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JOSEPH: AN OLD TESTAMENT ILLUSTRATION OF CHRIST (Genesis 37-50)

In Luke 24, we're told that not long after his death and resurrection, Jesus walked alongside two men from Jerusalem to a little town called Emmaus. During their conversation over those seven miles, the passage says that "beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27.)

Although Jesus isn't explicitly found in every letter of Scripture, the Bible does point to him and God's plan on every page. It's not uncommon for us to see Jesus in the Old Testament in many ways – preincarnate appearances, prophecies, or types. A type is an example, a foreshadowing that reminds us of who Christ is and what he has done. In this study, we finish up our series on lessons from the life of Joseph, a man who can be compared to the Lord Jesus in so many ways. Let's consider a few of them.

JOSEPH AND JESUS WERE BOTH SHEPHERDS

*Genesis 37:2 - Joseph, being seventeen years old, was **pasturing the flock** with his brothers.*

*John 10:11 - I am **the good shepherd**. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.*

BOTH WERE PROPHESED TO BE RULERS

*Genesis 37:10 - But when he told it to his father and to his brothers, his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I and your mother and your brothers indeed come to **bow ourselves to the ground** before you?"*

*Micah 5:2 - But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be **ruler in Israel**...*

BOTH HAD JEALOUS FAMILY MEMBERS

*Genesis 37:4 - But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, **they hated him** and could not speak peacefully to him.*

*John 7:3, 5 - So his brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea, that your disciples also may see the works you are doing." For **not even his brothers believed** in him.*

BOTH WERE STRIPPED OF THEIR ROBES

*Genesis 37:23 - So when Joseph came to his brothers, they **stripped him of his robe**, the robe of many colors that he wore.*

*Mark 15:20 - And when they had mocked him, they **stripped him of the purple cloak** and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him.*

BOTH WERE SOLD FOR SILVER

*Genesis 37:28 - And they drew Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of **silver**. They took Joseph to Egypt.*

*Matthew 26:15 - and [Judas] said, "What will you give me if I deliver him over to you?" And they paid him thirty pieces of **silver**.*

BOTH WERE KNOWN AS SERVANTS

*Genesis 39:1 - Now Joseph had been brought down to Egypt, and **Potiphar**, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard, an Egyptian, **had bought him** from the Ishmaelites who had brought him down there.*

*Philippians 2:7 – [Christ Jesus] emptied himself, by **taking the form of a servant**, being born in the likeness of men.*

BOTH WENT TO EGYPT UNDER STRESS

*Genesis 37:36 - Meanwhile the Midianites had **sold him in Egypt** to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard.*

*Matthew 2:13 - Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and **flee to Egypt**, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him."*

BOTH WERE FALSELY ACCUSED

Genesis 39:14, 15 – [Potiphar's wife] called to the men of her household and said to them, "See, he has brought among us a Hebrew to laugh at us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice. And as soon as he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried out, he left his garment beside me and fled and got out of the house."

*Matthew 26:59 - Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking **false testimony** against Jesus that they might put him to death...*

BOTH WERE UNJUSTLY PUNISHED

*Genesis 39:20 – And Joseph's master took him and **put him into the prison**, the place where the king's prisoners were confined, and he was there in prison.*

*1 Peter 3:18 - For **Christ also suffered** once for sins, **the righteous for the unrighteous**, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit,*

BOTH FORGAVE THEIR PERSECUTORS

*Genesis 50:21 – "So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and **spoke kindly to them**.*

*Luke 23:33, 34 - And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. And Jesus said, "**Father, forgive them**, for they know not what they do."*

BOTH SAW GOOD COME OUT OF EVIL

*Genesis 50:20 - As for you, you meant evil against me, but **God meant it for good**, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.*

*Acts 4:27, 28 - ...for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do **whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place**.*

BOTH SERVED AS A SAVIOR

*Genesis 47:25 - And [the Egyptians] said, "**You have saved our lives**; may it please my lord, we will be servants to Pharaoh."*

*Acts 13:22, 23 – [God] raised up David to be their king, of whom he testified and said, 'I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will.' Of this man's offspring God has brought to Israel **a Savior, Jesus**, as he promised.*

As you can see, many parallels can be drawn between Joseph and Jesus. And this is a great reminder to end our study with – as important as looking to other people for inspiring lives worthy of following, the person of Jesus himself is the ultimate example for us to know and emulate.

The Scriptures are the only reliable source we have to get to know him, the way he thinks, and what he expects of us. You will hear many varied ideas from those around you about who Jesus is, but let me encourage you to let the Bible speak for itself and to become acquainted with Christ through the objective, true words God revealed about himself. Any other idea, philosophy, or teaching should be held up beside that standard.

BIBLE STUDY

Legislators and Staff (During Session)
Thursdays, 8:00 a.m.
Room 165, House Office Building