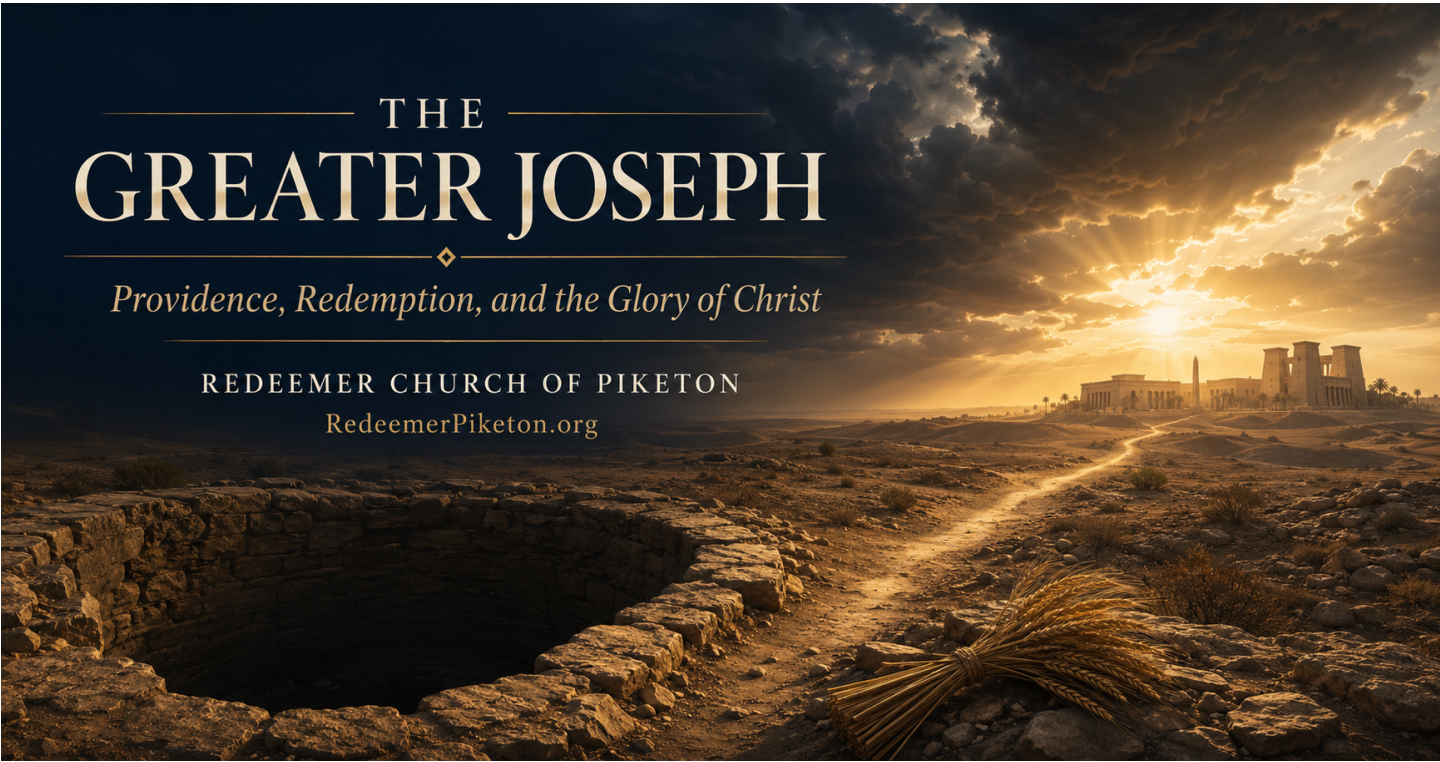




THE GREATER JOSEPH

Providence, Redemption, and the Glory of Christ

REDEEMER CHURCH OF PIKETON

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The Greater Joseph: Providence, Redemption, and the Glory of Christ

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“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.”

Genesis 50:20, KJV

Genesis 37 closes beneath a heavy shadow. Joseph has been stripped of the coat his father gave him, cast into a pit, and sold into slavery. His brothers have stained his coat with blood and used it to deceive Jacob. Their aged father mourns as though his beloved son were dead. Meanwhile, Joseph is carried toward Egypt as another man's property.

Everyone in the chapter sees only a fragment of the story. Joseph sees the road into Egypt. Jacob sees a bloodied coat. The brothers see silver in their hands and believe their troubling dreams are behind them.

God sees the whole.

The final verse tells us that the Midianites sold Joseph to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh. That detail quietly opens the next movement of divine providence. Joseph has been removed from his father's

house, yet he remains securely within the purpose of God. His circumstances have changed completely. The promise of God remains firm.

The story of Joseph reveals God's governing sovereignty over the ordinary and extraordinary events of life. It also points us toward Jesus Christ. Joseph, the beloved son who was sent, rejected, sold, humbled, and finally exalted, gives us a living pattern that anticipates the person and saving work of the greater Joseph.

Providence in the Shadows

Psalms 105 gives God's own interpretation of Joseph's journey:

"Moreover he called for a famine upon the land: he brake the whole staff of bread. He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant: whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron: until the time that his word came: the word of the LORD tried him. The king sent and loosed him; even the ruler of the people, and let him go free. He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance."

Psalms 105:16-21, KJV

Joseph's brothers sold him. Merchants carried him. Potiphar purchased him. Each person acted freely according to his own desires. Above every human action stood the sovereign direction of God. Scripture says, "He sent a man before them."

The brothers acted from envy and hatred. Their purpose was evil. God remained perfectly holy while governing the outcome toward the preservation of life and the fulfillment of His covenant promise. Joseph later said to them:

"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."

Genesis 50:20, KJV

The same event contained two intentions. The brothers meant evil. God meant good. Their guilt remained fully theirs, while the outcome remained fully under God's command.

This truth gives us a biblical understanding of providence. God continually preserves and governs His creatures and all their actions according to His holy, wise, and sovereign will. He never shares in the evil intentions of sinners. He rules over their actions and directs history toward the purpose He established from eternity.

Paul describes believers as those who are:

“Predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.”

Ephesians 1:11, KJV

God’s providence was active in Joseph’s pit, along the road to Egypt, inside Potiphar’s house, and within Pharaoh’s court. The hand of the Lord remained steady even when His purpose was hidden from every human eye.

The Covenant Promise Behind Joseph’s Preservation

Joseph’s preservation belonged to a far greater purpose than his personal survival. God had promised Abraham:

“And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”

Genesis 12:2-3, KJV

That promise reached forward to Jesus Christ. Paul explains:

“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.”

Galatians 3:16, KJV

A famine would eventually threaten Jacob’s household. Through Joseph, God prepared the means by which the covenant family would be preserved. Judah would survive, and through Judah’s line the promised Redeemer would come.

The pit in Genesis 37 therefore belongs to the history of redemption. The merchants, the road into Egypt, the false accusation, the prison, Pharaoh’s dreams, and Joseph’s elevation all serve the covenant purpose of God. What appears to be a private tragedy becomes one strand within the Lord’s gracious plan to bring Christ into the world.

Joseph Points Us to Jesus Christ

Jesus taught His disciples that the Old Testament Scriptures testify of Him. After His resurrection, He met two disciples on the road to Emmaus:

“And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.”

Luke 24:27, KJV

Joseph stands within that Christ-centered history. He was a sinner saved by grace, and Jesus Christ alone is the sinless Savior. Still, God shaped Joseph’s life in a way that provides a remarkable preview of Christ’s humiliation and exaltation.

The Beloved Son Was Sent

Joseph was the beloved son of Jacob:

“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.”

Genesis 37:3, KJV

Jacob sent Joseph to seek the welfare of his brothers. Joseph answered his father, “Here am I,” and willingly went.

Jesus Christ is the eternal and beloved Son of the Father. At His baptism, the Father declared:

“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

Matthew 3:17, KJV

In the fullness of time, the Father sent His Son into the world to redeem His people:

“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

Galatians 4:4-5, KJV

The Son came willingly to accomplish the Father’s saving purpose. Jesus said:

“For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.”

John 6:38-39, KJV

The Beloved Son Was Rejected

Joseph's brothers saw him approaching and conspired to kill him. Their hatred for Joseph was bound up with their hatred for the revelation God had given through his dreams. They believed they could silence the dreamer and prevent the dream from being fulfilled. Their conspiracy became part of the path by which God fulfilled His word.

Jesus also came to His own and was rejected:

"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not."

John 1:10-11, KJV

The religious rulers plotted against Him. Judas betrayed Him. Pilate handed Him over. Roman soldiers crucified Him. Each participant bore responsibility for his sin. Through these wicked actions, God accomplished the redemption He had purposed before the foundation of the world.

The early church prayed:

"For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."

Acts 4:27-28, KJV

Calvary unfolded according to the eternal counsel of God. Human guilt and divine sovereignty appear together without conflict. Peter preached:

"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."

Acts 2:23, KJV

The God who governed Joseph's betrayal also governed every event leading to the cross. The cruelty of men served the holy purpose of God, and the death of Christ secured eternal redemption for His people.

The Beloved Son Was Sold and Humbled

Joseph's brothers stripped away his coat and sold him for twenty pieces of silver. The beloved son was treated as unwanted property and handed over to strangers.

Judas later betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver:

“Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.”

Matthew 26:14-15, KJV

Christ was stripped, mocked, condemned, and crucified. Throughout His humiliation, He remained the sovereign Son who willingly laid down His life for the sheep.

“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”

John 10:11, KJV

Joseph endured undeserved suffering that placed him where God would use him to preserve earthly life. Jesus Christ, the perfectly righteous One, bore the sins of His people and secured eternal life through His sacrifice.

Peter writes:

“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”

1 Peter 2:24, KJV

The Greater Deliverance

Joseph would eventually rise from slavery and imprisonment to a position of honor beside Pharaoh. God would use him to provide bread during a severe famine. The brother who had been rejected would become the instrument through whom his family was preserved.

This pattern reaches its perfect fulfillment in Jesus Christ. The eternal Son humbled Himself unto death and was raised in glory:

“And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.”

Philippians 2:8-9, KJV

Joseph rose from confinement and received authority within Egypt. Jesus rose bodily from the grave and reigns as Lord over all creation. Joseph distributed bread to hungry people. Jesus is the Bread of Life who gives everlasting life to His people.

“And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.”

John 6:35, KJV

Joseph preserved people from famine. Jesus saves His people from their sins. His obedience supplies the righteousness they lack. His blood satisfies divine justice. His resurrection declares His victory over sin and death. His intercession ensures that every person given to Him by the Father will be kept and raised in glory.

The Gospel of the Greater Joseph

The deepest human need is reconciliation with God. Scripture declares that all have sinned and come short of His glory. Our fallen nature leaves us spiritually dead and unable to produce the righteousness His holiness requires.

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”

Romans 3:23, KJV

God, in sovereign mercy, sent His Son. Jesus Christ took our nature without sin and fulfilled the law in perfect obedience. At the cross, He stood as the substitute of His people and bore their guilt. The Father imputed their sins to Christ, and the perfect righteousness of Christ is imputed to every believer.

“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

2 Corinthians 5:21, KJV

Christ accomplished redemption. Divine justice was satisfied. Sin was put away by His sacrifice. On the third day, He rose from the dead and now lives forever as the Savior and Intercessor of His people.

“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”

Hebrews 7:25, KJV

Salvation is the gift of God’s grace, received through faith in Jesus Christ. Faith brings no personal merit before God. It rests upon the merit of Christ and receives what He has fully accomplished.

The Gospel call is clear:

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

Acts 16:31, KJV

Come to Christ with your guilt, helplessness, and need. His promise gives strong assurance:

“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”

John 6:37, KJV

The Father chose a people in Christ. The Son accomplished their redemption. The Holy Spirit gives life, reveals Christ, and grants faith. Salvation from beginning to end is of the Lord. Every redeemed sinner will give all glory to God.

Hope When God's Purpose Is Hidden

Joseph could not see God's purpose from the bottom of the pit. The road to Egypt may have felt like another sorrow piled upon betrayal. Every mile carried him farther from home. Yet every mile also carried him toward the place God had appointed.

Believers often experience seasons when the purpose of God remains hidden. Prayer seems unanswered. Illness changes daily life. A trusted friend causes deep pain. Plans collapse. Grief enters the home. Scripture gives us room to weep in such seasons. Providence assures us that sorrow never rules the outcome. Our Father governs the trial with wisdom and covenant love.

Jesus taught:

"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows."

Matthew 10:29-31, KJV

The smallest details of creation stand beneath the Father's rule. His redeemed children are forever secure within His care.

The cross gives us the clearest lens through which to view difficult providence. On the day Christ died, His disciples saw rejection, suffering, death, and a sealed tomb. God was accomplishing eternal redemption through those very events. The resurrection revealed the triumph of His purpose.

Paul therefore writes:

"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."

Romans 8:28, KJV

Some events are grievous in themselves. God works all things together for the eternal good of His people. He conforms them to Christ, preserves them through faith, and carries them safely toward glory.

Trust the God of the Pit and the Palace

Genesis 37 ends with Joseph in Egypt. His story continues. Potiphar's house will lead to prison. Prison will lead to Pharaoh. Pharaoh's dreams will lead to Joseph's elevation. His elevation will lead to the preservation of many lives. The dreams God gave Joseph will be fulfilled in every detail.

Our lives also unfold one chapter at a time. We see a small portion of the road. God governs the entire journey.

Christian, trust Him when the way is clear. Trust Him when the path disappears into darkness. The hands that govern providence are the hands that were pierced for your redemption. The Father who delivered His Son for you will supply everything required to bring you safely home.

The Lord finishes the work He begins:

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

Philippians 1:6, KJV

The pit remained under God's rule. The palace stood under His rule. Calvary unfolded under His rule, and the empty tomb bears witness to the victory of His sovereign purpose.

Jesus Christ, the greater Joseph, lives and reigns. He receives guilty sinners, clothes them in His righteousness, preserves them by His power, and will raise them in glory at the last day. In Him, the providence of God becomes the sure comfort of every believer.

"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

Romans 11:36, KJV

Redeemer Church of Piketon proclaims God's free and sovereign grace in Jesus Christ. To learn more about the Gospel, service times, and available resources, visit www.RedeemerPiketon.org.