

THEY MEANT IT FOR EVIL, BUT GOD MEANT IT FOR GOOD.

Snapshot of Joseph's struggles

- 1) Favored and hated in a blended family – Genesis 37:2-4 *These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was pasturing the flock with his brothers. He was a boy with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives. And Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father. ³ Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his sons, because he was the son of his old age. And he made him a robe of many colors. ⁴ But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peacefully to him.*
 - Joseph's dream about his brother and family bowing down to him – 37:8b *So they [his brothers] hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.*
 - Brotherly betrayal – 37:12-36
 - Joseph is attacked, thrown into a pit, sold to their enemies, then sold in Egypt.
 - Brothers coldly covered it up – 37:31-32 *Then they took Joseph's robe and slaughtered a goat and dipped the robe in the blood. ³² And they sent the robe of many colors and brought it to their father and said, "This we have found; please identify whether it is your son's robe or not.*
- 2) Falsely accused at "work" – Genesis 39
 - God was with Joseph in his suffering – 39:3-4 *His master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD caused all that he did to succeed in his hands. ⁴ So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him, and he made him overseer of his house and put him in charge of all that he had.*
 - Joseph was tempted by the boss's wife – 39:6-10 *Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. ⁷ And after a time his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, "Lie with me."⁸ But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Behold, because of me my master has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that he has in my charge. ⁹ He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"¹⁰ And as she spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not listen to her, to lie beside her or to be with her.*
 - Joseph refused for two reasons: Loyalty to his boss and his commitment to God.

- Potiphar's wife continues to advance, Joseph refuses, and he is falsely imprisoned – 39:19-23
- God was still with Joseph in his suffering – 39:23 *The keeper of the prison paid no attention to anything that was in Joseph's charge, because the LORD was with him. And whatever he did, the LORD made it succeed.*

3) Failed by people he helped – Genesis 40

- Unreturned encouragement and forgotten "friendship" – 40:1-23

God's gifts to sufferers (What to preach to yourself)

- 1) God has given me wisdom and insight that others do not have – Genesis 41:37-39
This proposal pleased Pharaoh and all his servants. ³⁸ And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find a man like this, in whom is the Spirit of God?" ³⁹ Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has shown you all this, there is none so discerning and wise as you are.
- 2) God has given me a platform of influence – Genesis 41:40 *You shall be over my house, and all my people shall order themselves as you command. Only as regards the throne will I be greater than you.*
 - Joseph prepares for and leads through an international crisis – Genesis 41:41-57
- 3) God has given me grace to overcome bitterness and forgive – Genesis 42-45
 - Joseph's brothers come to Egypt to buy food – Genesis 42-44

Genesis 45:5-8

And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶ For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. ⁷ And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. ⁸ So it was not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt.

- 4) God has given me the confidence that my suffering has meaning – Genesis 50:20
As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.