

# JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

## Lesson 14: JOSEPH Hated & Envied by His Brothers

Aim: To show how the treatment of Joseph by his brothers pictures the nation of Israel's treatment of their brother Jesus Christ. And how Cain killing Abel is another facet of the same picture.

Key Scriptures: Genesis 4:1-8; Genesis 37:12-36; John 5:16-18.

In our last lesson Joseph had 2 dreams, both of which pointed to his future role of rulership over his brothers. *(If you do not have good recall then re-read [Genesis 37:4-11](#))*

**Q:** What happened in Joseph's first dream?

**A:**

**Q:** What was the second dream about?

**A:**

**Q:** In what way is the 2<sup>nd</sup> dream similar to the 1<sup>st</sup> dream?

**A:**

**Q:** How did the brothers and his father respond to the dreams?

**A:**

The brothers' hatred of Joseph had begun before the dreams when they realized their father Jacob loved Joseph more than them. Jacob had given

Joseph a fine tunic of many colors and widths. Then after the second dream their hatred increased, and they became envious of him.

This is the third of a series of 5 lessons on: **Joseph, a Type of Jesus Christ.**

**Q:** If Joseph is a type of Jesus Christ, then who do the brothers picture?

**A:**

Let us look at some NT verses that demonstrate Jesus's brethren's hatred of Him.

In John chapter 5 Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath who had been lame 38 years. Jesus told the man: 'Arise, take up your bed and walk' and as he did so, he was healed.

Notes:
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***John 5:16** For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath.*

*17 But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working."*

*18 Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.*

**Q:** Why did the Jews persecute Jesus and seek to kill him?

**A:**

The hatred of the Jews towards Jesus, especially the religious leaders, was so strong that eventually they killed Him as you know. Although Joseph's brothers did not kill Joseph, we shall see that there are some remarkable similarities with what they did do with Joseph.

The main focus of this lesson is how the brothers' hatred and envy of Joseph is a type of the nation of Israel's hatred of their 'brother' Jesus Christ, which led to them crucifying Him. However, there is an earlier account in

Genesis of two brothers that resulted in one killing the other, which we studied in a previous lesson. And it is a foundational Type for the Nation of Israel killing their Messiah.

**Q:** Does anyone recall the names of the two brothers?

**A:**

Let's remind ourselves of this foundational type in **Genesis 4:1-8:**

*1 Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, "I have acquired a man from the LORD."*

*2 Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.*

*3 And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD.*

*4 Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering,*

*5 but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.*

*6 So the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?"*

*7 If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it."*

*8 Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.*

Notes:
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When the time came to bring an offering to the Lord both brothers brought from what they had produced. However, Abel's offering was respected by the Lord but Cain's was not. We learnt from **Hebrews 11:4** that Abel's offering was made 'by faith' and therefore respected.

God did not respect Cain's offering and therefore it must have been given apart from faith. So when both brothers were in the field together Cain rose up and killed Abel. In Scripture the field is often a type of 'the world'. (*Mt 13:38*)

*"The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one.)*

When Jesus was 'in the world', talking with His brother Israel, then Israel rose up just as Cain did, and killed their Brother and King, Jesus Christ.

Likewise Joseph's brothers' hatred and envy led them to commit a crime that parallels Christ's death, and burial in the tomb, but also his 'resurrection'. So let's read **Genesis 37:12-22** to see what they did:

Observations:
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**Genesis 37:12** *Then his brothers went to feed their father's flock in Shechem.*

*13 And Israel [Jacob] said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers feeding the flock in Shechem? Come, I will send you to them." So he said to him, "Here I am."*

*14 Then he said to him, "Please go and see if it is well with your brothers and well with the flocks, and bring back word to me." So he sent him out of the Valley of Hebron, and he went to Shechem.*

*15 Now a certain man found him, and there he was, wandering in the field. And the man asked him, saying, "What are you seeking?"*

*16 So he said, "I am seeking my brothers. Please tell me where they are feeding their flocks."*

*17 And the man said, "They have departed from here, for I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan.'" So Joseph went after his brothers and found them in Dothan.*

*18 Now when they saw him afar off, even before he came near them, they conspired against him to kill him.*

*19 Then they said to one another, "Look, this dreamer is coming!*

*20 "Come therefore, let us now kill him and cast him into some pit; and we shall say, 'Some wild beast has devoured him.' We shall see what will become of his dreams!"*

*21 But Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands, and said, "Let us not kill him."*

*22 And Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit which is in the wilderness, and do not lay a hand on him" -that he might deliver him out of their hands, and bring him back to his father.*

**Q:** What observations of the text did you make?

Joseph's father Jacob had sent him to check on his brothers and after wandering in the field at Shechem a man told him they had left there and gone to Dothan. **Dothan** means **the law** or **custom**, and in this we have yet another example of Joseph being a TYPE of Christ! When God the Father sent His Son Jesus Christ to the earth the first time, He found His brothers, the nation of Israel living under the Law (*Gal.4:4*). Wow! So, Joseph finding his brothers in Dothan is not an insignificant detail! Jesus said in:

*Matthew 5:17 "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.*

**Q:** Re-read Genesis 37:19-20. What did Joseph's brothers plan when they saw him coming from afar off?

**A:**

**Q:** What seems to be the cause or reason for their plans to deal with Joseph in this way?

**A:**

Reuben, the eldest of the brothers, had other ideas though of how to avoid killing him so that he might return him to his father. Let's read what happened next, and as you observe the text consider any cross references that relate to Israel's treatment of Christ:

*Genesis 37:23 So it came to pass, when Joseph had come to his brothers, that they stripped Joseph of his tunic, the tunic of many colors that was on him.*

*24 Then they took him and cast him into a pit. And the pit was empty; there was no water in it.*

<b>Observations &amp; Cross References:</b>
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*25 And they sat down to eat a meal. Then they lifted their eyes and looked, and there was a company of Ishmaelites, coming from Gilead with their camels, bearing spices, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry them down to Egypt.*

*26 So Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is there if we kill our brother and conceal his blood?"*

*27 "Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother and our flesh." And his brothers listened.*

*28 Then Midianite traders passed by; so the brothers pulled Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.*

**Q:** What did they do to Joseph and his tunic in vv.23 & 24?

**A:**

**Q:** What cross references did you find to link the events in these verses with Israel's treatment of Christ?

**A:**

In the Bible, **'the pit'** is often the same thing as the grave, and the place where the souls of those who have died go to be. We shall see that what Joseph's brother did was a picture, a type, of what happened to Jesus after He died when He was placed in the tomb.

In vv.26 & 27 Judah was also not too keen on killing his brother and realized that a profit was to be made in not doing so.

**Q:** What did the brothers decide to do instead?

**A:**

Let's read on to see how the brothers covered up what had happened to Joseph:

**Genesis 37: 31** *So they took Joseph's tunic, killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the tunic in the blood.*

*32 Then they sent the tunic of many colors, and they brought it to their father and said, "We have found this. Do you know whether it is your son's tunic or not?"*

*33 And he recognized it and said, "It is my son's tunic. A wild beast has devoured him. Without doubt Joseph is torn to pieces."*

*34 Then Jacob tore his clothes, put sackcloth on his waist, and mourned for his son many days.*

*35 And all his sons and all his daughters arose to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and he said, "For I shall go down into the grave to my son in mourning." Thus his father wept for him.*

*36 Now the Midianites had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard.*

The brothers' sinfulness reached a climax when they deceitfully implied that Joseph was dead and had been devoured by a wild beast. This was such a wicked thing they did both to Joseph, and then to Jacob. And all because of **the envy** in their hearts.

Jacob tore his clothes and refused to be comforted because he believed his favorite son had been attacked by a wild beast and was dead.

### **Death, Burial, and Resurrection.**

Unlike Jesus and Abel, Joseph didn't actually die, **but** the shed blood of a goat (v.31) was used to fake his death. (This also pictures a substitutionary death similar to the account of Isaac in lesson # 8 when a ram caught in a thicket died in his place.)

However, by putting Joseph in the pit (a picture of the place of death), and then pulling him out of the pit, we can see the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

**Q:** Which other OT characters have we studied that portrayed the resurrection of Jesus Christ?

**A:**

As we continue to study through the OT looking for evidence of Christ it really becomes quite obvious how Scripture continues to repeat itself over and over again through various types. If you have not seen that previously I pray you are beginning to have your spiritual eyes awakened to the repetition God has put in His Word.

As we wrap this lesson up let's review the chart showing some of the parallels or similarities between what happened with Joseph and what happened to Jesus.

<b>JOSEPH</b>	<b>JESUS</b>
Stripped of his tunic of many colors and widths.	Stripped of His clothes and the soldiers cast lots for His tunic.
Cast into a pit in the wilderness with no water. 'Pit' in the OT often refers to the place of the dead (e.g. Num.16:33) and so it is as if Joseph died and was buried.	Following His crucifixion Jesus was buried in a new unused empty tomb (Mat.27:59-60).
Sold into slavery for 20 shekels of silver.	Betrayed into His enemies' hands for 30 pieces of silver.
Following Joseph's 'resurrection' from the Pit he was taken to a far country – Egypt.	Following Jesus's resurrection He ascended to the heavens – a far country (Lk.24:51; Mat.21:33-39).

In our next lesson Joseph, the Dreamer, becomes the Dream Interpreter.