

Additional notes for teachers:

Many of the notes comprise deeper matters which have arisen in the course of preparation of the Students Notes. Other material has been appended for the purpose of providing background, explanations or interesting detail.

LESSON 15 THE LIVES OF JOSEPH AND JESUS

The Spirit of God writing through the Apostle Paul (1 Cor 10:6, 11) uses the expression “ensamples” (“types or figures” in mg.) in applying events that occurred to Israel for the purpose of teaching us lessons.

In a similar way in the life of Joseph there is demonstrated in an extremely comprehensive way the life and mission of Jesus Christ. The experiences of Joseph are like a divinely drawn outline or pattern of the coming Messiah. Some striking likenesses of Joseph (the shadow) and Jesus (the substance or reality) are described below:-

- (1) Joseph was loved of his father, but hated by his brethren, so was the Lord. Compare Gen. 37:4, 8 with Matt. 3:17; Luke 10:14; John 15:25.
- (2) His brethren were jealous of Joseph, particularly because of his prophetic dreams. So the Scribes and Pharisees were jealous of the Lord, particularly through the parables which they detected were spoken against them. Compare Gen. 37:8 with Matt. 21:45.
- (3) The brethren of Joseph conspired against him, as the Jews conspired against the Lord. Compare Gen. 37:18 with Matt. 26:4.
- (4) They cast him into a pit and returned to their father with Joseph’s bloodstained coat, pretending Joseph had been killed. To all intents and purposes Joseph was dead. Even when he went into Egypt, he was imprisoned by the Gentiles. So, with the Lord Jesus, he was condemned to death by the Jews, and this was confirmed by the Gentiles whose representative was Pilate. Compare Gen. 37:23-32 with Matt. 27:26. Refer also to John 19:24, Psalm 40:1-3, Zech 9:11, 11:12, Rev. 19:13.
- (5) But as God brought Joseph from prison, so He brought the Lord Jesus from the grave, raising him to immortality, and elevating him to a position of authority. Compare Gen. 41:1, 14, 38-40, 43 with 1 Cor. 15:4; Acts 2:34; Matt. 25:18.
- (6) In due time, a time of great trouble and famine, Joseph’s brothers were forced to bow before Joseph and beseech his help. They saw him only as a great ruler and were perturbed when they learned that this ruler was their brother whom they had ill-treated. So also with the Jewish people at Christ’s return. This will be a time of great trouble for them. They will be saved through his help, but when they learn that this great Ruler is the one their forefathers crucified over 1,900 years ago, fear and remorse will grip them as it did the brethren of Joseph. Compare Gen. 42:8,21 and 45:1-5 with Zech. 12:10 and 13:6; Rom. 11:26.
- (7) Joseph, however, overlooked the evil action of his brothers, and forgave them. He set them up in the Land of Goshen, the best of the land in Egypt, in a part that was separate from the rest of the country. So with the Lord Jesus. His mercy will be seen in bringing all his people (the Jews) back from their dispersion to establish them as a great nation in the land of Israel. Compare Gen. 45:7-8 with Heb. 9:28; Isa. 49:6; Matt. 21:42.

TEACHING METHODS

1. Present this lesson with the future emergence of the family of Jacob into the nation of Israel in mind – providentially achieved by natural circumstances.
2. Discuss how circumstances and years bring their changes in our lives.
3. Underline the unmistakable signs of Providence still evident in Joseph’s life.
4. Note the principal similarities between Joseph’s and Jesus’ lives.