

## A King Who “Knew Not Joseph”

B.C. Carr  
Deceased

[Editor’s Note: Although the author wrote the following article perhaps a quarter century ago, its message is no less relevant to the present. The problems he discusses have only intensified since he wrote it, and his suggested solutions are timeless. DM]

A familiar statement to many is found in Exodus. “NOW THERE AROSE UP A NEW KING OVER EGYPT, WHICH KNEW NOT JOSEPH” (**Exodus 1:8**). This change in leadership was to result in radical changes that would affect God’s people.

Under the Pharaoh who knew Joseph, Israel had been greatly blessed. They had grown from seventy souls to perhaps three million people. They had been given choice land for their cattle in the land of Goshen. Their wealth had increased. The God of heaven was respected because of Joseph (**Genesis 41:32-45**). When Jacob died the nobles of Egypt honored him (**50:7**).

How things have changed because the new leader knew not Joseph. He did not know his God. Israel is regarded as an enemy (**Exodus 1:10**). They were made slaves. Cruel taskmasters were placed over them (v. ii). Orders were given to kill the male babies (**vv.15-16**). What changes had taken place because of a change in leadership!

### Changes in Leadership Are Occurring in the Church

We have seen a generation of great men pass on: men like Foy E. Wallace, Jr., G.K. Wallace, N.B. Hardeman, H.A. Dixon, Gus Nichols, B.C. Goodpasture, and a host of others who stood for the Truth without wavering. They challenged false teachers and engaged them in debate. The church grew and remained strong in the faith. Strong elders watched over the churches. False teachers were not allowed in the pulpits. Error was condemned by their teaching. Young people felt secure under their leadership. Now these have gone on. There is a new leadership in the church. Some preachers now ridicule these men of the past. Elders are giving place to popular demands for softer preaching and entertainment. They have been deceived into thinking this will cause the church to grow.

### What We Hear Today

From the same pulpits where brave and faithful men stood, we are hearing: Salvation is by grace alone; there is nothing man can do toward his own salvation. Others are saying that we are saved by faith only. We are told that instrumental music is a matter of tradition or opinion; we should not make it a test of fellowship. “Pattern theology” is to be rejected. We should be less rigid in our beliefs. The “old paths” mentality should be rejected. We should not believe we

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are the only true church. The Scriptures should not be used as proof-texts. We need to give women a more prominent role in the church. Preachers should swap pulpits with denominational pastors. Fellowship among all who “believe in Christ” should be practiced. These are just a few things being heard today in pulpits where they could not have been preached just a few years ago.

Lectureships which use faithful preachers to expose such false teachings are being avoided by the new breed. Faithful preachers are not being used by these liberal churches. Schools which still teach the Bible without fear or favor are not being supported by these who “knew not Joseph” because they do not know the God of Joseph. Some of the same congregations which condemned false teachers a few years ago have since employed them as their preachers. The church is suffering because of changes in leadership.

### What Can We Do To Prevent Apostasy?

1. We need to appoint and support faithful elders who will properly oversee the flock (**Acts 20:28-32**).
2. We need to be busy now training other leaders to take their place. Consider Joshua’s training and the influence he wielded (**Joshua 24:31**).
3. We need to learn again proper respect for the Word of God (**Psalms 119:9-16**). We must teach this to our children (**Deuteronomy 6:4-9**).
4. We must vaccinate against the errors of our day by exposing all false teachers – even if this means being “negative” (**Acts 20:29-32; 2 Timothy 4:1-5**).
5. We must indoctrinate each generation. It is right to teach doctrine (**1 Timothy 4:16; 2 John 9-11**).
6. We need to pray fervently for elders and preachers (**James 5:16**).
7. We must be set for the defense of the Gospel (**Philippians 1:17**).