

Jesus BC: Beloved

Philosopher Michael Scott once said:

*“Would I rather be feared or loved?
Easy. Both.
I want people to be afraid of how much they love me.”*

Isn't that what we all want? To be deeply loved? Regardless of what we do just loved for who we are.

There is this amazing word in the bible “BELOVED” (bee-love-ed OR bee-loved).

It means greatly loved, dear to the heart, favorite. This is the kind of love that is the sole action of the one doing the loving. It's not earned or deserved therefore not lost or taken away. It's the kind of unconditional love of our Father in heaven.

Do you know what your role is in being beloved? It is simply to BE LOVED! That's it! Jesus loves you, you just have to receive it. It's a kind of love that you can't understand until you experience it, and even then you can't fully understand. But BE LOVED and know that to God, you are beloved, you are greatly loved and dear to his heart.

In Genesis 37 we find a son, beloved by his Father. This Father Jacob (Israel) had been through a lot. He wanted a wife, got tricked into marrying her sister, eventually worked enough to get the wife he really wanted in Rachel. She couldn't have kids so he had them with his first wife and their servants. Eventually God opened Rachel's womb and the firstborn of Rachel was Joseph.

Jacob may not be husband or father of the year but what we know is he loved Rachel and he loved his son Joseph.

1. Joseph is loved dearly by his aging father. In fact his father loves him more than any of his brothers so much that he even gives Joseph a special robe that sets him apart. His brothers are shepherds and we are told that he reports back to his father about their poor work.
2. Joseph has prophetic dreams about a day where his brothers, mother, and father would one day serve him. The brothers who already hate him are angered by these dreams. His father seems a little resistant to them but also kept them in mind.

3. The father sends Joseph out to check on his brothers and the flocks that they are shepherding wanting a report back. Joseph discovers that his brothers are not shepherding the flocks as the father expected but they were in a different place.
4. When Joseph's brothers see him coming, they plot to kill him, although one brother (Reuben, the oldest) doesn't want to kill him. They agree not to but instead they strip him of his special robe, and threw him into a dry well (an empty hole in the ground) to leave him for dead.
5. One of the brothers (Judah) comes up with the idea to sell Joseph to the Gentiles and make a little money. Those present agree and Joseph is sold.
6. Reuben, the brother who didn't want Joseph to be killed returns to the well only to find that it is empty and Joseph is gone. He is completely discouraged and unsure what to do next.
7. A goat is killed and the robe is dipped in its blood so it can be used to trick the father into believing that Joseph had been killed by a wild animal. Their father Jacob mourns the death of his son, the others try to comfort him but he refuses the comfort and says he will mourn until he dies.

This is a pretty wild beginning to the story of Joseph that I highly recommend reading from Genesis 37 through the end of Genesis 50.

We see love, hatred, jealousy, betrayal, and as you read on in Joseph's story you'll see more of those things but also redemption and reconciliation.

This story today at the well shows how Joseph in his messed up family and messed up situation, was a foreshadowing of Jesus Christ. This would have been something Jesus taught as He taught the scriptures and how they would point ahead to His time on the earth.

Here are the parallels to this story at the well.

1. Jesus is God's beloved Son, greatly loved, dear to the Father's heart, as Joseph was to Jacob's.

Matthew 3:17 (NKJV)

And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

He came to his brothers (the Jews) and was despised by them and the world because He testified of their evil deeds.

John 7:7 (NKJV)

The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil.

2. Many of the prophecies in the Old Testament indicate obedience and service to the Messiah by the Jews as well as all the nations.

Deuteronomy 18:15-19 (NKJV)

“The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, 16 according to all you desired of the Lord your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.’

17 “And the Lord said to me: ‘What they have spoken is good. 18 I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. 19 And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.

The Jewish leadership and really all the Jews refused to accept Jesus as their king

John 19:19-22 (NKJV)

Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was:

JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

20 Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.

21 Therefore the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but, ‘He said, “I am the King of the Jews.””

22 Pilate answered, “What I have written, I have written.”

At one point Mary, Jesus’ mother, seemingly frustrated with Jesus’ assertion that He was about His Father’s business, keeps it in her heart (center of her thoughts)

Luke 2:51 (NKJV)

Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart.

3. Jesus is sent by God to be among His people

John 1:11 (NKJV)

He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

John 5:23 (NKJV)

that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

Jesus finds the people like sheep without a shepherd

Mark 6:34 (NKJV)

And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things.

The leaders were more like hired hands than shepherds

John 10:12 (NKJV)

But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them.

So like Joseph's brothers, the leaders (shepherds) were not tending to the flocks in the place where the Father instructed them to.

4. Just like Joseph's brothers, the Jewish leaders devise a plan to kill the Father's most beloved Son.

Mark 3:6 (NKJV)

Then the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.

But there were some Reubens, not all of the Jewish leaders wanted Jesus dead.

John 7:50-53 (NKJV)

Nicodemus (he who came to Jesus by night, being one of them) said to them, 51 "Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?"

John 19:38-39 (NKJV)

After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus. 39 And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds.

Jesus is stripped of his robe by those who kill Him.

Matthew 27:28 (NKJV)

And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him.

John 19:23-24 (NKJV)

Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece. 24 They said therefore among themselves, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be," that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says: "They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots." Therefore the soldiers did these things.

Jesus is placed in a tomb (a hole in the ground) with death being clearly established

Luke 23:53 (NKJV)

Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb that was hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before.

5. Jesus had been "sold" by one of those closest to Him as one of His brothers, Judas, agrees to hand Him over for a price. (Judah for Joseph, Judas for Jesus)

Matthew 26:15-16 (NKJV)

and said, "What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?" And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. 16 So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.

Jesus is turned over to the Gentiles by his family

Matthew 27:2 (NKJV)

And when they had bound Him, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

6. Jesus' followers return to an empty tomb and are greatly dismayed and confused about what they should do next

John 20:1-2 (NKJV)

Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. 2 Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him."

John 20:15 (NKJV)

Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away."

7. Joseph's brothers used the blood of a goat to cover up their sin. This is significant because it was a goat that was used once a year, every year on the Day of Atonement as a sacrifice for the sins of all the people.

But Jesus is the Lamb of God, Whose blood covers our sin ONCE and FOREVER

John 1:29 (NKJV)

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

Jesus is the Lamb, a lamb is a young sheep. There is a big difference between goats and sheep.

Matthew 25:31-33 (NKJV)

"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. 33 And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

Sin being covered by a goat is just a temporary measure providing temporary atonement, but sin being covered by a sheep, the Lamb of God, provides permanent, lasting atonement.

Remember when Jacob was told of Joseph's death, he was distraught, his heart was heavy, because of his great love for his son. This is a picture of the Father's heart because of His great love for His Son.

We see Jesus BC in Joseph and we see the Father's love in Jacob, and eventually Joseph if you keep reading.

This is the focus of this story, not the evil of the brothers, not the well, not even Joseph other than the parallels to Jesus and foreshadowing of what was to come. The real focus is love. The Father's love which is a REALLY important component in the Christ story. It's the REASON for it all!

Like we saw last week with Jesse sending David....the Existing One (God) sent Love (Jesus) to the front lines of the battle for us!

Romans 5:8 (NKJV)

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

See if you don't get being BELOVED then it's hard to sit back and be loved. You are so dear to the Father's heart that He send Jesus to die for you so that if you accept Him, you can be saved from your sin, saved from your fear, saved from your unworthiness, saved from your shame.

You can BE LOVED.....not because you deserve it, but because God wants to love you!

1 John 3:1-2 (NKJV)

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

Behold - to see, know, experience.....the kind of love the Father has given us, so that we are invited to be children of God.

You are invited to be a child of God. You have to receive His love. The love that was poured out for us on the cross through Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior, Redeemer, Deliverer.

1 John 4:9-10 (NKJV)

In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Do you receive this love of God in Christ? THEN, and only then, you will be a child of God and the Spirit will work in your life to shape you and mold you to be like Christ until that day when He returns!

Maybe you have received God's love. Maybe you know Him and are sure of your salvation in Christ.....

When is the last time you accepted God's gift of just being loved? Or do you submit to your unworthiness, guilt, shame and hide from His love?

Jacob gave Joseph that special robe because He especially loved Joseph. Joseph was his favorite. Joseph was dear to his father's heart and deeply loved.

Do you know that you are deeply loved?

Do you know that you are dear to the heart of your Father in heaven?

Do you know that He has a special robe waiting for you because He especially loves you?

Do you know that you are His favorite?

When was the last time you were almost embarrassed by God's love for you? You know when someone does something for you that is so far beyond what you deserve, that you are embarrassed that they did so much?

Maybe how Joseph felt wearing that robe..... Maybe it's how you feel when you think about the cross.....

God is Love, and His love is very different from human love. God's love is unconditional, and it's not based on feelings or emotions. He doesn't love us because we're lovable or because we make Him feel good; He loves us because He is love. He created us to have a loving relationship with Him, and He sacrificed His own Son (who also willingly died for us) to restore that relationship.

While God's love is unconditional in that He'll love you regardless of if you love Him. It's up to you to be loved, you have to accept it.

Behold - to see, know, experience.....the kind of love the Father has given us, so that we are invited to be children of God.

BE LOVED