

In beginning to consider Stephen's Defense last week, I mentioned it can be divided into four parts: Abraham (vv2-8); Joseph (vv9-16); Moses (vv17-43); and David (vv44-50). Verses 51-53 contains his application, and vv54-60 their response. I furthermore mentioned, it's important to keep in mind his purpose. Remember, he is defending himself from their false accusations of blaspheming Moses, the Law, and temple. In essence, he's providing them, an inspired interpretation of the God's OC with national Israel. And thus, he begins where that nation began (with Abraham), and he follows it all the way to its glory days with the temple.

But he makes very clear, that everything about the OC, pointed to Christ and His new and better covenant. And thus, it wasn't him who blasphemed Moses, the law and temple, but them, as they murdered the Messiah and are now persecuting His people. And so, in coming to vv9-16, I want to consider the history of Joseph under three main headings: historically (I want to move through the actual history), typically (show his connections to Christ), and practically (suggest a few practical lessons from the life of Joseph).

- I. Historically
- II. Typically
- III. Practically

- I. Historically

1. Here I intend, to move briefly through the passage and simply reminder of the historical acts and/or facts.
2. (1) Joseph is sold into slavery, v9—"And the patriarchs, becoming envious, sold Joseph into Egypt."
3. Joseph's brothers were jealous of him for a number of reasons; first Jacob openly loved him more than the others, Gen.37:4—"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."
4. Second, Joseph was given several dreams, which indicated he would rule over them, Gen.37:11—"And his brothers envied him."
5. That is, they envied the fact that Jacob loved him most, and, he was given several dreams from God.
6. As a result, they initially plotted to kill him, but instead cast him into a pit, and eventually sold him into slavery.
7. Thus, according to Gen.37:28, they sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver, "and they took Joseph to Egypt."
8. Chapters 39-40 recount how Joseph was falsely accused by Potiphar's wife, and imprisoned for 2 years.
9. And so, Stephen underscores the fact that it was the envy of the patriarchs that brought His people to Egypt (in fact, if you notice, he mentions Egypt five times in vv9-12).
10. (2) Joseph is delivered by God, v10—"But God was with him and delivered him out of all his troubles, and gave him favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house."
11. This is recounted back in Genesis 41—if you remember, Pharaoh had a dream, which no one was able to interpret.
12. Finally, the chief butler remembered Joseph had interpreted a previous dream he had, so he mentions him to Pharaoh.
13. Gen.41:14—"Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him quickly out of the dungeon; and he shaved, changed his clothing, and came to Pharaoh."

14. Pharaoh recounts the dream to Joseph, and Joseph interprets it to foretell, seven good years, and seven bad years.
15. Joseph then advises Pharaoh to set a wise man over the land of Egypt, to collect one-fifth of the produce of the land in the seven plentiful years, to store them as a reserve for the seven years of famine.
16. Gen.41:37-40—"So the advice was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants. And Pharaoh said to his servants, 'Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom is the Spirit of God?' Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'Inasmuch as God has shown you all this, there is no one as discerning and wise as you. You shall be over my house, and all my people shall be ruled according to your word; only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you.'"
17. (3) Joseph is made known to his brothers (vv11-13)—these verses recount the famine and great trouble that came over all the land of Egypt and Canaan.
18. As a result, Stephen says, v11—"our fathers found no sustenance"—that is, the Hebrews had no food.
19. V12—"But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first"—that is, the 10 remaining patriarchs.
20. If you remember, Jacob kept back Benjamin as he was the youngest, and he was afraid some calamity would befall him.
21. And so, they went down to Egypt to buy grain—and Joseph sold them grain but accused of being spies.
22. So, he kept Simeon imprisoned, and told the other 9, to return to Canaan and bring Benjamin back to Egypt.
23. Well, eventually, if you remember, they did just that, and they returned a second time, this time with Benjamin.
24. And so, when they arrived at Egypt, Joseph gave them a great feast, and sent them away with abundant grain.
25. And yet, he had his steward place his silver cup in one of the sacks of grain, and sent them on their way.
26. He then sent the steward and his men to overtake them, and accuse them of stealing his cup, and repaying evil for good.
27. Joseph then threatens to enslave Benjamin as punishment for their theft, but Judah pleads that he would become a surety for Benjamin and be enslaved in his place.
28. Thus, having seen the change that took place in Judah and his brothers, Joseph finally reveals his identity to them.
29. V13—"And the second time Joseph was made known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to the Pharaoh."
30. The point of course, was to wait until his brothers had humbled themselves and displayed true repentance for what they did to him.
31. Gen.45:1—"Then Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, 'Make everyone go out from me!' So no one stood with him while Joseph made himself known to his brothers."
32. It was this point, that Joseph revealed his true identity to his brothers, and bestowed forgiveness upon them.
33. (4) Joseph calls for his father and relatives (vv14-16), v14—"Then Joseph sent and called his father Jacob and all his relatives to him, seventy-five people."
34. Thus, Jacob came down to Egypt where he, and the others eventually died, and their bodies were carried back up to Canaan (v16).
35. If we were to compare the OT texts, it seems likely that Jacob was buried in Southern Canaan, and Joseph 400yrs later in Shechem (which is Northern Canaan).

36. The point being, both Jacob and Joseph believed the promise, that they would inherit the land of Canaan.
37. F.F. Bruce—"The presence of their tombs in the land of promise, where the tombs of Abraham and Isaac were already, was a token that, even if they died down in Egypt, they died in faith."
38. Heb.11:21-22—"By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff. By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones."

## II. Typically

1. Because the Bible is no regular book, it shouldn't be interpreted just as any other book—yes, it contains words which have to be understood in their original context and setting.
2. But to rightly understand the Bible, you have to go beyond that, and understand it as a single and unified whole.
3. The Bible has ultimately a single author and a single message—it's written by God to tell the story of redemption.
4. Perhaps I can liken it to a puzzle—while each piece can be view and appreciated by itself, to rightly appreciate the individual pieces, who must view them in relation to the whole.
5. For example, just take Stephen's defense—he tells the history of Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and David.
6. Each of these are a piece of the puzzle, to be studied and appreciated in and of themselves—but if this is as far as you go, then you fail to get the big picture.
7. In theological terms, this is called Biblical Theology, and it concerns the overarching point of the Bible.
8. Christians have always believed, because the Bible is a single book, ultimately written by a single author, its parts should be understood in light of the whole.
9. Richard Rackham—"Though the name of the Christ is not once mentioned, Stephen is all the time 'preaching Jesus.' He preaches Him in His types, especially in Joseph (vv9-16) and Moses (vv20-43). The Scriptures contained prophecies of the Christ in word, but the lives of the fathers were prophecies in deed. Argument based upon type or allegory does not commend itself to the modern mind, but in those days, it was familiar and popular. Thus, his hearers would have recognized in Joseph and in Moses pictures of Jesus of Nazareth; they would have felt the irony, by which in the jealousy of Joseph's brethren and the dullness of Moses' contemporaries their own folly was laid bare; and the words made them gnash their teeth."
10. In his exposition of Genesis, A.W. Pink suggested there are 60 ways in which Joseph was a type of Christ.
11. But instead of looking at all the particulars, I merely want to consider four areas where Joseph served as a type of Christ.
12. (1) Humiliation—as most of you know, Christ's state of humiliation began with His humble birth, and continued while His body was in the grave.
13. (a) He was betrayed by His own people—just as Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery because of envy, so, Judas sold Christ to the Jews, who gave Him to the Romans because of envy.
14. Remember, what I said last week—Stephen isn't here merely giving the Jewish leaders a history lesson.
15. He has a specific purpose, and there's little doubt that they must have seen themselves in Joseph's brothers.
16. Just as the patriarchs hated Joseph because of envy, selling him into slavery; so they hated Christ because of envy, and gave him into the hand of the Romans.

17. Our Savior was not only betrayed by a close friend (In Judas), but we know from the gospels that His siblings rejected Him too.
18. Furthermore, as I've said, the Jews largely hated and rejected Him, and that because of envy and jealousy.
19. (b) He was confined in a shameful prison—just as Joseph was unjustly imprisoned, so Christ was unjustly arrested and crucified.
20. And so, just as Joseph spent two years in a dark cell, our Savior spent three days and nights in a dark tomb.
21. Thus, while Joseph shadowed Christ, there's a sense in which the humiliation of the two can hardly be compared.
22. What is being sold into slavery and imprisoned 2yrs, in comparison to all that Christ personally endured.
23. Furthermore, while both Joseph and Christ were innocent, only Christ suffered while remaining sinless.
24. Gen.40:15 (Joseph to the chief butler while in prison)—"For indeed I was stolen away from the land of the Hebrews; and also I have done nothing here that they should put me into the dungeon (I am innocent of the crime for which I've been imprisoned)."
25. (2) Exaltation—Christ's state of exaltation began with His resurrection, and comes to a head at His second coming.
26. Verses 9-10—"But God was with him and delivered him out of all his troubles, and gave him favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house."
27. Just as God delivered Joseph from prison and exalted him as governor over all Egypt, so God delivered Christ from the grave, and gave Him a name above every name.
28. Acts 5:30-31—"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree. Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins."
29. Even though Joseph's brothers hated him and sold him into slavery, God raised him up as governor over all Egypt.
30. And even though the Jews hated Christ and gave Him over to the Romans to murder, God raised Him up as Prince and Savior.
31. (3) Revelation—by this I refer to the fact, that, just as Joseph revealed himself to his penitent brothers, so Christ reveals Himself to His penitent people.
32. While Christ knows and loves His people before conversion, it's not until then that He makes Himself known to them.
33. V13—"And the second time Joseph was made known to his brothers"—he revealed himself to them.
34. Gen.45:1-4—"Then Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, 'Make everyone go out from me!' So no one stood with him while Joseph made himself known to his brothers. And he wept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard it. Then Joseph said to his brothers, 'I am Joseph.'" v4—"And Joseph said to his brothers, 'Please come near to me.' So they came near to him."
35. First, Joseph revealed himself to them because of love—even though they had mistreated him, he yet loved them (and so too, even though by nature we mistreat and disobey Christ, He's loved us from eternity).
36. Second, Joseph brought them near to himself—he desired to fellowship and have communion with them (and so too, 1Cor.1:9 – 'we are called into the fellowship of His Son').
37. (4) Provision—by this I refer to the fact, that, just as Joseph became a savior to his brethren, so Christ becomes a Savior to His.

38. David Peterson—"Joseph was rejected by his own people but empowered by God to save those who rejected him. Jesus was raised from suffering and death to bring eternal salvation even to those who rejected Him."
39. V12—"But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first"—just as there was an abundance of grain in Egypt, so there is an abundance of grace in Christ.
40. This is exactly what every awaked sinner does—he hears in the gospel that there's grace to be found in Christ.
41. We have come to see there's a famine in this world—that is, there's no way of salvation but in Christ.
42. In other words, we have to come to see that this world and our own souls by nature, are barren and dry.
43. And thus, we learn that God's chosen people are saved from death, by the humiliation and exaltation of another.

### III. Practically

1. Here I want to rather briefly, simply suggest three practical lessons learned from the historical narrative of Joseph.
2. (1) God is with His people in all their troubles, vv9-10—"But God was with him and delivered him out of all his troubles."
3. Ps.105:16-19—"Moreover He called for a famine in the land; He destroyed all the provision of bread. He sent a man before them—Joseph—who was sold as a slave. They hurt his feet with fetters, He was laid in irons. Until the time that his word came to pass (Joseph's prophecy), the word of the LORD tested him."
4. Here we learn several things about troubles or trials: first, God uses them to test us; second, they are painful; third, God will deliver us from them.
5. Thus, we mustn't misunderstand what Stephen says—when he says God delivered him from all his troubles, this doesn't mean we removed all the troubles.
6. Remember, Joseph was hated by his brothers, thrown into a pit, sold into slavery, laid about, forgotten about, and sat in prison for over two years.
7. V18—"They hurt his feet with fetters, he was laid in irons"—this is in part the troubles mentioned by Stephen.
8. Thus, the point of Stephen is that God was with Joseph while He was in the pit, Potiphar's house, and prison.
9. 1Cor.10:13—"No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it."
10. The word "temptation" can be rendered "trial" or affliction—"No trial has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tried beyond what you are able, but with the trial will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it."
11. First, trials are common; second, trials are from God; third, God will be with us to deliver us from our trials.
12. John Calvin—"When the text says that 'God was with Joseph,' it is to give us hope that the same will be our lot if we are unjustly afflicted. And while suffering patiently, we must not doubt that whatever misfortune may befall us, God's hand is upon us for our defense and salvation because in the end we will need to know we have not trusted in Him in vain. But when we see that God worked this way in Joseph's behalf, we have a confirmation of His promise and recognize its truth."
13. (2) God uses the evil acts of men to bring about good—by this I mean, God was orchestrating the entire account of Joseph, and He orchestrated the entire account of Christ.

14. Gen.50:20—"But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive."
15. God used the envy of his brothers, to bring temporal good to the Hebrews; and, He used the envy of the Sanhedrin, to bring eternal good to His beloved people.
16. Brethren, may the LORD enable us to learn this difficult lesson, that we must walk by faith, not by sight.
17. I can only imagine what Joseph was tempted to think and feel, as we laid in that pit, was sold into slavery, falsely accused, and then sat in prison.
18. And yet, if you remember, prior to all that God had given Joseph several dreams, which assured him of his future.
19. And yet, he could have said—"While God promised that I should one day be a ruler, I now find myself a slave in prison."
20. Yes, it's true his brothers meant it for evil, and yes, it's true, Potiphar's wife meant it for evil—but God meant it all for good.
21. (3) God has determined that humiliation precedes exaltation—this was true of Joseph, it was true of Christ, and it's true of every Christian.
22. Just like Christ, Joseph had to endure a cross before a crown, and so it is, with every Joseph God calls to Himself.
23. Yes, it's true we may be in a pit or prison now, but God is with us, and in His time, He will deliver us.
24. John Calvin—"Let us not be distressed if we are persecuted in this world, for this is the path by which God wants to guide and lead us into possession of that heavenly glory which He has promised us and to which He will bring us through the agency of our Lord Jesus Christ."