

LEMONADE

Character Development, Genesis 50:20

God Meant it For Good

Genesis 50:20 (KJV) But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.

- By Genesis 50, Joseph is in the place he dreamed of when he was 17
- Genesis 50:20 lets you know things worked out for good in Joseph's life
- A close reading of Genesis 50:20 tells you there were some bad chapters in Joseph's life story, and God used the "bad chapters" to *develop* Joseph into the man He needed to be and create the *outcome* God planned **Romans 8:28 (NLT2) 28 And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.**
- From this one verse, we know some bad things happened Joseph's life and God used the bad things and made something good out of them
 - What happened in Joseph's life that shaped into the man we see in Genesis 50:20?
 - What can we learn from Joseph's life and apply to our lives as we navigate the trials and suffering associated with this pandemic and our pre-pandemic trials and suffering?

Joseph's Dysfunctional Family

Genesis 37:3-5 (KJV) 3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours. 4 And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him. 5 And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more.

- Joseph was loved by his father Jacob
 - He was the favorite son because he was born in Jacob's old age
 - Jacob made Joseph a *coat of many colors*; it was a coat that suggested to his brothers that he was not only his father's favorite, but he was the one that would receive the largest portion of the inheritance; not the oldest brother Reuben
- As you can imagine, Joseph's brothers not only envied him, they hated Joseph
- Joseph was also dreamer
 - He dreamed one day he would rule over his brothers and they would bow to him
 - Joseph's dreams tell us a lot about God-given dreams and visions
- **Character Development Lessons from Joseph's Life**
 - Regardless of who you are and the dynamics of your family, God has placed a dream inside of you
 - Be careful of how and to whom you tell your dreams

The Pit

Genesis 37:24 (KJV) 24 And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it.

- Joseph's brothers hated him so much they wanted to get rid of him

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- Joseph's brothers stripped off his coat of many colors and threw him in empty pit and left him
- Joseph may have "contributed" to it by flaunting his robe, his superiority, and his constant telling of his dreams to his brothers
- The *layover* in the pit is not designed to be permanent, but it is designed to teach us *humility*
- **Character Development Lessons from the Pit**
 - Sometimes God allows us to have a "layover in the pit" to *purge* us of our pride
 - *Humility* is a character trait we need to manage the *new levels* God wants to take you
 - *The way up is down*
 - The vision God has given you should not make arrogant, but we should be *humbled* that God chose us to give this vision to

From the Pit to Slavery

Genesis 39:1-6

- Joseph was sold to a band of traders passing by for 20 pieces of silver, who in turn sell Joseph to Potiphar in Egypt
- Joseph went from "the pit" to being sold as a slave; his life has gone from *bad to worse*
- Yet the Bible says, Genesis 39:2 "...**and the Lord was with Joseph, and prospered him**"
- God was not only with Joseph, but Joseph did *excellent work* as a slave in Potiphar's house
- Potiphar *promoted* Joseph, the slave and made him overseer of all his businesses
- **Character Development Lessons from Joseph's Life**
 - Joseph was an "excellent worker" on a job he *did not* choose
 - Joseph turned a bad situation into a promotion
 - During this pandemic, many of us are working from home or going to work with limited resources
 - Are you committed to doing an excellent job in less than ideal conditions?
 - Can you be faithful doing a job that's not suited for all your skills?
- God is looking for excellence in all we do even if it's not what we're called to do

Self-Control and Integrity Matter

Genesis 39:7 (KJV) 7 And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me.

- Joseph was making the best of a bad situation, he was a slave that had found favor and promotion with his master, Potiphar
- And seemingly out of nowhere, the Bible says in **Genesis 39:6 says "...And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured."**
- And Mrs. Potiphar took notice of Joseph and she started propositioning Joseph
- And Joseph said in **Genesis 39:9 How can I do this wickedness and sin against God**

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- Joseph is a long way from home, he could have slept with Potiphar's wife and no would have known...except God ***Proverbs 15:3 (KJV) The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.***
- Joseph's commitment to God was greater than Potiphar's appeal to his flesh
- A few days later, Mrs. Potiphar and Joseph were alone in the house and she grabbed him and said let's go to bed
- Joseph left the coat in her hand and fled and got out of the house
- What was true for Joseph, is true for us, don't allow sexual temptation or temptation of any kind derail the vision God has for your life
- ***Character Development Lessons from Joseph's Life***
 - It's during the *layover in the land of temptation* that God teaches *self-control* and provides a way of escape ***1 Corinthians 10:13 (KJV) 13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.***
 - God doesn't take the temptation away from us, but He does *provide* a way of escape
 - Commitment matters. Integrity matters. Self-control matters.

Prison Time

Genesis 39:19-21

- Joseph escaped from Mrs. Potiphar's clutches, but not from her revenge
- She had Joseph's coat and told Potiphar that Joseph tried to rape her, but she screamed, and he ran away
 - Even though he had favor with Mr. Potiphar, he had no choice but to put Joseph in prison
- But even in prison, the Lord was with Joseph
- Joseph met the butler and the baker in prison and used his gift of interpreting dreams
- The butler's dream comes to pass, and he was released from prison and restored to his position
- Joseph asked to be "remembered" when he was released
- The butler forgets and Joseph stayed in prison two additional years
- Even though the butler forgot about Joseph, God did not
- It was during this prison time; Joseph *grew* in patience and faith in God
- ***Character Development Lessons from Joseph's Life***
 - Joseph continued to do what was right even when the results turned out wrong
 - Joseph used his spiritual gifts for the benefit of others
 - Joseph learned to patiently wait on God's timing while in prison
 - The way God develops patience in us by allowing situations that try our patience
 - This pandemic is trying our patience

Promotion

Genesis 41:8-9

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- Pharaoh had a dream but none of Pharaoh's wise men or magicians could interpret the dream
- The butler then "remembered" Joseph and how he interpreted his dream and it came to pass
- Pharaoh sent for Joseph to interpret his dream
- Joseph has been waiting two additional years in prison and *unexpected opportunity* arises
 - Even though Pharaoh summoned Joseph to come quickly, Joseph took the time to prepare for his meeting with Pharaoh by shaving and putting on fresh clothes
- Our most important opportunities may come when we least expect them
- Be ready for those *unexpected opportunities* by staying close to God
- Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's dream that a famine was coming, and the dream meant to store grain during the 7 years of plenty so they would be able to make it through the 7 years of famine
- The officials said to Pharaoh, "Can we find a person like Joseph that is so obviously filled with the Spirit of God?"
- Unbelievers can *recognize* and *value* the Spirit of God on your life
- As a result, Pharaoh made Joseph prime minister over all of Egypt
- **Character Development Lessons from Joseph's Life**
 - Be ready for *unexpected opportunities* by staying close to God
 - Your gift will open doors for you **Proverbs 18:16 (KJV) 16 A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.**
 - Get "physically ready" for your *unexpected opportunities* during this pandemic
 - Get *completely dressed*, i.e. shower, shave, fix your hair, put on clothes, even if it's only a routine video chat with staff, you never who will show up at routine meetings!
 - You never know, you may be "auditioning" for your next promotion!

Forgiveness

Genesis 45:4-8

- During the famine he meets his brothers again who were trying to buy grain
- Joseph tell his brothers, "I am Joseph"
- Instead of getting even, Joseph blesses them *and* forgives them
- Joseph told his brothers not to be angry with themselves over how they treated him, it's in the past, Joseph has forgiven them **Genesis 45:5 Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.**
- All along Joseph's journey God allowed Joseph to have some that shaped Joseph's character to fit the palace so that when he got to the place of his dreams, he'd do the right things
- The greater purpose was to save a nation alive, the Israelite people
 - If they had died in the famine, not only is a nation of people extinct, there is no Jesus Christ to be born to be our Savior, without a Savior, we are lost forever

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- **Character Development Lessons from the Life of Joseph**
 - Forgiveness is a vital part of the Christian life **Matthew 6:14-15 (KJV) 14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: 15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.**
 - Forgiveness is extended to friends and enemies **Ephesians 4:31-32 (KJV) 31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.**
 - The more we are aware of own sinfulness and the forgiveness we have received, the easier it is to forgive others
 - Joseph's brothers hated him, but he was still able to forgive them
 - Forgiveness is not an option, it's a command

All Things Work Together for Our Good

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

- What you are experiencing right now is not an isolated event
- Everything that you have been through or are going through now is piece of a puzzle that is coming together
- Sometimes we wonder how God is going use what we've done or been through
- What matters to you is that you trust God enough to give Him everything and trust Him blend it all together into a wonderful life
- This pandemic is a horrible *chapter* of our lives, but this is not the *whole* of our lives
- God wants us to know that the *journey* is as important as the *destination*
- The difficult times in life teach us valuable lessons that help shape us into the person God wants us to be
- Despite trials and suffering, God will put you in the place He wants you to be