

“IT’S ALL GOOD!”

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Text: Genesis 50:15-21

I want to tell you a story today. It’s a story that most of us are probably familiar with. It’s the story of a boy Joseph who was the favored son in his family. His father loved him so much, he gave him a specialized garment made just for him. He often showered his favor upon this dear son and to top it all off – God gave Joseph dreams to be able to see the future and how he would be elevated. Needless to say, when Joseph’s brothers heard this, they were upset and jealous. They staged a traumatic event to finally rid themselves of the issue Joseph represented for them. They abandoned their brother, left Joseph all alone in the bottom of a pit and told the father he was no longer alive. The entire plot was pre-meditated, and for a season they thought they won this battle.

Joseph’s pit came in the form of a cistern. What form does your pit come in? Maybe yours came in the form of a diagnosis, a foster home, or a traumatic injury. Joseph was thrown in a hole and despised. And you? Thrown in an unemployment line and forgotten. Thrown into a divorce and abandoned, into a bed and abused. Pits have no easy outs. But in God’s hands, intended evil becomes eventual good.

Joseph’s story got worse before it got better. Abandonment led to enslavement, then entrapment, and finally imprisonment. He was sucker punched. Sold out. Mistreated. People made promises only to break them, offered gifts only to take them back. Joseph never gave up. Anger never metastasized into hatred. Bitterness never staked a claim. His heart never hardened; his resolve never vanished.

An Egyptian official promoted him to chief servant. The prison warden placed him over the inmates. And Pharaoh, the highest ruler on the planet, shoulder-tapped Joseph to serve as his prime minister. By the end of his life, Joseph was the second most powerful man of his generation. It is not too much to say that he saved the world from starvation.

How? In God's hands, intended evil becomes eventual good. Another word in Hebrew means "weave." Satan wove evil, but God rewove it together for good. Satan weaves; God reweaves.

Hear the end of the story of Joseph and see a beautiful picture of forgiveness.

Genesis 50:15-21 (NLT)

¹⁵ But now that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers became fearful. "Now Joseph will show his anger and pay us back for all the wrong we did to him," they said.

¹⁶ So they sent this message to Joseph: "Before your father died, he instructed us ¹⁷ to say to you: 'Please forgive your brothers for the great wrong they did to you—for their sin in treating you so cruelly.' So we, the servants of the God of your father, beg you to forgive our sin." When Joseph received the message, he broke down and wept. ¹⁸ Then his brothers came and threw themselves down before Joseph. "Look, we are your slaves!" they said.

¹⁹ But Joseph replied, "Don't be afraid of me. Am I God, that I can punish you? ²⁰ You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people. ²¹ No, don't be afraid. I will continue to take care of you and your children." So he reassured them by speaking kindly to them.

Regardless of what you are going through right now, remember these three things:

1. God is with you!

Joseph made it through difficult circumstances because the Almighty God was with him wherever he went. Remember King David recorded in the Psalms, wherever he went God was there – in the earthly realm, in Heaven or in the world beneath – God was there. (Psalm 139) Likewise, in the positive and negative moments of life,

you must know, understand and believe that God is with you. He has promised “I will never leave you or forsake you.” (Hebrews 13:15b) As you walk throughout this day, remember that God is with you and there is a power that comes with the presence of God.

My favorite promise that has taken on special meaning during these days is from Joshua 1:9. Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid! Do not be discouraged! God is with you wherever you go!

2. Your circumstance does not define you!

Everyone has had difficult moments, made mistakes and experienced misfortune or failure at some point in your life. However, it is not the situation that defines you – it is what lies inside of you. I know the world will try to make us think our misfortune is our destiny, but the devil is a liar and a deceiver too!

Joseph was sold into slavery – but he didn’t give up. He was mistreated because of a moral decision, but he didn’t give up. He was hated by his brothers, but he did not give up. He did not give up and he could not give up because God had already shown him his destiny.

The brothers could hate him, but they could not steal or alter his destiny. The baker could forget him, but he could not steal or alter his destiny. Potiphar’s wife could falsely accuse him, but she could not steal or alter his destiny. It is all in the hands of God.

That’s why we must always be careful when we talk about a child of God – you may know where they are but you do not know where they are going! As I have heard numerous times, God moves in mysterious ways, his wonders to perform.

You too are not defined by what has happened in your past or what may be the case today – you will be known by what God is preparing you for – the ultimate place God will place you in life. So what should you do? Hold on, help is on the way! Your circumstance is temporary, but your relationship with God is eternal.

3. The power of God will perform a mighty act!

Although Joseph was left for dead, that was not the plan of God. Others may plan your failure or demise, but God has a greater plan for you. His plan is that you prosper, have hope and a future. (Jeremiah 29:11) God used Joseph's situation to elevate him and to bring blessings to even his adversaries through an act of redemption and reconciliation.

You may not see it or fully understand it, but I promise you right now that God is working out your situation for the good. (Romans 8:28) Please don't give up or give in because God is going to use the power of transformation to convert all intended evil into good.

What Satan intended for evil, God intended for good! Thanks be to God!

Amen!