

A FAMILY SHAKEUP

GENESIS 37

Text:

Introduction:

This family crisis centers on a gifted son. He is unusual, unique, and misunderstood. Joseph is the son of his dad's old age. This makes him the fair-haired favorite boy. He gets anything he wants. This is where the trouble begins for Joseph and where it starts in any family.

Two things contributed to this dilemma; (1) the love of Jacob towards his son Joseph in giving him a coat of many colors, something he didn't give the other boys; (2) the jealousy of Joseph's brothers. This jealousy led to bitterness, hatred and foul play.

Let me issue a stern warning. An unkind act or attitude by any family member or any number of members can rock the foundation of family harmony. A family can be torn apart by the attitude or action of just one, to say nothing of eleven against one. The odds were totally stacked against Joseph.

This combination - a gifted young son, an aging father and eleven jealous brothers - provides a perfect

formula for a family squabble and a family fight. Sibling rivalry is not uncommon, nor is it new. It started a long time ago. It has been in the human race ever since Adam, and his family.

Notice:

1. The Dreams of Joseph

A. Joseph's first Dream (Gen 37:5-8)

(Gen 37:5-8 KJV) "And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. {6} And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: {7} For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf.

1. What did it mean? (vs 8)

{8} And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words."

2. The consequences of the dream. (vs 5)

"And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more

a. Notice: They already hated him

B. Joseph's second dream (Gen 37:9-11)

(Gen 37:9-11 KJV) "And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.

1. What did it mean?

{10} And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? {11} And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying."

(Word to parents.)

Something that is happening in your child's life while he or she is young could be a forecast of what God has for that child ten, fifteen, twenty-five or forty years from now. So be careful how you stifle the development of your child when God is doing something in his or her life. Perhaps you don't understand it now, but when you can't understand, just learn to trust Him.

God has to have someone one day to be the pastor of this church. God has to have someone one day to be a missionary. God has to have someone one day to be the mayor of this city, and president of this country. God has little children to grow up into men and women to give them places and positions of responsibility.

If your child acts a bit different from other children, be careful how you stifle him, how you criticize him, how you handle him. God may be working in that child's life in a way that will affect this whole nation.

2. The consequences of the dream. (vs 11)

{11} And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying."

C. We not have jealousy in the family but also in the church.

(1 Cor 3:1-4 KJV) "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. {2} I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. {3} For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? {4} For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?"

2. The Dedication Of Joseph (Gen 37:12-17)

Two things reveal the character of and dedication of Joseph. There are no more outstanding traits that a man could have than the two Joseph had.

A. Joseph complied with his father's instructions.

(Gen 37:13 KJV) "And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said to him, Here am I."

1. Joseph was obedient.

(Eph 6:1-3 KJV) "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. {2} Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; {3} That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."

a. Notice: There is no age limits to this command.

b. Joseph was 17 when this takes place.

B. Joseph had concern for his brothers.

(Gen 37:15-17 KJV) "And a certain man found him, and, behold, he was wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, What seekest thou? {16} And he said, I seek my brethren: tell me, I pray thee, where they feed their flocks. {17} And the man said, They are departed hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan."

3. Solution for a Family Shakeup

When your family begins to show signs of a shakeup don't wait until they breakup, but incorporate these things.

A. Diversify Devotions.

1. Do it as a family some times and have all your children take part.

B. Intensify Family Togetherness

1. Do things as a family.

C. Amplify Family Favors.

1. Doing random acts of kindness.

D. Rectify Family Differences.

1. Sit down and talk things out.

E. Simplify Family Chores.

1. Make work fun.

Close:

You can prevent a family breakup by properly handling a family shakeup. Don't wait until it becomes a point of no return.

There are three things that are absolutely necessary, and these govern the five solutions to a family shakeup that I have given you:

- Compassion
- Communication
- Commitment