

## Old Testament types of the Lord The rejection of Joseph

*[Please note: sections in blue type are not broadcast on every radio station.  
King James Version of the Scriptures used unless otherwise stated.]*

### Introduction

Today we begin a new series of talks entitled, Old Testament types of the Lord. As usual, in my talks, I will be reading and quoting from the Authorised Version of the Bible, sometimes called the King James Version, and these references will be listed in the transcript. Our website is [www.truthfortoday.org.uk](http://www.truthfortoday.org.uk). Please feel free to download any of our talks to listen to, or print them off to read, and if you have enjoyed any of our broadcasts, tell your Christian friends about us, so that they can benefit from them too.

I think I can be pretty certain that everyone listening to this programme knows that the Bible is divided into two testaments, the Old and the New, but perhaps all are not familiar with the term, 'type'. I was brought up to understand types and typical teaching from the Old Testament, and it is really a wonderful eye opener into the Scriptures of truth. A type can be an Old Testament someone or something, which has a greater or fuller meaning to the Christian. Perhaps one of the earliest types (or pictures) is when Adam was put into a deep sleep, and awoke to find Eve, his wife next to him. To the Christian, this could be viewed as Christ's death and resurrection, from which His bride, the church, was brought into existence. I was taught, "The New is in the Old contained, the Old is in the New explained." Put simply, with the light of the New Testament teaching and revelations, things that were at best obscure in the Old Testament, have a clearer meaning for us today.

The great teacher Himself, our Lord Jesus Christ, spoke of Old Testament people and instances and applied them as types of Himself. He spoke of Moses lifting up the serpent of bronze in relation to Him being lifted up on the cross, and of Jonah being three days and three nights in the whale's belly, in relation to His death and resurrection (see John 3:14, Matthew 12:40). What a revelation it must have been for those two weary disciples on their way home to Emmaus when,

"Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he [the risen Lord] expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (see Luke 24:27).

The writer of the Hebrew epistle also used this technique widely as he contrasts the Old Testament sacrifices and ordinances with our present Christian blessings. He writes of the Old Testament priesthood and system of worship as "the example and shadow of heavenly things" (see Hebrews 8:5) and shows how these types or pictures have a greater anti-type or meaning for us in the Christian era.

However, and I feel I must say this, we do need to be careful. I suppose over the years I have become just a little more questioning about what is or what is not a type. We certainly need to exercise our spiritual discretion on this subject. I think, like the Bereans, we need to 'search' the

Scriptures to see if these things are so, and to 'study' as the apostle Paul encouraged Timothy, so he would be able to rightly divide the word of truth. We won't find a perfect type of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is unique! I recall an old man speaking of Him as, "the impeccable Jesus". We can certainly take a typical teaching too far and become fanciful in our interpretation of Scripture. I recall a preacher who when he spoke publicly often prefaced what he suggested by saying, "could it be that ...". I think this is wise when we come to typical teaching, not to be dogmatic, but to exercise our spiritual discretion when we speak and when we hear.

Our subject today is the rejection of Joseph as a type of Christ's rejection. Next week, the subject will again be Joseph, but looking at his glory as a type of the glory of Christ. I feel sure that the Lord must have spoken to the Emmaus disciples about Joseph. If we know the story of Joseph from beginning to end, we will know that there was suffering before glory. In Luke ch. 24, the Lord's words concerning Himself are, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (v.26) For me, Joseph is undoubtedly a type of Christ, even although this is not explicitly said in the Bible. I trust we shall see over these two talks, of his rejection and of his glory, just how much the life of Joseph typifies the life of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The life of Joseph as a type of Christ is such a full picture that sometimes I fear that it is spoken of as an almost perfect type. But there is no such type. All types fall short of the great anti-type, the Lord Jesus Christ. For example, although I'm sure he must have, we do not read of Joseph praying. Contrast this with the Lord Jesus, and the multiple times we read of Him praying to His Father. Also, I think Joseph was perhaps more than a little proud of his position in the family and in his father's affection, and perhaps making known his dreams of his superiority over them to his brothers was an unwise thing to do. Contrast his actions with those of Mary, the Lord's mother, who after listening to what the shepherds said, "kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart" (Luke 2:19). I'm sure there would have been many occasions, especially during the years of the Lord's public ministry, when she could have made known what the shepherds had said, concerning the Saviour "which is Christ the Lord", but she wisely kept these things in her heart.

I suggest that apart from viewing Joseph as a type of Christ, there are practical lessons to be learnt as well from his life. The first is his relationship with his father, Jacob or Israel, as God has changed his name from "Jacob, a supplanter" to "Israel, a prince with God." Joseph's grandmother, Rebekah, had a favourite son, who was Jacob, Joseph's father. Rebekah had conspired with Jacob to deceive her husband, Isaac, so that Jacob would be blessed instead of his brother, Esau. This naturally caused a family feud and enmity between brothers. As we know, behaviour experienced in life often is repeated and years later, Israel, a prince with God, would repeat this behaviour in his own family. Jacob had a favourite wife, and Joseph was the eldest son to his favourite wife. This we read,

"Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours" (see Genesis 37:3).

Let us just pause there for a moment. It is easy to read of Israel's love for Joseph and think of God the Father's love for His Son, Jesus, but let us consider the perfection of the Father's love, in contrast with the partial love of Jacob. It is interesting to note, in passing, that we do not read of any favouritism shown to Jesus by His earthly father, Joseph. Of course we know that Joseph was not Jesus' natural father, as Mary was a virgin when she conceived, but Joseph and Mary would go on to have their own children, sons and daughters, half-brothers and half-sisters of Jesus. We do not read of any undue favouritism shown to the Lord, or any resentment in the family because of who He was. On the contrary, as we read,

"And he [Jesus] went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (see Luke 2:51,52).

But the great practical lesson from the life of Joseph is the morally upright way he lived his life. We don't read of any of Joseph's sins. Of course, he was not perfect, as the Scripture is very clear, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (see Romans 3:23). That is all, of course, except the 'true' Joseph, the Lord Jesus Christ.

How carefully the Scriptures guard the sinless perfection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul wrote, He "knew no sin", the apostle Peter wrote, He "did no sin", and the apostle John wrote, "in Him is no sin" (see 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:22; 1 John 2:5). How remarkable that threefold testimony is to the sinlessness of the blessed man, Jesus.

But Joseph was a moral man, and a great example for us all. We do not read of him berating his brothers as they treated him so badly: conspiring against him, stripping him and throwing him into a pit, before eventually selling him to slave traders. What an example for us, but we have the greater example of Christ, of whom Peter writes,

"Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (see 1 Peter 2:23).

But perhaps Joseph's greatest moral victory was when he resisted the opportunity to sin with the wife of Potiphar. He was a young man of seventeen, and this older woman tried her very best to seduce him, but he not only refused, he fled. I wonder, how we measure up to temptation. Do we play with it or do we act as Joseph did and recognising the danger, flee from it?

And so, while we could look at the life of Joseph and learn practical lessons, the subject of our talk is to see in him a picture of the rejection which Christ suffered. I want to suggest that we look together at this subject under two headings. Joseph was rejected by his brothers because of who he was, and he was rejected in Egypt (for the early part of his life) because of what he was. At the end of our talk, we will see in Christ, something which Joseph knew nothing about. The one who was "despised and rejected of men", was "forsaken" by God, because of what He was made.

### **Rejected because of who He was**

It is interesting to read of the brothers' hatred for Joseph. This was a jealous hatred, as they knew that Israel loved Joseph more than all his children. Joseph was singled out by his father and given the special coat, the coat of many colours, or the coat with sleeves as one translator puts it. Maybe the idea was that he didn't have to roll his sleeves up and work, as he was the special son? Whatever it meant, it certainly brought out the hatred of his brothers. But it was when Joseph told them of his dreams, which seemed to indicate his superiority over them, that they hated him even more.

When it comes to our blessed Lord, He is the Son of the Father's love in a unique and wonderful way. He is the "only begotten" and is without rival or comparison. We read in John's Gospel,

"The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand", and again, "For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth" (see John 3:35 & 5:20).

The Father's love for the Son is truly wonderful! How amazing then is the thought that the Father loves us with that very same love. Listen to the words of Jesus as He prepares His disciples for His departure out of the world. He says, "For the Father himself loveth you, because you have loved me" (see John 16:27). Well might John later exclaim, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God" (see 1 John 3:1).

The word John uses for 'sons' is really 'children'. It is true that we are sons of God, but John seems to make the distinction that we are children, and in his writings, he reserves the term 'son' for the Lord Jesus Christ.

How wonderful to know this divine love!

But as the Lord Jesus made Himself known in this world as the Son of God, He was rejected. We have already quoted from Isaiah's prophecy in relation to the one "despised and rejected of men." We read,

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (see John 1:11).

As we have already seen, the Old Testament spoke of Him, and the porter, John the Baptist, the last of the Old Testament prophets opened the door for "the good shepherd" (see John 10). But even those who taught the law, and knew the Scriptures, could not see the Messiah in the son of the carpenter from the lowly town of Nazareth.

### **Rejected because of what He was**

Joseph was an upright man, even as a teenager. Being a slave in a foreign land and different culture did not change him; he remained true to what he knew to be right. As a result, we read multiple times in the story that "the LORD was with Joseph." Potiphar's wife tried hard to seduce him. Day after day she tried, before finally when there was no-one else around, she pounced. But Joseph had the great realisation that to sin, was to sin against God. Had he complied with the woman's wishes, he would have sinned against his master, Potiphar, and his own body, but he knew that to sin was an offence against God. Good if we thought more about this today, in a society which increasingly tries, in so many ways, to seduce the Christian. Potiphar's wife complains to her husband and Joseph ends up in prison, where again, we read that, "the LORD was with him." He suffered rejection because of what he was, a moral man. However, I have often thought that if Potiphar had believed his wife's story then he would have had Joseph killed, and the fact that he did not, perhaps shows that he knew where the truth lay. However, maybe my thoughts are influenced by the fact that in the case of the 'true' Joseph, Pontius Pilate knew that he was sentencing an innocent man when he gave the order for Jesus to be crucified.

In His conversation with Nicodemus, Jesus said that,

"Men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil"  
(see John 3:19-20).

This is true for all mankind including those who are cultured or religious. The Lord Jesus, as "the Light of the world", was not welcome to most. He, the sinless one, showed them up for what they were, sinners, "children of the darkness." We noted that in the case of Joseph, perhaps he was conceited and unwise in what he said to his brothers, but not so with Jesus! The hatred He received was truly "without a cause." Not even the sweet psalmist of Israel, David, could write these words of himself,

"They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away." (see Psalm 69 v. 4).

These words clearly speak of the Messiah. Perhaps even as believers, we are sometimes guilty of losing sight of this truth that "God is light." Our fellowship with God, who is in the light, is dependent upon our walking in the light. Let me read for you the words of John, the aged apostle,

“This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin” (see 1 John 1:5-7).

Perhaps we too often rest and rely on the truth that “God is love”, and not be exercised about walking in the light of God. If we over-emphasise “God is love” and under-emphasise “God is light” in our Gospel preaching, we do a disservice to those in need of salvation. The order we find in Scripture is “God is light”, then, “God is love” (see 1 John 1:5 & 4:8).

Jesus Christ was rejected because of what He was, and in a stark warning to His disciples, He says,

“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you”  
(see John 15:18-19).

How much is this a reality to us today? Are we hated and rejected by the world, or loved by the world? Being a Christian is not about being popular or being acceptable to the world. Just as Christ was rejected by the world, we too will be rejected, but only if we live like Him. I feel the challenge of this, as I expect many listening will. The apostle Paul in what may well be his last epistle writes,

“Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution”  
(see 2 Timothy 3:12).

The apostle Peter writes,

“If ye suffer for righteousness’ sake, happy are ye” (see 1 Peter 3:14).

We have been speaking about the Lord being rejected by the world (that is the world of the ungodly), but the Lord was rejected, too, by His own people. Perhaps that was a rejection He felt even more keenly, that those to whom God had given so many blessings (they had Moses and the prophets) rejected Him. We have already quoted from Psalm 69, where we read,

“Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none” (v.20).

It must have been a real heartbreak for the Lord Jesus to experience His people, the Jews, rejecting Him and the blessing He would have brought to them. What a sight it must have been to see Jesus weeping over Jerusalem, and crying,

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem... how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!” (see Matthew 23:37).

To bring this thought into the Christian era, we can see in Revelation 3, the Lord standing outside the door of the church at Laodicea. What a sadness it must be to Him to be outside the gatherings of any who claim to be His people.

We often speak of the Lord’s sufferings in a twofold way, His physical sufferings, especially those He endured at His crucifixion, and His atoning sufferings for sins, as the sin bearer. How right it is

that we continually have these things on our hearts, but also let us never forget His moral sufferings, those He suffered for righteousness' sake. This is the subject of our study today, and the picture we have in Joseph, the rejection which the Saviour experienced during His life on earth, because of who He was and because of what He was.

### **Forsaken because of what He was made**

I mentioned earlier that at the end of our talk, we would consider something which Joseph knew nothing about. This is something we, too, can have very little appreciation of what it meant for Christ to be forsaken by God. Quoting the words of Psalm 22, on the cross of Calvary, the Lord Jesus cried,

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (see Matthew 27:46).

Even if you are familiar with the psalm, read it again, it will touch your heart to think that the Saviour was forsaken by God on account of sin and our sins. We approach this subject as on “holy ground” with unshod feet, and with the helmet of salvation. But we do well to meditate upon this most holy of thoughts, why our blessed Lord was abandoned by a holy God at Calvary. It ought to move our hearts and lips in worship; and cause us to live sanctified lives as we have a greater appreciation of what sin is in the sight of God. It is important to keep within the language of Scripture. Nowhere do we read that the Father forsook His Son, or that He even turned His face away, but we do read that He was forsaken by God. It is a mystery, as we read that,

“God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself... For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin: that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (see 2 Corinthians 5:19-21).

Jehovah lifted up His rod –  
O Christ, it fell on Thee!  
Thou wast forsaken of Thy God;  
No distance now for me.  
Thy blood beneath that rod has flowed:  
Thy bruising healeth me.

Mrs A.R. Cousin 1824 – 1906

May God bless you all.

Thank you for listening to this Truth for Today talk on Old Testament types of the Lord – The rejection of Joseph. Talk number T1188.

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