

# Joseph's Dream

Genesis 37:1-11

By Scott Huckaby

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## Does history repeat itself? And if so, why?

Ecclesiastes 1:9 – *That which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.*

Yes, it does... people make the same mistakes failing to learn the lessons of history thinking they are smarter than all who have gone before them.

## What is a prophetic type?

It is where something that happens in history parallels something that happens in the future. They help us learn about God because He works in consistent patterns.

## How are prophetic types similar to parables?

- As a parable requires spiritual discernment to understand them, a prophetic type requires spiritual discernment to recognize them.
- As parables illustrate only one principal point, so too does a prophetic type represent only one key point.
  - ...so, we need to be careful not to read too much into both parables and prophetic types despite the temptation.
  - ...sometimes there are serendipitous secondary similarities that reinforce the prophetic type but this doesn't mean they will always be there.

The story of Joseph is full of prophetic types with Joseph mostly as a type of Christ shedding light on Him, both His first and second advent.

Inspiration for this study series came from the December 6, 2020 Prophecy update from J.D. Farag.

I also found some relevant insight from a website called "The Interactive Bible," [www.bible.ca](http://www.bible.ca).

## Genesis 37:1-4, The Favorite Son of Jacob

*Now Jacob dwelt in the land where his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. <sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>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. <sup>4</sup>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.*

## v1 – Where did Jacob live?

In the land of Canaan where his father Isaac as a stranger. The future land of Israel after the time of Moses.

## v2 – What do we know of Joseph's family?

His Father Joseph had four wives: Leah had 6 sons, Rachael had 2 sons (Joseph & Benjamin), Bilhah (Rachael's maidservant) had 2 sons, Zilpah (Leah's maidservant) had 2 sons... total of 12.

## What do we learn of Joseph from verse 2?

He was 17, was a shepherd, he reported to his dad about his brothers.

## What is the significance of Joseph being a shepherd?

John 10:11 – *I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.*

As Joseph was a shepherd, so was Jesus [1]

## How is Jesus like a shepherd?

He protects us (the sheep), He has a relationship with us, and He gives His life for us.

## What is the significance of Joseph reporting on his brothers to his dad?

As Joseph spoke truth in exposing sinful behavior of others knowing he would be hated and ostracized, so too did Jesus for exposing the hypocrisy of Jewish religious leaders [2]:

Matthew 15:12 – *Then the disciples came and said to Him, "Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this statement?"*

Luke 20:19 – *The scribes and the chief priests tried to lay hands on Him that very hour, and they feared the people; for they understood that He spoke this parable against them.*

### **v3 – What do we learn of Joseph from this verse?**

Joseph was Jacob's favorite (as the first born of his favorite wife), he was the son of his old age, Jacob gave Joseph a special tunic of many colors.

### **What is the significance of Joseph being loved by his wealthy father?**

As Joseph was the beloved of his wealthy father, so was Jesus... there is no one more wealthy than God the Father! [3]:

Matthew 3:17 – *and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased*

### **What is the significance of Joseph being the favorite of his father?**

As Joseph was exalted by his father above his brethren, so was Jesus [4]:

Hebrews 1:9 – *You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions.*

This was quoting Psalm 45:6-7... the companions were others God sent, the prophets and apostles.

### **What is the significance of Joseph being born when Jacob was old?**

Joseph had a miraculous birth since Jacob was 74 years old and Rachel had been barren; Mary was a virgin [5]:

Matthew 1:18 – *Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit*

### **v4 – Why did Joseph's brothers hate him?**

They were jealous because they knew their father loved Joseph more than them. This explains antisemitism... Gentiles don't like the idea that Israel is God's special people. And Satan fans the flames of jealousy thinking he can thwart the plans of God by eliminating God's people.

### **What is the significance of Joseph's brothers hating him?**

As Joseph was rejected by his brothers, so was Jesus [6]:

John 1:11 – *He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.*

### **Who is "His own"?**

This is essentially a double entendre... both Israel and humanity in general.

Matthew 7:14 – *narrow is the gate and confined is the way which leads to life and there are few who find it.*

### **What is the significance of Joseph's brothers not speaking peaceably to him?**

As Joseph suffered as a servant, so too was Jesus the suffering servant [7]:

Isaiah 53:3 – *He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.*

This is a classic Suffering Servant passage along with Psalm 22 which described the crucifixion of the Messiah 500 years before the Persians even invented crucifixion as a method of execution. Jewish sages dealt with the Suffering Servant passages by rationalizing there must be two different Messiahs totally missing the idea that there was one Messiah who would come twice.

### **Genesis 37:5-11, Joseph Dreams of Greatness**

<sup>5</sup> Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers; and they hated him even more. <sup>6</sup> So he said to them, "Please hear this dream which I have dreamed: <sup>7</sup> There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf." <sup>8</sup> And his brothers said to him, "Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words. <sup>9</sup> Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, "Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me." <sup>10</sup> So he told it to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?" <sup>11</sup> And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

### **Of what does the dream of the sun, moon and stars remind us?**

Revelation 12:1 – *Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars.*

The passage goes on to explain that the woman would bear a Child who would rule with a rod of iron, an obvious reference to the Messiah. Thus, the woman has to be Israel, not the church as some have incorrectly interpreted this passage.

**v5 – What is the significance of Joseph’s brothers hating him for telling them his dream?**

As Joseph was hated for speaking the truth and prophesying, so was Jesus [8]:

John 8:40 – *But as it is, you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God; this Abraham did not do.*

John 7:7 – *The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil.*

John 3:32 – *What He has seen and heard, of that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony.*

**v6-7 – What is the significance of Joseph being likened to a sheaf of wheat?**

As Joseph was likened to a sheaf of wheat, the wave sheaf pointed to the sacrifice of Christ [9]:

Leviticus 23:11-12 – *He shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. And you shall offer on that day, when you wave the sheaf, a male lamb of the first year, without blemish, as a burnt offering to the Lord.*

The wave sheaf was part of the ritual observing the Feast of Firstfruits which was fulfilled by Jesus in His resurrection which happened on Sunday, the day after the Sabbath. Jesus was the firstfruits of the resurrection and He provided what we need for life eternal by making it possible for our sins to be forgiven. That explains why He is the Bread of Life...

John 6:35 – *I am the Bread of Life.*

**What is the significance of Joseph’s destiny as foretold in his dream?**

As Joseph was destined to be king over Israel, so is Jesus [10]:

John 18:37 – *Pilate therefore said to Him, “Are You a king then?” Jesus answered, “You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world*

**How is Jesus a king?**

Jesus is God, the King of kings. He is now King over the church; He will be King over Israel and the whole world when He returns.

**v8 – What is the significance of Joseph being hated even more for speaking of his dream?**

As Joseph was hated for telling of his future as king, so was Jesus [11]:

Luke 19:14 – *But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We will not have this man to reign over us.’ (Parable of the Minas)*

People don’t want a spiritual king ruling over them. This brings to mind:

Psalm 2:1-3 – *Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, “Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us.”*

**Why is it that totalitarian government cannot tolerate biblical Christianity?**

They insist on unity which means they have to eliminate any competition for how people think... no dissenting opinions can be tolerated. Thus, the freedom we have in Christ has to be squelched.

**What is the significance of Joseph’s brothers hating him for only his dream and words?**

As Joseph was hated by his brothers without a cause, so was Jesus [12]:

John 15:25 – *But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, ‘They hated Me without a cause.’*

This quoted the prophecy in Psalm 35:19, 69:4, and 109:3.

**What is the significance of the hatred of Joseph’s brothers growing more and more with time?**

As the hatred by Joseph brothers for him grew progressively, so too did it for Jesus [13]:

John 6:66-67 – *From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. Then Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you also want to go away?”*

The context of this is a “hard saying” by Jesus:

John 6:54 – *Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.*

**What was Jesus talking about in this “hard saying”?**

This was looking forward to Him instituting the Lord’s Supper where His followers would remember His sacrifice which paid for our sin debt.

**v9-11 – What is the significance of Joseph being rebuked by his parent?**

As Joseph was rebuked by his father, so was Jesus rebuked by his mother [14] (Jesus found “hiding out” in the Temple):

*Luke 2:48 – 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.”*

**What is the significance of Israel bowing down to Joseph?**

As all Israel will bow to Joseph, they too will bow to Jesus [15]:

*Romans 11:26 – And so all Israel will be saved*

**What is the significance of Joseph’s brothers envying him?**

As Joseph was persecuted because of envy, so was Jesus [16]:

*Matthew 27:18 – For he knew that because of envy they had handed Him over.*

*Mark 15:10 – For he was aware that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy.*

**Why were the Jewish religious leaders so envious of Jesus?**

They did not want to yield their power over people to any other who did not “earn” their position of religious leader as they had.

**What is the significance of Joseph’s parents being perplexed by his second dream?**

As Joseph’s dad pondered the prospect of his son becoming king, so did Mary [17]:

*Luke 2:19 – But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart.*