

The Sovereign Hand of God in the Pit

Part Five: The Greater Joseph and the Providence of Grace

Throughout the story of Joseph, one truth becomes increasingly clear: God is working.

At the beginning of Genesis 37, Joseph appears to be a young man whose future is uncertain. He is a shepherd in his father's household. He is rejected by his brothers. He is thrown into a pit and sold into slavery.

Yet beneath every circumstance, the sovereign hand of God is directing the story.

The Lord was not surprised by Joseph's suffering.

The Lord was not defeated by Joseph's betrayal.

The Lord was not absent when Joseph entered the darkness.

God was accomplishing His purpose.

As we conclude this series, we must recognize that Joseph's story points us beyond Joseph himself. The Bible is not simply a record of remarkable individuals. It is the unfolding revelation of God's plan to redeem sinners through His Son, Jesus Christ.

The life of Joseph prepares us to see the greater Joseph.

The suffering servant who would come.

The beloved Son who would be rejected.

The Redeemer who would accomplish salvation through His suffering.

Joseph, the Beloved Son

Genesis introduces Joseph as the beloved son of Jacob.

Moses writes:

"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).

Joseph held a special place in his father's affection.

The coat given to Joseph became a visible sign of his father's love.

In a far greater way, Jesus Christ is the beloved Son of the Father.

At the baptism of Christ, the Father declared:

"And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17, KJV).

The love between the Father and the Son existed before the foundation of the world. Christ did not become beloved because of His obedience. He has eternally been the beloved Son.

Yet in the fullness of time, the Father sent His Son into the world to accomplish redemption.

The apostle John writes:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16, KJV).

The sending of Joseph by Jacob foreshadowed the greater sending of Christ by the Father.

Joseph, the Rejected Brother

Joseph was sent by his father to his brothers.

Jacob said:

"Come, and I will send thee unto them" (Genesis 37:13, KJV).

Joseph went willingly.

Yet when he arrived, his brothers rejected him.

They hated him.

They stripped him of his coat.

They cast him into a pit.

In a far greater way, Christ came unto His own people and was rejected.

John declares:

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11, KJV).

The rejection of Jesus was not because of any fault within Him.

He was perfectly righteous.

He was completely holy.

He was without sin.

Isaiah prophesied of the suffering Messiah:

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief"
(Isaiah 53:3, KJV).

Joseph's brothers rejected him because of jealousy.

The leaders who rejected Christ rejected Him because of unbelief and hatred toward the truth.

Yet the rejection of Christ did not prevent God's purpose.

It fulfilled God's purpose.

Joseph, Sold for Silver

Joseph's brothers eventually sold him.

Moses records:

"And they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the
Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt"
(Genesis 37:28, KJV).

Joseph was exchanged for silver.

His value was measured by earthly men.

The beloved son became a servant.

Centuries later, another beloved Son would be betrayed for silver.

Judas came to the religious leaders and said:

"What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with
him for thirty pieces of silver" (Matthew 26:15, KJV).

The comparison is striking.

Joseph was betrayed by someone close to him.

Jesus was betrayed by one of His own disciples.

Joseph was sold into slavery.

Jesus willingly entered humiliation to redeem His people.

Yet the suffering of Christ was not a tragic accident.

It was the eternal plan of God.

Peter proclaimed:

"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 cross reveals the mystery of God's providence.

Wicked men acted according to sinful desires.

God accomplished His holy purpose.

Human evil was real.

Divine sovereignty was greater.

Joseph, Suffering Before Glory

Joseph's journey followed a pattern that would ultimately be fulfilled in Christ.

First came suffering.

Then came exaltation.

Joseph entered Egypt as a slave.

Eventually, he would rise to a position of authority beside Pharaoh.

The suffering was not the end of his story.

The pit was not the final chapter.

The slavery was not the final destination.

God was preparing Joseph for a greater purpose.

The same pattern is found in Jesus Christ.

Paul writes:

"But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

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 2:7-9, KJV).

Christ humbled Himself.

Christ suffered.

Christ died.

Yet Christ was exalted.

The grave could not hold Him.

Death could not defeat Him.

The Father raised Him in victory.

The Comfort of God's Providence

The story of Joseph gives believers confidence because it reveals the character of God.

Joseph did not understand the purpose of his suffering while he was experiencing it.

He could not see the future from the pit.

He could not see the deliverance that was coming.

But God saw everything.

The Lord knew the end from the beginning.

The Lord was working through every circumstance.

Years later, Joseph would tell his brothers:

"But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good" (Genesis 50:20, KJV).

Those words summarize the entire story.

The brothers meant evil.

God meant good.

The brothers intended harm.

God accomplished salvation.

This is the confidence of every believer.

God is not merely watching our lives unfold.

He is actively governing them according to His wisdom and grace.

The apostle Paul gives this promise:

"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).

Paul does not say every circumstance is good.

Joseph's pit was not good.

His betrayal was not good.

His suffering was not good.

Yet God works through all things for the good of His people.

The believer's hope is not found in the absence of trials.

Our hope is found in the presence and faithfulness of God.

Trusting the God Who Rules the Pit and the Palace

Perhaps you are walking through a season where God's purpose seems hidden.

Perhaps you are carrying a burden you did not expect.

Perhaps you are waiting for the Lord to reveal what He is accomplishing.

Genesis 37 reminds us that God's silence does not mean God's absence.

The Lord was with Joseph in the pit.

The Lord was with Joseph in Egypt.

The Lord was with Joseph in the palace.

And the Lord remains with His people today.

Jesus promised His disciples:

"And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:20, KJV).

The God who guided Joseph's steps guides ours.

The God who preserved Joseph preserves His people.

The God who fulfilled His promises through Christ will fulfill every promise He has made.

The pit was not the end of Joseph's story.

The cross was not the end of Christ's story.

And suffering is not the end of the believer's story.

The Lord is bringing all things together according to His perfect purpose.

Therefore, we can trust Him.

When His ways are hidden, trust Him.

When circumstances are difficult, trust Him.

When the future is uncertain, trust Him.

The God who ruled the pit also ruled the palace.

He still reigns.

He still saves.

He still works all things according to the counsel of His will.

As the apostle Paul declares:

"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen" (Romans 11:36, KJV).

This completes the five-part blog series, “The Sovereign Hand of God in the Pit.” It can also be adapted into a church newsletter series, devotional booklet, or sermon companion resource for the Genesis 37 series.

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