



## *Fulfilment of a Dream*

### **WEEK SIX – JOSEPH’S IMPORTANCE IN SCRIPTURE**

The meaning of the name Joseph is: **GOD ADDS** and that sums up his life.

The Old Testament uses metaphors, symbols or characters which point to Jesus and the plan God has for our salvation. These are called *Types of Christ*, foreshadows, or forerunners of Jesus and can often better help us understand scripture. Moses was one of these because of how he led and delivered the Children of Israel out of Egypt (often typifying the world), through the wilderness to the Promised Land. Likewise, Joshua, who completed the task that Moses was unable to complete.

What follows are examples of how Joseph’s life resembles the life of Jesus.

#### **GREATLY LOVED BY HIS FATHER** Genesis 37:3

Jacob loved Joseph so much that he gave him a special coat – probably expensive – as an expression of that love.

*Matthew 3:17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying “This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased”.* This was the occasion of the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist.

*Mark 9:7 “This is my beloved son. Hear him!”* God spoke these words when Jesus was transfigured before Peter, James, and John.

*John 3:16 “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life”*

To be beloved is to be the most precious, the most special, and yet God was willing to send his beloved son to die for our sins that we might have eternal life.

*1 John 4:10 “This is real love--not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.”*

Don’t ever doubt God’s love for you. We can never earn that love, it is freely given to us but at great cost to God and his son, Jesus.

#### **REJECTED BY HIS BROTHERS** Genesis 37:4

In modern parlance we would say Joseph’s brothers couldn’t stand him at any cost. Such was their hatred that they were willing to kill him and would have done so, had not Reuben intervened. He was also sold, just like Jesus.

For me, one of the most beautiful passages foretelling the death of Jesus is Isaiah 6. Verses 3-6 which say:

*“He was despised and rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care. Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God’s paths to follow our own. Yet the LORD laid on him the sins of us all.”*

Read those verses several times and ask God to make real to you the things Jesus suffered on our behalf. The world rejected Jesus, let us accept him with an increased awareness of all he has done.

### **UNJUSTLY ACCUSED AND PUNISHED** Genesis 39:20

It is hard to be accused of something you haven’t done and even more so if punishment follows. In verse 21 of chapter 39, it says that the Lord was with Joseph and gave him favour with the keeper of the prison.

Joseph didn’t rant and rave about his unjust situation but left it in the hands of God. A lesson we all need to learn when things are difficult in our lives.

2 Corinthians 5:21 *“For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.”*

Jesus is described as *the perfect Lamb of God*, sinless but nevertheless sacrificed in order that we might have eternal life.

### **SUFFERED** Genesis 40:15 and 23

Joseph suffered imprisonment but he also suffered because someone forgot to keep his promise. Pharaoh’s butler said he would mention Joseph’s situation but then promptly forgot all about him.

When studying the Creed, we looked at that phrase: *suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried ...*” Jesus suffered because of the actions of the religious leaders and at hands of the Roman soldiers. The great truth is that Jesus knew what our salvation was going to cost him but willingly submitted himself to his father’s will. Philippians 2:8 says: *“And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient, even the death of the cross.”*

Many Christians throughout the world suffer for their faith. We may suffer difficulties in our lives but in Romans 8:18 Paul says: *“Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later.”*

## **EXALTED TO A HIGH POSITION** Genesis 41:37-44

Joseph answered only to Pharaoh. He was the second most powerful man in the land. Despite all that his brothers, and Potiphar's wife, had done to him Joseph was vindicated by God. Remember those words: *"You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good"*. Joseph was able to save the physical lives of the Egyptians and his whole family because he had been exalted by Pharaoh. Of Jesus, the Bible says:

Philippians 2:9-11 *"Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honour and gave him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."*

Jesus is sometimes referred to as our HEAVENLY JOSEPH, and we can understand why. Those who crucified Jesus meant it for evil, but it was part of God's divine plan to enable us to become children of the living God.

Have you committed your life to Jesus, promising to love and serve him, and in doing so, serve others? Pray asking Jesus to become the Lord of your life. He gave everything for us so don't reject him, accept him today.

**Prayer: Jesus, in the realisation of all that you have done for us help me to make you my Saviour, my King and my Lord.**

