

Joseph a Type of Christ 5

We are continuing with our look at the way in which Joseph in the book of Genesis is a shadow or a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, the life of Joseph embodies parallels with the life of the Lord Jesus Christ and is an example of the way in which the scriptures are primarily concerned with Jesus

So far we have seen that:-

1 Joseph was a longed for son in the same way that Jesus was the longed for son of God

Matt 13:17

17 For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous men **longed to see** what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

(NIV)

2 Joseph was born to be a saviour of his people so Jesus was born to be the saviour of the world and especially of those who would believe (I Tim 4:10)

3 Joseph was **righteous**, he was his **father's favourite son** and that favouritism caused him to be **envied** by his brothers.

In the same way we saw that the Lord Jesus was a person who:

a loved righteousness and hated wickedness Heb 1:8-9

b was God the Father's Beloved Son and

c was envied by the Jewish leadership of His time.

4 Joseph was sold for silver to a foreign nation. The coat of Joseph carrying the blood of a slain goat was presented to Joseph's father Jacob just as the high priest carried the blood of a slain goat and presented that blood before God in the OT tabernacle. In the same way, Jesus was sold for silver, entered heaven and presented his

own blood before the Father. Jesus came to bear the sin of the world by the sacrifice of himself.

5 Both Joseph and Jesus came up against rejection and powerful temptations in their lives on earth and we will too and finally we saw how Joseph was falsely accused and punished for something he didn't do. In Joseph's case he was falsely accused and put in prison and in the case of Jesus he was falsely accused, killed and put in a grave.

Now we look finally at three episodes in the life of Joseph and see how they foreshadow the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 We look first at what happened to Joseph while he was in prison and what happened to Jesus while His body was in the grave.

2 We see next that when Joseph had been taken from prison and exalted he had a heart to forgive his enemies just like exalted Lord Jesus does now and

3 We see that just as Joseph had suffered so that the lives of thousands would be saved so Jesus suffered so that all who call on him will be saved.

1 Joseph in Prison

Gen 39:20 Joseph's master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined.

We read in Gen 39:21-23

But while Joseph was there in the prison, the LORD was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favour in the eyes of the prison warder. So the warder put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there. The warder paid no attention to anything under

Joseph's care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did. (NIV)

He was imprisoned for doing no wrong. It was an early shadow of what was said to Jesus by the two thieves as He hung on the cross.

Luke 23:41(NIV)

We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong."

Joseph had a God give ability to rise above his circumstances. Even in prison, just like in Potiphar's house, he was put in charge of prison affairs and he was successful in what he did.

One day Pharaoh king of Egypt became angry with his chief cup bearer and his chief baker and they were put in the prison with Joseph. You can read the story for yourselves. One night they had dreams. Because of his position, Joseph had access to them and interpreted their dreams. **As a result, one was set free while the other was not just as Joseph had said.**

I believe that the time Joseph spent in prison immediately before he was taken out and exalted to sit at the right hand of Pharaoh can be compared to the time that the Lord Jesus spent in the grave before he rose from the dead and ascended to sit at the right hand of the Father in Heaven.

The Lord Jesus in the Grave.

Anyone who has spent time in the Anglican church will be familiar with this:-

Apostles Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,

suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; **he descended into hell;** [he descended to the dead.] the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. AMEN.

Legend has it that the Apostles wrote this creed on the tenth day after Christ's ascension into heaven

Now what does "He descended into hell" mean. Well, it is based at least on the following scriptures.

Acts 2:23-27(RSV) Peter speaking on the day of Pentecost

23 this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

24 But God raised him up, having loosed the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.

25 For David says concerning him, 'I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken;

26 therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover my flesh will dwell in hope.

27 For thou wilt not abandon my soul to Hades, nor let thy Holy One see corruption.

Hades is sometimes translated Hell. It's place where spirits of people are imprisoned

And again in 1 Pet 3:18-20

18 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit,

19 through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison

20 who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water,

(NIV)

Now we have here an issue which is controversial amongst Bible scholars. What did Peter mean by saying that Jesus preached to spirits in prison. Did Jesus in His Spirit go to another place as His body lay in the grave? If so, where was it and what did He do there?

Paradise?

One thing is sure, the grave of Joseph of Arimathea wouldn't seem to be well described by the word "Paradise" but to the thief on the cross who asked Jesus to remember him, Jesus said this

Luke 23:43(NIV)

"I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."

So it seemed that Jesus and the dying thief went somewhere other than the grave of Joseph of Arimathea that day. According to Acts 2 which quotes Psalm 16 the soul of Jesus went to a place called Hades, a place where spirits are imprisoned, and according to Peter Jesus preached to spirits there and the spirits were those who were disobedient at the time that Noah was building the ark. Now why those spirits in particular were singled out I don't know.

What we do know is that the place called Hades is a place having at least two compartments. That is explained well in the story of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16. One compartment is a place of torment which holds the spirits of those who have

been disobedient to God and the other compartment (paradise or Abraham's bosom), at least up to the time of the resurrection of Jesus held the spirits of those who had put their trust in God. They were held captive there unable to go into the presence of God in heaven because during their life on earth in Old Testament times, their sin had been covered by animal sacrifice which could not make them fully clean. At the death of Christ, whose blood cleanses from all sin, the door was open for them to live in the presence of God.

When Jesus rose from the dead, it says in Ephesians that He took captivity captive when he ascended (Eph 4:8-9) and I believe that He took to Heaven the spirits of those who had been held captive in paradise.

Ascension on Resurrection Day?

After his resurrection, Mary mistook Jesus for a gardener and when Jesus made Himself know she must have gone to take hold of Him and He said

John 20:17

17 Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

(NIV)

Some believe that between the time He said that to Mary and the time he appeared in the upper room to His disciples, Jesus returned to heaven taking with him the spirits of those released from the paradise compartment of Hades, leaving the other compartment still full of those who do not know Christ and who will be one day released for judgment. That compartment continues to fill with those who die these days and who do not know Christ.

If Jesus preached to spirits in prison who had been disobedient at the time of Noah, I don't know what he preached and Bible commentators are not at all certain.

One thing we do know is that before Jesus was exalted to sit at the right hand of the Father in Heaven, spirits in paradise were released to take their place in the presence of God while spirits in torment were not. In that respect we see the parallel with the life of Joseph in that before Joseph's promotion to sit at the right hand of Pharaoh, the chief cup-bearer was released from prison to take his place in the presence of Pharaoh while the chief baker was not.

The whole topic of Hades, the grave and what happens to the spirits of those who die is very interesting and is a study in its own right. We might look at it sometime in more detail.

Let's now move on and look at:-

2 Joseph Exalted

Despite Joseph's plea to the chief cupbearer to mention that he was wrongly imprisoned, the cupbearer forgot until one day Pharaoh had dreams that no one could interpret. I won't go into the dreams. Then the cupbearer remembered Joseph.

Joseph was whisked from prison, he interpreted the dreams and then we are allowed to see the record of a fascinating discussion in Pharaoh's palace centred on Joseph.

After interpreting the dreams in front of Pharaoh, this is what Joseph says:-

Gen 41:33-36

33 "And now let Pharaoh look for a discerning and wise man and put him in charge of the land of Egypt.

34 Let Pharaoh appoint commissioners over the land to take a fifth of the harvest of Egypt during the seven years of abundance.

35 They should collect all the food of these good years that are coming and store up the grain under the authority of Pharaoh, to be kept in the cities for food.

36 This food should be held in reserve for the country, to be used during the seven years of famine that will come upon Egypt, so that the country may not be ruined by the famine."

(NIV)

I can imagine Pharaoh saying "This is a good plan V 37. He just made s statement. He didn't ask for an answer.

Our minds work quick right? Already you can be certain that each of Pharaoh's officials were already thinking that this was the chance for promotion he'd been waiting for. Chief corn commissioner - what a position - with a fourteen year contract! I bet there's a company chariot too - just think of that. When we need to think fast we can do it at amazing speed. Then with one voice they came out with "We agree with Pharaoh. It's a good plan"

Joseph just watches this happening around him.

Gen 41:38(NIV)

38 So Pharaoh asked them, "Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God?"

Now he asks them a direct question and he waits for an answer. It's like saying at a wedding does anyone know of any just cause.... No one says anything but someone might want to say "I have because I wanted her"! Perhaps it was a rhetorical question and he didn't expect and answer like the men in the balcony "Would you prefer to be in darkness with the foolish virgins or in the light with the wise ones?"

In any event, the officials said nothing as they see the vision of promotion evaporating. Silence. No one said anything and so Pharaoh makes a decisions which as far as he is concerned is based solely on his own judgment but which, in fact, is based on the will of God who has acted supernaturally on his mind.

39 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has made all this known to you, there is no-one so discerning and wise as you.

40 You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders. Only with respect to the throne will I be greater than you."

That was probably not a decision which the officials found favourable as this man had come up from prison and had passed right over them and right from the start Joseph could have had enemies.

In Genesis 49:23 when Jacob is dying and making pronouncements over his sons on of the things he says of Joseph is:-

Gen 49:22-23

22 "Joseph is a fruitful vine, a fruitful vine near a spring, whose branches climb over a wall. 23 With bitterness archers attacked him; they shot at him with hostility.

(NIV)

The "archers" denote the adversaries of Joseph-- his brothers, as well as Potiphar and his wife [and possibly even those in the court who were envious of his promotion] and the arrows shot at him were the envy, revenge, temptation and ingratitude of his various opponents.

(from Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary – MA's added in square brackets)

Perhaps that's why Pharaoh needed to go to such great lengths after that to show that Joseph really was his choice and that was it.

Pharaoh goes on.....

41 So Pharaoh said to Joseph, "**I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt."**

42 Then Pharaoh took **his** signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph's finger.

He dressed [Joseph] him in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck.

43 **He** had him ride in a chariot as his second-in-command, and men shouted before him, "Make way!" Thus he put him in charge of the whole land of Egypt.

44 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "**I am Pharaoh**, but without your word no-one will lift hand or foot in all Egypt." Gen 41:39-44(NIV)

By his action, Pharaoh left noone in doubt that Joseph was now in charge of Egypt next to him.

Jesus Exalted

This is what we read in Ephesians Eph 1:20-23 (NIV) about the Lord Jesus:-

The Father raised Christ [which he exerted in Christ when he raised him] from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,

21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,

23 which is his body, the fulness of him who fills everything in every way.

As Joseph rose from a position of being humbled in an Egyptian jail so Jesus rose from the humiliation of death on the cross.

Then in Phil 2:9-11 (NIV)

9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,

10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Joseph was promoted to the highest position a man could reach – right next to Pharaoh. The one who had been rejected was now made a chief in the land. The stone that the builders rejected, the same had become the chief cornerstone and now he was exalted above all his enemies – not just those who might have been in Pharaoh’s court. There was another one too.

Potiphar’s Wife

We don’t know how fast news travelled in those days but I bet Mrs Potiphar got to hear about it pretty quick. If Pharaoh believed it to be a good idea to promote Joseph to an exalted position she was one person who wasn’t sharing his sentiments. What a mess she was in.

It would take just one word from Joseph - that’s all. Every knock at the door for the next few weeks, any marching of feet in the streets at night, the sight of soldiers walking near the house. Were they coming for her? The chief cupbearer forgot about Joseph for two years. She may well have done that too but right now, the past was

coming back to haunt her. The chickens had come home to roost. She had every reason to fear too. Joseph could now trample her beneath his feet. His enemies could now be his footstool and she knew she was one of them.

Do you think Joseph forgot her? Not a chance. He was human. Humans never forget ill treatment. Would you? Here was the very opportunity to put things right. “Now, she can pay for the years I spent rotting in that jail.” But he held back. He could have told Pharaoh what had really happened and he could have had Potiphar and his wife dragged in front of him and punished. She knew it and she knew there was nothing she could do. The past couldn’t be changed no matter how many times she re-lived it and wished it hadn’t happened.

What compensation can you give to someone who sits at the right hand of the king? “I know, I could write a letter, Dear Joseph how are you, I am alright....!” She could only hope that Joseph would not take revenge on her.

Of course, we don’t read of Joseph doing anything of the sort even though he could have done. **Joseph was a remarkable man and, just like the Lord Jesus had within him the divine power to walk in a lifestyle of forgiveness even towards those who badly treated him.** Somehow he was able to see that even in the case of Potiphar’s wife, God had intended it for good.

He might even have felt like demanding recompense from the cup bearer who forgot Joseph and effectively added two more years to his stay in prison but, again, we read of no such action being taken. Even Joseph could now see that it would have been too soon if he had been released two years earlier.

Right now the Lord, at the right hand of the Father, has many enemies, not least those who persecute the church and there are still plenty of them. The Lord Jesus could

squash all his enemies now. But now is a time when the Lord will forgive even His enemies if that's what they want. After all he forgave us.

Rom 5:9-10

9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!

10 **For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!**

(NIV)

Although many have no fear of the Lord right now, there is every reason to fear because if they will not accept the forgiveness that only Jesus can give there will be a price to pay for one day. God will put **all his enemies** under the feet of Jesus. I want to be among those who the Lord Jesus calls his friends because Hebrews 10:27 speaks of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.

Mention about John at Whitley who when doing door to door came across a man who stood in his garden and said "If there's a God, strike me dead now". Wages are paid at the end of the week. He was still waiting for his but they will come, if they haven't come already.

3 Joseph gives life to nations

Joseph stored grain during the seven years of plenty and then came the famine.

Gen 41:55-57

55 **When all Egypt began to feel the famine, the people cried to Pharaoh for food. Then Pharaoh told all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph and do what he tells you."**

56 When the famine had spread over the whole country, Joseph opened the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe throughout Egypt.

57 And all the countries came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe in all the world.

(NIV)

There was no-one else to go to. Joseph was the only one who could save them from starvation and it seems that anyone could come but I want to look at Joseph's brothers in particular as they were in God' chosen line. Joseph's action towards his hungry brothers is shadow of the Lord's action towards those who come to him hungry for God.

Those who want eternal life must come in humility and repentance to the Lord Jesus in just the same way as the brothers did when coming to Joseph. There are no special provisions for those who feel they are "good" people. Whether good or evil, everyone who comes to the Lord Jesus must come in humility and repentance either to repent of the evil they have done in life or to repent of the belief that the good things they have done in life made them special to God and worthy of eternal life. That is deception made perfect and it's the last sort of people who find it hardest to come to Jesus.

The brothers came with money to buy but Joseph didn't crave for their money, he gave them corn and gave their money back. They received it without payment.

That is just as it is with the Lord Jesus now.

This is what we read in Isa 55:1-21 "Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.

Eternal life and an everlasting relationship with God can't be bought with money – it's a free gift to those who will humble themselves and repent of sin.

There is also another principle at work here. **If we give to God He gives back to us. God is in debt to noone.** This is what is says in 2 Cor 9:6-10 (NIV)

6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.

7 Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

9 As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures for ever

10 Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.

Also in Luke 6:38 we read:-

38 Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

The giving that brings a return is giving done cheerfully. It covers giving money to meet needs, using skills and gifts for the benefit of others and the kingdom, sick visiting, feeding people and doing it cheerfully. Doing it for other is like doing it to Jesus and the measure we use in giving cheerfully will be the measure God uses to give to us in return.

Finally, the brothers who came to Joseph were invited to leave their home and come to live with Joseph, the person who had been their savior, in a place which had been set aside especially for them and they lived there for the rest of their lives.

In the same way, those who put their trust in Jesus, who are born again and who can say the same as the same as the Apostle Paul will one day go to be with Jesus in a place specially prepared for them. This is what Paul says in 2 Tim 4:7-8:-

7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

8 Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day-- and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing. (NIV)