

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT JOSEPH?

Joseph: The Story of Human Evil and God's Good Plans (Genesis 50:15-21, ESV)

v.20 "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."

What is Evil?

- **Absence of Good**
- Darkness is the Absence of Light
- Hell is the Absence of God
- People, Environment, Spirit, Event
- Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil
- FALL – God says "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil." (Genesis 3:22)

What is Good?

- **Presence & Imprint of God**
- **Genesis 1** – Creation – light, land, sea, plants, stars, sun, moon, creatures, people in His image – very good
- Know, Experience, Hear, Talk, Walk – God
- Sought An Experience Apart from God - Evil

"Why Do Bad Things Happen to Good People?": Wrong Question

"Why Do Good Things Happen to Bad People?": Correct Perspective

SUFFERING

What Are the Sources of Suffering?

- **Satan/Demons – Evil Spirits**
- **Fallen World – Evil Place**
- **Fallen Humanity – Evil People**
- **Fallen Me – Evil Actions** - For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. (Romans 7:18-19)
- **God** - "God sent me here" – Joseph understands the source his suffering (Genesis 45:5,8)

When Is Suffering Good?

For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12:10)

- **What Are God's Purposes in Suffering? Trust.**

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:28)

- **What Is Our Responsibility? Don't Compare. Learn. Hope.**

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. (Romans 8:18)

I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. (Philippians 4:11)

What is the Ultimate Evil?

But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities (Isaiah 53:5a)

- Jesus - Proclaimed the truth of who He Is - Jealousy
- His Jewish brothers conspired
- Meant for evil – betrayed, sold for silver, Judas
- Imprisoned, Tortured, Ultimately killed
- Paid the price for our rebellion
- Ultimate Evil? Our transgressions. Our iniquities. Our sinful rebellion. Our seeking the absence of God. Our evil.
- Look at the brothers. We are the brothers who sold Jesus. We loved ourselves more than Him.
- Look at Joseph. Don't hold onto bitterness. Don't drink that poison. Recognize God's good plan in the midst of your suffering. Let Him turn the evil that has happened to you into good.

What is the Ultimate Good?

upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5b)

- By this many have been saved, - LIFE
- His war with Satan brings and makes lasting PEACE with us.
- His voluntary wounds from sin bring eternal HEALING to us.
- Accept Jesus. Accept His mercy and grace. You don't deserve it. It is a gift. Receive it. He is not bitter against those who love Him. He is not angry with His children. He restores those who love Him more than they love themselves. Sometimes it takes a famine and suffering to turn to Him.
- Be a Joseph. Forgive. Don't hold onto bitterness. Bless instead of curse. Trust Jesus to take care of vengeance in His own perfect way and timing. Let Jesus change evil to good.

Joseph

Name's Meaning – may God add, increaser

Siblings: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Dinah, Benjamin

Prophecy about Egypt

- (Genesis 15:13-14 ESV) Then the LORD said to Abram, “Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years. [14] But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions.”
- (Exodus 12:40 ESV) The time that the people of Israel lived in Egypt was 430 years.

Stephen's Summary (Acts 7:6-16 ESV)

[6] And God spoke to this effect—that his offspring would be sojourners in a land belonging to others, who would enslave them and afflict them four hundred years. [7] ‘But I will judge the nation that they serve,’ said God, ‘and after that they shall come out and worship me in this place.’ [8] And he gave him the covenant of circumcision. And so Abraham became the father of Isaac, and circumcised him on the eighth day, and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob of the twelve patriarchs.

[9] “And the patriarchs, jealous of Joseph, sold him into Egypt; but God was with him [10] and rescued him out of all his afflictions and gave him favor and wisdom before Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who made him ruler over Egypt and over all his household. [11] Now there came a famine throughout all Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction, and our fathers could find no food. [12] But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers on their first visit. [13] And on the second visit Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to Pharaoh. [14] And Joseph sent and summoned Jacob his father and all his kindred, seventy-five persons in all. [15] And Jacob went down into Egypt, and he died, he and our fathers, [16] and they were carried back to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham had bought for a sum of silver from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.

Jealousy - (Genesis 37:2-4 ESV) [2] 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.

Potiphar's Slave - (Genesis 39:2 ESV) The LORD was with Joseph, and he became a successful man, and he was in the house of his Egyptian master.

Potiphar's Wife - (Genesis 39:12 ESV) she caught him by his garment, saying, “Lie with me.” But he left his garment in her hand and fled and got out of the house.

Imprisoned - (Genesis 39:21-23 ESV) But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. [22] And the keeper of the prison put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners who were in the prison. Whatever was done there, he was the one who did it. [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.

Faithful in all things - (Genesis 40:5 ESV) [5] And one night they both dreamed—the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison—each his own dream, and each dream with its own interpretation.

- (Luke 16:10 ESV) “One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much.”

Joseph & Pharaoh (Genesis 41:39-57 ESV)

[39] Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Since God has shown you all this, there is none so discerning and wise as you are. [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.” [41] And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt.” [42] Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph's hand, and clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain about his neck. [43] And he made him ride in his second chariot. And they called out before him, “Bow the knee!” Thus he set him over all the land of Egypt. [44] Moreover, Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no one shall lift up hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.” [45] And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphenath-paneah. And he gave him in marriage Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On. So Joseph went out over the land of Egypt.

- New name = “revealer of secrets”
- [51] Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh. “For,” he said, “God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house.”
- [52] The name of the second he called Ephraim, “For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction.”

Faith vs. Works

- (Genesis 41:47-49 ESV) [47] During the seven plentiful years the earth produced abundantly, [48] and he gathered up all the food of these seven years, which occurred in the land of Egypt, and put the food in the cities. He put in every city the food from the fields around it. [49] And Joseph stored up grain in great abundance, like the sand of the sea, until he ceased to measure it, for it could not be measured.

The Cursed Provides Life & Blessing

- (Genesis 41:55 ESV) When all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread. Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, “Go to Joseph. What he says to you, do.”

Jacob & Joseph - Hope

- (Genesis 45:26-27 ESV) [26] And they told him, “Joseph is still alive, and he is ruler over all the land of Egypt.” And his heart became numb, for he did not believe them. [27] But when they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said to them, and when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of their father Jacob revived.

Joseph's Characteristics: Integrity, Humility, Wisdom, Piety, Faith