

Joseph,
Jesus,
& the Jewish People

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Jesus,
& the Jewish People*

A GOSPEL TRACT HIDDEN
IN THE TORAH

C . V . T R I P P


REDEMPTION
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Unless otherwise noted, all Scriptures are taken from the King James Version of the Bible.

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PREFACE

Our Lord Jesus prayed to the Father that all His disciples, throughout the centuries, would be one with Him and with one another (John 17:20-21); but, earlier, He said that He came to bring division (Luke 12:51-52). Indeed, division is expected between the wheat and tares (true vs. false disciples), until the end of this age (Matt. 13:29-30); but no division needs to exist among the wheat (Phil. 2:2). Why do we stay divided, then? It seems that, to promote humility and interdependence (both of which lead to unity), God reveals to His various children different bits of understanding, like puzzle pieces. We need each other to put the puzzle together; but, unfortunately, we tend to hold tightly to our pieces, ignore or look down on those of others, and fail to see how the pieces fit together. The result is distorted truth and unnecessary disunity.

How to distinguish truth from error and how to convince others to take a second look at their own views are great challenges. Therefore, my prayer has been that the Lord would grant new or unrecorded insights to His church that would help to bring Christians of differing theological views to reconsider their positions and put the pieces together. Israel and the end-times prophecies have been my main focus of prayer in this regard.

I am very hopeful that God may lead the church to see these issues more clearly through this study of a beloved story from Genesis. Joseph's story is not merely history but an amazing portrait of the Messiah, a portrait so widely recognized that it is safe to declare it prophetic. His story is best studied in two parts because the second part, I am convinced, is not fulfilled and will not be fulfilled until Jesus returns. Surprisingly, I have not seen in print nor heard from pulpits any comprehensive comparison of Joseph's story to Jesus' second coming, despite the fact that such a comparison proves very helpful in interpreting end-times prophecies and vividly demonstrating the two advents of the Messiah.

What this book offers you is something new based on something very old. Whether you agree or disagree with my observations and interpretations, I hope you will enjoy this study and be challenged to probe deeper into God's Word and its prophecies. May you discern a richer, more accurate interpretation of the prophecies and experience a ripple effect on other Bible passages. I pray that your life will be touched such that you see God's beloved children of Israel through His eyes and be moved to share His message of love with them, using Joseph's story. Most of all, I pray that you will grow closer to the Savior by this study. After you have read my book, I welcome your comments and suggestions for improvement. Please feel free to contact me at carmen.v.tripp@gmail.com.

I want to acknowledge Gary Hedrick, president of *The Christian Jew Foundation*, for his comparison of Joseph and Jesus. His work affirmed my pursuit and moved me to search the literature. Thus, I determined that my approach is indeed unique—an answer to much prayer.

I want also to acknowledge Joel Richardson for his research, especially in *Mideast Beast*. His work helped me greatly in writing Appendices D and E, included in this revised edition.

I want to declare my indebtedness to one of God's great gifts to me: my dear husband, Vic. He has been my encourager, prompting me to write in earnest, providing the entire family income, and being my co-editor. I could not be writing without his help and support. Also, I want to thank my daughter Rachel for reading the manuscript and offering some excellent suggestions.

Most of all, I want to acknowledge God's grace and my parents' contribution. Even though neither one of my parents knew Jesus as Savior and Lord at the time, my father initiated a prayer for their yet-not-conceived child to know the Lord. Undoubtedly pleased, God revealed His love to me very early in life and nurtured my budding faith through my mother's love and devotion. By age nine, He had brought me to repentance and saving faith; and He has grown and sustained my faith ever since (and saved both my parents). There is nothing I do not owe ultimately to Him, and He is the love of my life.

INTRODUCTION

LITERATURE SURVEY, PURPOSE, AND APPROACH

The title of this book outlines its contents and structure. This is a biblical study of the Joseph of Genesis and of Jesus the Messiah, comparing their stories and applying the comparison to issues concerning the Jewish people. Consequently, this book is also a study of the prophecies and covenants, insofar as they relate to these issues.

Our purpose does not include an in-depth treatment of eschatology—the study of the end times. For this reason, the rapture and most of the detailed judgments of the Revelation—seals, trumpets, and bowls—are hardly discussed. Likewise, the different schools of prophecy interpretation will be mentioned only in passing and strictly for clarity and needed contrast. For a concise, accurate discussion of the various views, please consult Clouse’s *The Meaning of the Millennium*, listed in the bibliography. That book contains a presentation of each of the major schools of end-times prophecy: amillennialism, postmillennialism, historical premillennialism, and dispensational premillennialism. The presentations are written by an expert from each particular school, and include rebuttals by the other three opposing experts. Another resource that is valuable in quickly comparing and contrasting theological views of any kind is House’s *Charts of Christian Theology and Doctrine*, also listed in the bibliography.

The present study is not a report on the writings of theologians; however, this introduction does survey a specific subject in the literature and is written in a more formal style than most of the rest of the book. Intended for those readers who like to settle certain questions up front, this introduction establishes context and consensus, defines purpose, and briefly explains the approach used in this study. If you are this kind of reader, start here and do not miss chapters 6 and 7, which contain similar material. If you prefer to begin reading about the comparison of the stories, start with the first chapter, and treat this introduction as an appendix for now.

This work is presented somewhat like a reference book. There are chapters that delve into specific topics in greater depth and can be skipped without disturbing the continuity of the work significantly. They are intended for the student of the Word who wants to have the complete picture, with all the evidence. The detailed table of contents and the various charts and indices are available to help guide your reading choices.

Please note the following information regarding biblical references, abbreviations, and added emphasis:

- Nearly all quoted biblical material is from the King James Version and is not so labeled.
- All biblical quotations from versions other than KJV have been labeled accordingly.
- All italicizing of biblical material is the author's added emphasis and is so labeled.

The Consensus Regarding Joseph

This study develops and uses a comparison of Joseph's story with that of Jesus the Messiah. Therefore, we are first considering what the consensus is in the literature, regarding such comparisons. Does the church concur that Joseph is a type of Christ? Indeed, Gary Hedrick, president of *The Christian Jew Foundation*, recently affirmed:

Joseph is the most perfect and complete type of our Lord in the Old Testament...nowhere in the Bible is there a more compelling portrait of the Messiah than in the story of Joseph, the son of Jacob.¹

Likewise, a group called *The Duty Is Ours*, which has also published a comparative commentary of Joseph and Jesus on the web, confirms Dr. Hedrick's observation:

The lives of Joseph and Jesus are a powerful example we should consider. Could their lives be so perfectly paralleled if it were not by the hand of God Himself?

Who else in all of history could fit this detailed description thousands of years before Jesus? It is amazing that the *very first book* of the Bible predicted the way to salvation through Christ in incredible detail...These truths were not ignored in the past...Pink and Spurgeon as well as countless others before us understood this material² (italics in original).

These modern authors claim that the great church leaders of the past, including Spurgeon, taught the parallels between the stories of Joseph and Jesus. Such assertions are important to lend credibility to the study we are about to undertake. Although the approach is new, it is built on this consensus, which the next five statements confirm with finality. (All quotes have no changes in spelling or grammar, except for replacing obsolete characters.)

- *NavPress* (1983): The story of Joseph has fascinated laymen and scholars for centuries...many Bible students have seen in Joseph's life and mission many parallels to Christ...a striking resemblance to the Saviour...forgiving spirit also foreshadows the attitude of Jesus...³
- Ada Habershon (1861–1918): While some only typify Him in certain particulars, there are a few which seem to do so in almost every detail...Three of them, *Joseph, Moses, and David*, foreshadow both the sufferings and glory of the Lord...The thirteen chapters of Genesis which tell us the beautiful story of Joseph's life are full of Christ⁴ (italics in original).
- Matthew Henry (1706): Joseph became the shepherd of Israel, to take care of his father and family; also the stone of Israel, their foundation and strong support. In this, as in many other things,

Joseph was a remarkable type of the Good Shepherd, and tried Cornerstone of the whole church of God.⁵

- Samuel Mather (1626–1671):...Joseph is generally lookt upon as a Type of Christ...if the History of Joseph in Genesis be compared with the History of Jesus Christ in the four Evangelists, the Analogy will be very clear and evident...It is true Joseph is not so expressly mentioned in the New Testament as a Type of Christ...but the Analogy is so clear and full, that we cannot well omit him...clear in sundry particulars; I shall but instance in four Things, wherein he was...*made like unto the Son of God*...Qualifications and Endowments and Wisdom and Holiness ... Sufferings ... Advancement...Carriage towards his Brethren⁶ (italics in original).
- John Calvin (1509–1564):...Joseph...was, in many respects, a figure, or rather a lively image of Christ...(Genesis 49:26; Deuteronomy 33:16).⁷

Common Reasons for Studying Joseph As a Type of Jesus

Jesus is the key to interpreting the Old Testament, including all prophecies. Hence, we can profit from a careful study of those Old Testament figures that represent Him vividly (called types), particularly Joseph's amazing portrait of the Messiah. Three specific reasons or benefits are:

1. To delight in seeing that the Bible is consistently true and that God fulfills His prophecies (and prophetic types);
2. To demonstrate, especially to Jewish persons who do not believe in Jesus, that He is the Savior, who, like Joseph, was first humiliated and then exalted to power; and
3. To let Joseph's character inspire us to be more faithful to God, in spite of adverse circumstances, more patient to wait for His promises, and more forgiving of others.

As one of our sources comments, regarding its comparison of Joseph and Jesus,

This would be great material to discuss in Bible study, especially with an unbeliever, at the same time teaching the life of Christ and the inerrancy of the Bible.⁸

Again, when analyzing Genesis 45:5 (the scene of Joseph's forgiveness and his explanation of God's providence), the same source states,

Yes, God's plan is revealed. God saved many through the suffering of Joseph and, in the perfect sense, through Jesus Christ. Both compassionately forgave their brothers who did evil to them, [the brothers] not realizing that their sin was to be used by Almighty God to do the ultimate loving thing, save the perishing. This is a perfect analogy between Joseph and Jesus. Praise God! This is overwhelming evidence that Jesus is found in the very first book of the Bible in a long, highly detailed, description of Joseph as a type of Christ. The Bible proves itself to be congruent, consistent, and true.⁹

In other words, it is helpful to our cause for Christ and His Word, especially the gospel message, to find and proclaim new or fresh evidence for our claims, especially when that evidence appears in the first five books of the Bible, the Pentateuch or Torah, which are books revered by religious persons of both Jewish and Christian faiths, especially by the devout.

New Reasons for Studying Joseph As a Type of Jesus

The above reasons would be sufficient for undertaking such a typology study (the study of Old Testament figures that represent Christ). Yet, a careful reading of Joseph's story leads us to other reasons. It seems that a significant portion of his story has no close parallel in Christian history and thus merits further consideration. In fact, the study of this unfulfilled portion has led the author to conclude that Joseph's story contains prophecies of the end times. Accordingly, three additional reasons for pursuing the work of matching Joseph's story to Jesus' story are:

1. To interpret other end-time prophecies by matching them with the unfulfilled, straightforward details in Joseph's story, and,

- hopefully, bring more unity to the church on eschatology (the study of the end times);
2. To demonstrate to all, especially unbelievers, that Jesus will reappear bodily, in glory and power, at which time He will be reunited with His surviving Jewish brothers in an earthly setting; and
 3. To show the impact that such a family reunion will have upon the world that survives to that day, especially because the reunion is a testimony of forgiveness and restoration for those whom the world has often hated and labeled as enemies of God.

Approaches Named and Compared

The six reasons above reveal two approaches to the study of Joseph as a type of Christ. Let us call *historical* the approach that uses the common reasons (the first three) to study Joseph's story, and let us call the other approach, which is developed in this book, the *end-times* or *eschatological approach*. The latter emphasizes the three "new reasons," but finds all six to be excellent reasons to pursue this typological study.

The historical approach is presented in all the studies cited above and is based on the common belief that Joseph's story has been largely fulfilled in history. Although some authors recognize that Joseph's reunion with his brothers could prophesy the spiritual restoration of many Jewish people or their entire nation, these authors do not pursue the parallel further and quickly return to spiritual applications for this age. These spiritual applications are very valuable; but, if used exclusively, they fail to reveal other great benefits that Joseph's story has to offer.

None of these historical writers divide the story to correspond to the two advents of the Messiah. Thus, they fail to match the latter scenes with prophecies that appear to be for the end of this age or for a utopian age in which Christ rules visibly. One historical author is Samuel Mather. He states:

...his Brethren the Jews, tho' they have stood it out long against him, yet they shall come in at last, and humble themselves before him whom they have pierced, Zach. 12. 10.¹⁰

We see that Mather does expect the Jewish people “to come in at last.” Yet, analyzing the passage about Joseph revealing himself to his brothers, Mather speaks of their conversion in general terms. He says, “So doth Jesus Christ reveal himself to the Souls of his People, when they are fit for it.”¹¹ In other words, Mather does not indicate that Jesus’ revelation to the Jewish people en masse is any different from the present revelation, which is generally only to the soul. His words imply no additional *visible* encounter with Christ.

Another writer who considers Joseph a type of Christ, historically fulfilled, is William Guild. He allows for the Jewish people to come to Christ collectively, but gives no details.

Joseph’s brethren at last come for food, and reverence him, Gen. xlii.—So shall the Jews at last (albeit long lingering) come to the profession of Christ, and adore him, Zech. xii. 10.¹²

One who gives a little more detail is Ada Habershon, speaking on Moses and Joseph as types of Christ. Habershon states that Israel will acknowledge her Messiah “by-and-by” and will say, “Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.” Habershon also says, “through this time of separation the hearts of Joseph and Moses were full of love to their own brethren.”¹³ Both the word “own,” modifying “brethren,” and the context of this sentence make it clear that the writer implies that Jesus’ heart also yearns for His Jewish brothers.

Gary Hedrick does a great job of discussing seventeen points of comparison between Joseph and Jesus and believes that the Jewish people will come to Christ in the end. He is a premillennialist; thus, he believes they will see Jesus with their own eyes rather than only in their souls and that there will be some very specific events surrounding that climactic scene of restoration and a thousand-year reign of Christ to follow. Yet, surprisingly, he does not analyze Joseph’s story from the end-times perspective. In fact, Dr. Hedrick’s seventeen points are not significantly different from those found in a chart from the Life Application Bible, which chart is a good summary of the historical approach.¹⁴ (The chart is presented under endnote 14.)

To summarize, the historical typological approach to Joseph's story does not view the second part of his story as having much significance with respect to the end times; in fact, this approach does not recognize a second part at all. When one finds in the literature an isolated detail interpreted as an end-times event, it is a rare occurrence and never developed. Such is the case with the spiritual restoration of the Jewish nation, just discussed, which is often not even associated with the return of Christ. Another example is the seven-year famine. The author found only one source where the famine is explicitly compared to the tribulation period; but no further end-times reasoning follows, not even the mass conversion of the nation of Israel.¹⁵ In this source, all applications of Joseph's story refer to Christians (Jewish and Gentile), in spiritual terms.¹⁶

On the other hand, by dividing the story of Joseph into two parts, the end-times approach enables us to see in Part II the many connections that exist to other prophecies of the end times. The gap of time when Jacob's family is separated from Joseph, physically and socially, is the significant dividing line between the parts of Joseph's story, from Jacob's point of view. This gap corresponds to the gap of time between the first and second coming of Christ, during which the Jewish Messiah is also separated from His genetic family, physically, socially, and spiritually. (Chapters 6, 9, and 17 discuss the significance of this separation.)

Marking the beginning of Part II of Joseph's story is the great famine, which follows a long gap in fellowship between Joseph and his genetic family—the time of their separation. Since Jesus' exaltation occurs within days of His ultimate humiliation and is part of His fulfilled story or first advent, Part I of both stories include the exaltation scenes, even though Joseph's exaltation comes years after his initial humiliation. For emphasis and clarity, therefore, a flashback to the beginning of Joseph's twenty-plus-year separation from Jacob closes Part I of Joseph's story and is matched by another flashback in Jesus' Part I. The discussion of Joseph's years of separation, which correspond to the church age, is postponed until after Joseph's Part II is narrated. Similarly, a detailed discussion of the church does not appear until one of the last chapters of this book. This method of dividing Joseph's story reveals that his story is primarily a prophecy of Christ's visible dealings with His Jewish people,

rather than His invisible dealings with the church (except for spiritual applications). This division demonstrates that Messiah appears on earth two times to minister to His (Jewish) family *in person*, and that the gap between these advents is the time the family of Jacob (Israel) remains separated from their Savior-Brother in all respects.



I trust that you will find this book innovative, informative, and enjoyable. Most of all, may it be spiritually edifying, encouraging you to seek a fresh understanding of the Bible, particularly of biblical prophecy, and a greater appreciation for the magnitude of God's love. In particular, may you see the Jewish people the way God sees them—as His beloved for the sake of their fathers. This book is primarily dedicated to them, emphasizing the Jewish role in God's plan and their heavy burden of responsibility and suffering. My goal is to help the church come closer to unity in truth regarding Israel, and to offer a relatively new means to help our estranged Jewish brothers recognize their Messiah and inherit the Abrahamic blessings. For all that the Lord may accomplish through this book, to Him be the glory.

*The Stories of
Joseph and Jesus*

Chapter 1

SETTING THE STAGE

THE BOOK OF GENESIS AND MATTHEW'S GOSPEL

A gospel tract hidden in the Torah...

A key to unlock the meaning of end-times prophecies...

A means to dispel confusion on debated issues...

A miniature portrait of Messiah, Israel, and the church...

These are descriptions of what the last chapters of Genesis provide.

How could it possibly be true that the first and second advents of Messiah be woven into a story appearing in the first book of the Bible? Oh, but it is; God's Word is like a beautiful tapestry, with the story of Jesus as its central pattern. What about His exaltation? It is very vividly portrayed. What about the church, with both Jewish and Gentile believers, is it also in Genesis? Absolutely. What about the end times? For instance, is there a seven-year tribulation? Yes, there is one. Does that mean the future of the nation of Israel is also revealed in Genesis? Right again.

Pictures of these things and many more are found in the story of Joseph, Jacob's favorite son, whose story is strategically placed at the end of Genesis, the introductory book to God's revealed Word. Joseph's story is an overview of history from his day to the end of time, packed within thirteen short chapters. It is a testimony to God's love, faithfulness, and sovereignty. It is that gospel tract hidden in the Torah and that key that unlocks the meaning of many prophecies.

Joseph is the Savior in miniature; Jesus' story is Joseph's story greatly magnified. No other figure in the Old Testament seems to depict the Messiah better than Joseph. The literature of the church is in agreement on this point, as this book's introduction amply demonstrates. Yet, there are no explicit comparisons of the two men in the Bible. Only once in the New Testament, Joseph is mentioned in connection with Messiah's death, creating a rather indirect comparison that happens to support the main observation of this study. Stephen, the first martyr, while chiding his persecutors for the death of the Messiah and for his own persecution, accused them of being like their fathers, who persecuted Joseph (Acts 7:9). Such an accusation embarrassed and angered them.

Their anger demonstrated that the Jewish people and their leaders had learned from the time of Jacob to revere Joseph (though his brothers first rejected him). Unlike Joseph, Jesus was neither revered in His visitation, nor is He now, by most of His Jewish brothers. In other words, Jesus' story has not been brought to a close as Joseph's has been, which constitutes the premise of this book. The Jewish family was reunited with their physical savior in Joseph's prophetic story, but it remains separated from their eternal Savior at this time. Thus, Joseph's story as a messianic prophecy lacks complete fulfillment. The natural implication is that since Joseph's brothers revered him when they encountered him in his glory, the Jewish people will revere their Brother Jesus when they see Him in His glory. Their hearts will be ready to meet Jesus at His return and never again will they waver from their devotion. As Joseph became the recipient of admiration once he was reunited with his family, so Jesus will be the recipient of Jewish adoration.

How we view Israel, physically and spiritually, affects our entire approach to interpreting prophecy. Furthermore, if we are to remain logically consistent, how we interpret prophecy should also affect in many ways how we interpret the rest of the Bible, which should determine our worldview, and, in turn, our actions. How we view Israel, therefore, is not a mere academic question but one that can profoundly impact the church, collectively and individually. Our disunity over Israel's identity and significance, if by nothing more than this ripple effect, may have contributed to the spiritual decline of the church after the first few centuries. Let us pray that our disunity over Israel ceases.

Joseph, Jesus, and the Story of Israel

The Old Testament is full of prophecies of the Messiah, including prophetic types, such as Jacob, Joseph, Judah, Moses, and David. These stories are factual history, but they carry a prophetic message, a portrait of the Messiah. Perhaps to emphasize the nature and significance of the message, God placed Joseph's story in a book full of unconditional covenant promises He made to man—to Eve, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He did not place Joseph in Exodus, the next book, where conditional promises, dependent on man's obedience, appear—the covenant of the law. Joseph's story deals with the unconditional promises to the family of Jacob, not to be confused with the conditional blessings of the law. Indeed, Joseph is a veiled portrait of the fulfillment of Abraham's promises.

Genesis also contains prophetic blessings of the patriarchs upon their descendants, Jacob's blessing upon Joseph being one of these:

Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall: The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel:) Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb: The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.

—Genesis 49:22-26

Jacob blessed Joseph with a blessing that was very personal and spiritual in nature. Both Judah and Joseph's blessings point to the Messiah, but Joseph's blessing from Jacob paints a picture of the Good Shepherd and the reliable foundation of His people (old and new) rather than the powerful king. Here is how Matthew Henry's *Concise Commentary* reviews Joseph's blessing:

The blessing of Joseph is very full. What Jacob says of him, is history as well as prophecy. Jacob reminds him of the difficulties and fiery darts of temptations he had formerly struggled through. His faith did not fail, but through his trials he bore all his burdens with firmness, and did not do anything unbecoming. All our strength for resisting temptations, and bearing afflictions, comes from God; his grace is sufficient. Joseph became the shepherd of Israel, to take care of his father and family; also the stone of Israel, their foundation and strong support. In this, as in many other things, Joseph was a remarkable type of the Good Shepherd, and tried Corner Stone of the whole church of God. Blessings are promised to Joseph's posterity, typical of the vast and everlasting blessings which come upon the spiritual seed of Christ. Jacob blessed all his sons, but especially Joseph, "who was separated from his brethren." Not only separated in Egypt, but, possessing eminent dignity, and more devoted to God.¹⁷

Jacob's blessing upon his beloved son Joseph came seventeen years after father and son were reunited in Egypt. Their family was the beginning of a people identified with the name *Israel*. Actually, the origin of Israel's people is in Abraham, his faith, and his son of promise, Isaac. Isaac had two sons: Jacob and Esau. But God hated Esau and loved Jacob (Mal. 1:2-3; Rom. 9:13). God uses words of passion to make us understand the depth of His love toward those He calls His own. We learn from Jesus that we are to return that love back to God with the same passion. To be considered worthy of being called Jesus' disciple, we ought to love Him to such an extent that we virtually are to hate everything else by comparison, including our parents and our own lives (Luke 14:26). That word translated *hate* that Jesus uses is the same Greek word Paul uses in Romans 9:13 regarding Esau.

God loved Jacob so much more than Esau that it seemed as though He hated Esau. Jacob was His chosen; Jacob would someday know His Creator and embrace Him, and God would commune with him and change his heart and his name. God would rename him *Israel*, and he would be the father of Joseph and of eleven other patriarchs from whom the tribes of Israel would descend. The apostle Paul declared that Jacob's family is still beloved of God for the fathers' sake (Rom. 11:28)—"the apple of his eye" (Zech. 2:8; Deut. 32:9-10).

Israel denotes a prince of God, a man destined “to rule as God” (according to *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance, Hebrew Dictionary*, #3478). A true Israelite is a man whose heart is in unity with his Maker, who acts empowered by God, and “in whom is no guile” (John 1:47). What better example of such a man is there than Jesus, the Jewish Messiah and ours? Indeed, Jacob, who became Israel, was the earthly ancestor of God’s only begotten Son, who came to do His Father’s will (Ps. 40:7-8; Heb. 10:5-10; John 4:34; 6:38). Jesus was obedient to the Father even unto death (Phil. 2:8), to save and to empower men to know Him and the Father, to be of one mind and heart with God and one another, and to behold His glory for eternity (John 17:2-3, 20-24). In short, He died that all who are called by His name would become what God intends for Israel and has fulfilled in Messiah, Jacob’s descendant.

Messiah was Immanuel (God with us), but He was called Israel in Isa. 49:3: “Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.” (See the context, verses 1-6). Also, when Jesus, the God-man, was taken to Egypt as an infant and returned (escaping Herod), the messianic prophecy that Jacob’s descendants portrayed at the Exodus (escaping Pharaoh) was rendered fulfilled in Matthew’s gospel:

When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.

—Hosea 11:1 (Matt. 2:15; Out of Egypt have I called my son.)

Indeed, God created the nation and declared, “I gave Egypt for thy ransom” (Isa. 43:1-7). He called Jacob’s descendants, *collectively*, “my son, even my firstborn.” *Before* the covenant of the law was made, God ordered Pharaoh to “Let my son go:”

And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn: And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn.

—Exodus 4:22-23

It is no wonder that Paul chose to call the Jewish people by their messianic name, “Israelites,” while mourning over their spiritual estrangement and declaring that to his “brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh,” belong “the adoption, and...the promises” (Rom. 9:3-4). It is also no wonder that Gentile believers enter into “the commonwealth of Israel” through the Jewish Messiah (Eph. 2:12-13; 3:6, 11).

Jesus, of whom Joseph is a type, is the key to interpreting all the Scriptures. Such is another likely reason for God choosing to have the story of Messiah’s most complete type included in the first book of the Bible. Rather than letting Joseph’s story be moved into Exodus, He fittingly kept it in Genesis, which introduces the rest of God’s revelation. Furthermore, since the Jewish Messiah identifies Himself with Israel and since He is the key to interpretation, the issue of Israel’s identity and significance to the world has to be central to the study of prophecy. The Bible, with its prophecies, is Messiah’s story and Israel’s story as well; and Joseph’s story is a miniature portrait of both.

Indeed, it seems that God intended for us to pause and reflect on His overall plan for the world by analyzing Joseph’s life story as a prophecy of history to the end of time, especially the role that the Jewish Messiah and nation would play in that plan. Only after this meditation on man’s history, would God turn our attention to the next episode in the continuing saga of Jacob’s family—the second instance of suffering and rescue, the one involving Moses and the Pharaoh that “knew not Joseph” (Ex. 1:8). In other words, God did not want us to think of Joseph and his story as mere introductory material to Moses and the covenant of the law but as a separate entity, with long range, worldwide ramifications that would extend beyond the law and leap forward into grace, restoration, and eternal blessings.

Jacob, Joseph, and Jesus

While Genesis points us forward to the end of time, Matthew’s Gospel cleverly points us back to Joseph before Jesus’ story unfolds. Matthew’s Gospel appears first in the New Testament, as Genesis does in the Old, and providentially records Jesus’ genealogy first, starting with Abraham. Before we are told the story of His birth, we are informed that another Jacob and another Joseph immediately precede

Jesus and with the same familial relationship to each other as the famous pair of Genesis. This New Testament Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, the virgin who gave birth to Jesus, the Messiah (Matt. 1:15-16).

Not only did God place those two men so strategically, but He gave us other parallel details to catch our attention: God communicated with both Joseph's in dreams, sent them both to Egypt, sent them both there for the purpose of rescue, and to rescue Israel in both cases. The first Israel was in the form of Jacob and his family, and the second in the form of baby Jesus, "my servant...Israel" of Isa. 49:3—the Messiah.

How fascinating and how intriguing God's Word can be. Numerous parallels, indeed, have been detected between Joseph's story and that of Jesus, from His birth through His exaltation to the right hand of God. But Messiah's story, the greatest of all time, will someday have a sequel, which will complete God's plan for the earth and for Jacob's descendants:

And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

—Acts 3:20-21

Facilitated by the approach used in this book, which focuses on the state of separation between the rest of the Jewish family and their savior-brother, the return of Messiah can be seen in the life of Joseph. Come and enjoy searching Joseph's story to find the clues that confirm the sequel to Messiah's love story.