tempted by Satan.

This number forty is related to the reduction of the man of flesh and the proving of a spiritual man. It is in the wilderness that we must decrease, but Christ must increase in us. There is a wilderness path appointed to all of Yahweh's people, and it is only with great loss that any refuse to endure it. It will be the Joseph Company, who has gone before, that will prepare the way for others to also come and embrace this difficult walk where the flesh man is brought to an end and a spiritual creation arises.

Let us now observe this same pattern in the New Testament.

Mark 15:42-46

And when evening had already come, because it was the preparation day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, *Joseph* of Arimathea came, a prominent member of the Council, who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God; and he gathered up courage and went in before Pilate, and *asked for the body of Jesus... and he granted the body to Joseph. And Joseph bought a linen cloth, took Him down, wrapped Him in the linen cloth, and laid Him in a tomb* which had been hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb.

Yahweh is a God of precise detail, having numbered the very hairs upon a man's head, and determined the days of a man's life. We must understand that every name in the Bible is also significant. Once more we see a Joseph preparing a body for burial. This body also speaks of God's people, for the church is "the body of Christ." We are therefore once more observing a parable in this account which is a parallel to the actions of the son of Jacob who bore the same name.

Even as Jacob was the head of a nation that bore his name, Israel, so too we see here that Yahshua the Christ stands as the Head of a people who also bear His name. We observe that even as the sons of Jacob had to go down to Egypt for their flesh to be dealt with, until it should be buried, so too must the same occur to the offspring of the Christ. The cross must be borne by all. The flesh must be put to death. Once more we see Joseph being involved as he ministers to the body of Christ in preparation for burial.

Unless the body submits to death, a spiritual creature will not arise. Jacob had to be buried, but he did not remain dead. Yahshua testified of this fact.

Mark 12:26-27

"But regarding the fact that the dead rise again, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the burning bush, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of *Jacob*'? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living; you are greatly mistaken."

Jacob is not in the grave anymore. His body was buried, but a spiritual creature arose. He now lives before God. The same is true of Christ. He went into the tomb, but three days later He arose. He now sits in great glory and honor and power at the right hand of God the Father. The body of Christ must also pass through death to attain to resurrection life. If we protect the flesh we will remain fleshly. The flesh must be crucified that we might walk as spiritual men and women. It is the ministry of Joseph to prepare the body as it must pass through death to attain to life.

Consider a further parallel brought out in these twin accounts. We read in the above passage from Mark that Joseph of Arimathea went before Pilate, the Roman Governor, and asked that he might be given the body of Christ to bury it. This same petition was made by the son of Jacob as he asked Pharaoh to allow him to bury his father.

Genesis 50:4-6

And when the days of mourning for him were past, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, "If now I have found favor in your sight, please speak to Pharaoh, saying, 'My father made me swear, saying, "Behold, I am about to die; in my grave which I dug for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me." Now therefore, please let me go up and bury my father; then I will return.'" And Pharaoh said, "Go up and bury your father, as he

made you swear."

Pharaoh had authority over all those who dwelt in his kingdom, even as Pilate had authority over all those under his dominion. Who has authority over the church, the body of Christ? It is Yahweh, God the Father. What is shown in type in these two Joseph's asking that a body might be given to them in order to be able to prepare it for burial is a picture of the intercessory work that the Joseph Company must also enter into.

The Joseph Company, observing that the body of Christ is spiritually dead, being filled with sin and the foul odor of the flesh, must petition the Father that the body might be given into its hands that it might be prepared for its burial. The body must not sit out in the open in its state of decay and be allowed to fester and stink, becoming noxious to all. It must be embalmed. It must be prepared with spices, and wrapped in linen, speaking of the righteous acts of the saints. It must be hidden away until it is resurrected as a spiritual creature. As I have mentioned in many writings, this process is pictured in the metamorphosis of the caterpillar into a butterfly. It must go through a cocoon stage where the old fleshly form is transformed into a state of winged glory.

It is time now for the Joseph Company to begin petitioning the Father that the body of Christ, full of death as it is, might be given into their hands that they might prepare it for burial. The stink of the church has already begun to offend many, and it must be quickly wrapped and hidden from sight until it has shed its fleshly form and is ready to emerge in the image of Christ.

Are you a member of this Joseph Company? Then arise with tears and weeping as you observe the death among the people of God. This was the heart of Joseph.

Genesis 50:1

Then Joseph fell on his father's face, and wept over him and kissed him.

We too should weep when we observe that the body of Christ has become so thoroughly leavened with sin, and has rejected the disciple's cross, which alone works in it sanctification and holiness. We should desire that the church arise to be that glorious body that it was called to be, lamenting at the lifeless corpse she has become. Ask God to deliver the body to the Joseph Company that it might be prepared. Observe again the parable in the following words:

Mark 15:42-44

And when evening had already come, *because it was the preparation day, that is, the day before the Sabbath*, Joseph of Arimathea came, a prominent member of the Council, who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God; and he gathered up courage and went in before Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus.

Do you recognize the day we now are in? The Sabbath is close at hand. The Millennial reign of Christ corresponds to the seventh day. We are now at the end of six thousand years, six days in spiritual type. The seventh day is at hand, and the body has yet to be prepared. This must be a quick work. We must act quickly, and with courage, and petition the Father that He might deliver the body to be prepared for burial.

May many have eyes to see the wonderful truth of these prophetic types that must be fulfilled at this hour.