

# JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

## Lesson 12: JOSEPH – the Father’s Favorite Son

Aim: To show how both Joseph and Jesus were loved by their fathers. They are both full of wisdom from a young age as demonstrated by Jacob giving Joseph a tunic of many colors, and God giving Jesus glory and honor.

Key Scriptures: Genesis 37:1-4; Matthew 3:17 & 17:1-5; Luke 2:46-52

In our previous lesson we saw how Jacob’s seeming deception of his father Isaac was really a type of Christ taking on the flesh of sinful man. When Jacob clothed himself in the animal skins and the firstborn son’s clothes, that was a picture of Jesus Christ coming to the earth in the appearance of a Man, in the likeness of sinful flesh, that He might condemn sin in the flesh by taking our sins upon Himself.

[2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:21](#) and [1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:22](#) revealed to us that Jesus **did not sin** when He became sin for us, so that ‘we might become the righteousness of God in Him’. As a result we concluded that Jacob **did not sin** when he ‘seemed to deceive’ his father in order to obtain the blessing reserved for the firstborn son who was to rule.

The rights of the firstborn were legitimately Jacob’s. His brother Esau had **sold them** to him, having desired to feed his flesh rather than exercising patience in order to receive the promise of the inheritance that awaited him. Jacob **did not steal** his brother’s inheritance; rather his brother **despised** the inheritance and sold it.

Despite his blindness and failure in the natural to recognize Jacob, we know from [Hebrews 11:20](#) *By faith* [to the saving of his soul] *Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come*. Those ‘things which were to come’ were already told to Rebekah, by God, before the twins were born. [Genesis 25:23](#) *And the LORD said to her: "Two nations are in your womb, Two peoples shall be*

*separated from your body; One people shall be stronger than the other, And the older shall serve the younger."*

A different facet of the future fulfillment of the prophecy can be seen in **Genesis chapter 32:**

*26 And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!"*

*27 So He said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob."*

*28 And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed."*

**Q:** How do these verses reveal, as yet unfulfilled, details concerning Jacob, and what is the timeframe?

**A:**

Today we will begin a series of 5 lessons on: JOSEPH, a Type of Christ, and this lesson is entitled: **"The Father's Favorite Son"**. In the lesson we shall see how Joseph was Jacob's favorite of all his 12 sons. We shall compare that with Jesus who is God the Father's Beloved Son, just one example of why Joseph is a TYPE of Jesus Christ.

The Genesis chapters on Joseph are replete with details that Jesus could have used to show the 2 disciples on the road to Emmaus things concerning Himself, and to explain **why** He had to suffer before entering into His Glory. Many aspects of Joseph's life point to the life of Jesus Christ. In this way once again, we can learn a lot about Christ from the Old Testament (Lk.24:24-27).

As we begin let's read today's key Scriptures.

**Genesis 37:1** Now Jacob dwelt in the land where his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan.

2 This is the history of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brothers. And the lad was with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to his father.

3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age. Also he made him a tunic of many colors.

4 But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him.

Did you notice God called Jacob by a different name in **v.3**? As we have just noted in Genesis 32:28, God changed his name from Jacob to Israel.

(Israel = 'He will rule as God')

**Q:** What have you observed from these verses:

In **v.2** it says that Joseph was '*seventeen years old*' and in **v.3** it says that '*Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age*'.

It literally means ‘a wise son with wisdom beyond his years’. It is like saying, Joseph ‘had an old head on young shoulders’ because of his wisdom. We shall see that demonstrated in a future lesson when Joseph interprets Pharaoh’s dreams concerning the 7 years of plenty followed by 7 years of famine.

It is because of Joseph’s wisdom that Israel/Jacob loved him more than the other sons. Joseph was also the firstborn son of Rachel, Jacob’s favorite wife

Our lesson title is **Joseph, the Father’s Favorite Son**. Let’s read verses 3 & 4 again, and underline what Jacob did to demonstrate that favoritism:

**Gen.37:3** Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age. Also he made him a tunic of many colors.

4 But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him.

### **Jesus and His Father**

Where can we see God the Father’s great love for His Son Jesus Christ demonstrated?

Let’s go to the New Testament (NT) to read what God said from heaven concerning His great love for His Son, Jesus. This He did on more than one occasion.

**Matthew 3:16** *When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him.*

*17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*

What is the context?

And then again in chapter 17:

*17:1 Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves;*

*2 and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.*

*5 While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"*

What is the context?

There is much we could talk about with these 2 instances of God the Father revealing that not only is Jesus the Son of God, but that He is beloved by Him. ‘Beloved’ means “dearly and well beloved.” It comes from the Greek root word **‘agape’** which is sacrificial love and love of the highest order.

*Did you know: The 1<sup>st</sup> mention of ‘love’ in the Bible is in Genesis 22:2 when God tells Abraham to take his son Isaac who **he loves** and offer him as a sacrifice?*

(Jesus also said that the Father loved Him in John 3:35; 5:20; & 10:17.)

**Q:** In [Matthew 17:2](#) Jesus was transfigured before the 3 disciples who were with Him. How exactly was Jesus changed?

**A:**

This transformation took place after 6 days when Jesus took Peter, James, and John up on a high mountain. A mountain in Scripture points to a Kingdom. This was a ‘high mountain’.

**Q:** So which Kingdom is being referenced, and why would Jesus have been transformed so that His face shone like the sun and His clothes became as white as light?

**A:**

**Q:** Where else in the NT is there a similar description of Jesus covered in glory in anticipation of His impending Kingdom?

**A:**

**Q:** How might these descriptions of Christ parallel Joseph being given a tunic by his father in Genesis 37:3?

**A:**

- Jesus's clothing shone as the brightest of light; **He was covered in glory** which pointed to rulership. *(See Revelation 1:12-16.)*
- Joseph's tunic was **a long garment with long sleeves down to the hand and with 'many breadths'**. This indicates that the tunic did not necessarily have many colors, but rather may have had many breadths, showing it to be a wide-flowing garment.
- Both garments demonstrate the **love and the honor** bestowed upon them **by their fathers** and pointed to future glory and rulership. *(See Psalm 104:1-2.)*
- At His crucifixion, lots were cast for Jesus's tunic rather than divide it up because it was woven in one piece, as has been prophesied. *(See Psalm 22:18 & John 19:23-24.)*

### **Son of His Old Age**

We can draw one final parallel between Jesus and Joseph based upon our verses from **Genesis 37:1-4**. Jacob loved Joseph because he was **the son of**

his old age, which we now know means that Joseph was ‘wise beyond his years’. Similarly, there is an account in the NT of Jesus demonstrating great wisdom and knowledge of the Scriptures beyond His years at the age of 12:

***Luke 2:46** Now so it was that after three days they found Him [Jesus] in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions.*

Observations:
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*47 And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.*

*48 So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously."*

*49 And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"*

*50 But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them.*

*51 Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart.*

*52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.*

### In Conclusion:

**Joseph** was Jacob’s favorite son and he loved him because he had wisdom beyond his years, and because he was the firstborn son of his favorite wife Rachel. As a result, Jacob gave Joseph a flowing garment, possibly of many colors, that represented the love and honor that his father had for him. This favoritism caused discord between Joseph and his brothers, as we shall see in subsequent lessons, such that they could not speak peaceably to him.

**Jesus** is the ‘only begotten Son of God’ (John 3:16), who is greatly beloved of His Father, who from a young age demonstrated great wisdom. Peter, James & John were eyewitnesses of Christ’s glory and majesty when He was transfigured before them, when His Father spoke from heaven: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!” As for Jesus’s brothers, the nation of Israel, they didn’t speak peaceably to Him either, and in fact went so far as to crucify Him.

Any final comments or observations?

Next lesson: Joseph Dreams of Rulership.

**Revelation 1:12** Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands,

13 and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.

14 His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire;

15 His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters;

16 He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.

Let’s pray.



