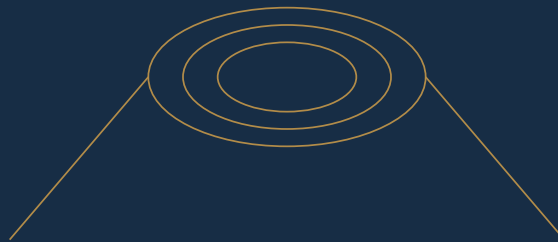


A REDEEMER CHURCH PUBLICATION

Joseph Points Us to the Greater Joseph

The Sovereign Hand of God in the Pit

GENESIS 37:25-36



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PROCLAIMING GOD'S FREE AND SOVEREIGN GRACE IN CHRIST

A SERMON FOR READING AND REFLECTION

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About this edition

This booklet presents an edited reading edition of Joseph Points Us to the Greater Joseph, preached by Pastor Jason K. Boothe. The supplied transcript has been organized into chapters and revised for clarity, with additional full-text scriptural cross references and five discussion questions at the conclusion of each chapter.

The sermon follows Joseph's journey through suffering and preservation to the greater glory of Jesus Christ. Its central encouragement is that God's sovereign purpose secures the salvation of His people and sustains them on the road they cannot yet see.

All Scripture quotations, including the opening reading, are presented in the King James Version. Scripture reference headings link to the corresponding KJV passages.

Original sermon: [youtube.com/watch?v=nEDtR9y0-ls](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nEDtR9y0-ls)

The Scripture Before Us

Genesis 37:25-36

25 And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmeelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt.

26 And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood?

27 Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content.

28 Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; 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.

29 And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes.

30 And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go?

31 And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood;

32 And they sent the coat of many colours, and they brought it to their father; and said, This have we found: know now whether it be thy son's coat or no.

33 And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.

34 And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days.

35 And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him.

36 And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard.

CHAPTER ONE

Held by God on an Uncertain Road

Genesis 37 closes beneath a heavy shadow. Joseph is gone. His coat has been stained with blood, and his father has been deceived by his own sons. Jacob descends into deep mourning while the brothers believe they have finally rid themselves of the dreamer. Joseph, meanwhile, is carried toward a foreign land as another man's property.

If we could see only what the people in this chapter could see, the scene would appear hopeless. Joseph could see the road to Egypt, but he could not see the authority that awaited him there. His brothers could see the silver in their hands, but they could not see that the brother they had sold would one day become the instrument of their deliverance. Jacob could see the bloodied garment, but he could not see his living son or the preservation God was preparing for his household.

Beloved, how familiar that uncertainty is. We know something of what God has promised, and we have the broad outline of the believer's future in Christ. The details of tomorrow remain hidden. We do not know which day will bring a great trial to our family, which hour will bring sorrow to someone we love, or when the Lord will call us home.

Joseph knew that he was traveling on a road. He could not know all that would happen when he reached its end. We live with that same limitation. Yet God knows the end from the beginning, and every step of His people's journey lies within His sovereign purpose.

The Lord knows where He is leading

Throughout this series we have returned to the providence of God. The Lord governs His creation with perfect wisdom. His purpose encompasses the circumstances we understand and those that leave us bewildered. We can trust Him because His knowledge is complete and His faithfulness does not change.

Isaiah 46:9-10

Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

The God who has declared the end from the beginning will hold His people through the valley of the shadow of death. He will guide us in the low places as surely as He keeps us on the mountaintops. His ways exceed our understanding, yet His character gives us every reason to rest in Him.

We might imagine that once we understood this truth, we would never worry again. We would hear the promise, take it into our hearts, and walk calmly through every

difficulty. But we know ourselves too well to make such a claim. Anxiety returns. Fear finds a familiar place in our thoughts. Even mature believers need to hear again that they belong to the Lord.

That is why Scripture calls us to remember His benefits. We forget what we have been taught. We lose sight of mercies we have already received. The ministry of the Word brings the promise before us again, and the Spirit uses that Word to strengthen weary faith.

Psalms 103:2-4

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;

Bought with a price and kept by grace

Today I need this reminder as surely as you do. Our worry and fretting may be brought to the feet of our Saviour. Christ bore the condemnation of His people. He purchased us with His own blood, and those whom He has redeemed are precious to Him.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

We belong to another. That truth changes the way we understand our lives. Our circumstances may be painful, but our lives remain in the keeping of the One who loved us and gave Himself for us. We may bring our cares to Him precisely because He cares for us.

1 Peter 5:6-7

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

Beloved, the Father holds His people. No enemy can reach into His hand and take away a single soul entrusted to His Son. Our security rests in the strength of the Shepherd who gives eternal life to His sheep.

John 10:27-29

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

Receive the comfort of those words. The Lord will keep His own. If you know Him, you may confess with gladness that you are His and He is yours. The road ahead may be unfamiliar, but the One who leads you is faithful.

Questions for Discussion

1. Observation: In Genesis 37:25-36, what could Joseph, Jacob, and the brothers see of their circumstances? What part of God's purpose remained hidden from each of them?
2. Interpretation: Read Isaiah 46:9-10 alongside John 10:27-29. How do God's sovereign purpose and Christ's promise to His sheep provide a foundation for trusting Him?
3. Personal reflection: Why do believers need repeated reminders of God's care? Which truth from Psalm 103:2-4 is especially meaningful to you in your present circumstances?
4. Practical application: A fellow believer says, 'I know God cares for me, but I still feel anxious.' How could you use 1 Peter 5:6-7 to encourage that person with patience and compassion?
5. Prayer: What burden could you entrust to the Lord this week? How might the knowledge that you belong to Christ shape the way you pray about it?

CHAPTER TWO

Salvation According to His Purpose

The final verse of Genesis 37 is quiet. Joseph is sold into Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard. The beloved son of Jacob has been treated as merchandise. His circumstances have changed with terrifying speed.

Yet Joseph remains under the government of God. The Lord's purpose reaches into Potiphar's house as surely as it reached into Jacob's household. The brothers' cruelty is real, and Joseph's suffering is real. God will carry forward His holy purpose through the very events the brothers intended for evil.

Whatever your station in life, beloved, you remain accountable to the Lord and dependent upon His care. The believer's confidence is grounded in His promise to work all things according to His wisdom. His providence rules the steps of His servants and even the schemes of wicked men who rise against them.

Ephesians 1:11

In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

The God who accomplishes His will

God's purpose is settled. He governs history according to His own counsel. The church must therefore proclaim Him as He has revealed Himself in Scripture. Our confidence in the Gospel grows from the power of God to save.

There is a great temptation to build religious life around human tastes. We may imagine that the right atmosphere, the most entertaining program, or a sufficiently fashionable presentation will create spiritual life. At one season, amusement becomes the attraction. At another, sentiment and holiday grandeur take their turn. We can spend our energy making religion agreeable while leaving the hearer without a clear proclamation of Christ.

The issue reaches deeper than decorations, music, or personal appearance. A ministry can satisfy the preferences of its audience and still fail to feed souls with the Word of God. The church has been entrusted with the Gospel of a crucified and risen Saviour. That Gospel announces what God has accomplished for sinners who cannot save themselves.

Romans 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

We must speak plainly about sin and grace. Fallen people need the mercy of God. They need the righteousness of Christ and the life-giving work of the Holy Spirit.

When the Lord brings to pass in time what He has purposed in eternity, His grace proves effectual.

Purposed in eternity and accomplished in Christ

Christians sometimes discuss salvation by emphasizing different points in its unfolding. Some speak especially of God's eternal purpose. Others direct our attention to the finished work of Christ at Calvary. Others describe the hour when the Gospel reached them and they were brought to faith.

In the sermon, I mentioned John Gill and the discussion of eternal justification. My pastoral concern is to keep our confidence fixed upon God as the Saviour of His people. We may distinguish His eternal purpose, the historical accomplishment of redemption, and the application of salvation in our experience. In each consideration, the praise belongs to the Lord.

God chose His people in Christ before the foundation of the world. In due time, Christ died for the ungodly. Through the preaching of the Gospel, the Spirit brings sinners to know and believe upon the Saviour. These truths lead the church to worship the God whose saving purpose reaches from eternity into our lives.

Ephesians 1:4-7

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Romans 5:6

For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

The Lord also sends His Word through the ministry of those He calls to preach. The sinner hears the Gospel, is brought to believe, and confesses with joy that the Lord has saved him. The grace of God becomes wonderfully personal. The Saviour who was proclaimed to us becomes the Saviour in whom we rest.

Romans 10:14-15

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

Beloved, I bring no saving merit to this work. God knew His people, sent His Son, and brings them to Himself through the Gospel. My confession is simple: God saved me. Christ alone is my righteousness. He will hold me fast because I am in the hands of Almighty God.

Matthew 1:21

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

The comfort of His unchanging character

Our preferences change continually. We set out wanting one thing and soon discover that we want something else. We change our plans, revise our opinions, and become uncertain about decisions that once seemed obvious. Our wills are fickle.

The Lord remains faithful to Himself. His promises possess a steadiness that our feelings cannot supply. When Paul says that God works all things after the counsel of His own will, he directs us to a foundation that will hold when our confidence trembles.

Malachi 3:6

For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

Joseph could not see the next chapter of his life. God already governed it. That same Lord keeps His people today. We can entrust our unknown future to Him because we know the Saviour who leads us.

Questions for Discussion

1. Observation: What do Ephesians 1:4-7, Romans 5:6, and Romans 10:14-15 each reveal about God's saving work? Identify the emphasis of each passage.
2. Explanation: How would you explain the relationship between God's eternal purpose, Christ's accomplishment of redemption, and the Spirit's application of salvation through the Gospel?
3. Discernment: According to Romans 1:16, where does the Gospel's saving power lie? How should that truth shape the church's priorities in worship and ministry?
4. Case discussion: Someone says, 'If God has purposed to save His people, preaching is unnecessary.' How would you respond using Ephesians 1:11 and Romans 10:14-15 together?
5. Personal application: Think of a time when your feelings or plans changed. How does Malachi 3:6 direct your confidence toward the unchanging Lord, and what might that mean for a decision you face?

CHAPTER THREE

The Covenant Promise Leads to Christ

As we conclude this series, our eyes are directed through Joseph's history to Jesus Christ. The sovereign hand that brought Joseph into Egypt was preserving the covenant family through whom the promised Redeemer would come. Joseph's suffering belongs within the larger history of God's saving purpose.

The brothers' conduct was dreadful. They sold their own brother, deceived their father, and lived beneath the weight of that lie. They even stood among those who offered Jacob comfort while knowing that the grief consuming him rested upon their deception. Scripture allows us to see the ugliness of sin within the very family God had chosen to preserve.

That preservation was grace. The Lord's promise did not depend upon the moral excellence of Jacob's sons. Through this household, and specifically through the line of Judah, Christ would enter the world. Joseph's journey to Egypt became part of the means by which the Lord sustained that family through famine.

Reading the Scriptures with Christ before us

The Bible records real people and events. It tells us of sorrow, wickedness, divine deliverance, and the lives of those who trusted God's promises. Together these accounts belong to one unfolding history of redemption. From Genesis onward, the Lord reveals His purpose to glorify Himself in the salvation of His people through Jesus Christ.

After His resurrection, our Lord taught His disciples to read the Scriptures with that purpose before them.

Luke 24:27

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

John 5:39

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

This is the wonderful unity of the Word of God. The promises and patterns of the Old Testament prepare us for the person and work of Christ. The Gospels reveal His coming and His accomplished redemption. The apostolic writings unfold the glory of that salvation and the hope of His people.

Joseph himself needed redeeming grace. He was a son of Adam, dependent upon the mercy of God. Yet the Lord shaped his history in ways that anticipate the humiliation

and exaltation of the Saviour. We see a beloved son sent by his father, rejected by his brothers, brought low through suffering, and eventually raised to a position through which life is preserved.

We should recognize those patterns with reverence. Joseph is a servant within the promise; Jesus is the promised Redeemer in whom the purpose reaches its fulfillment. The similarities guide our attention to Christ, while the differences remind us of His unique glory.

The seed promised to Abraham

Long before Joseph was born, the Lord spoke to Abraham concerning a blessing that would reach beyond his immediate household.

Genesis 12:2-3

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.

Paul directs us to the fulfillment of this promise in Christ.

Galatians 3:16

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.

The promise reaches across generations and nations. God's purpose in preserving Jacob's family was bound to His purpose in sending the Redeemer. Judah was already among Joseph's brothers. Through Judah's line, in the fullness of time, the promised Christ would come.

Consider how much Joseph could not see. What felt like a private tragedy stood within the unfolding history of redemption. He was far from home, carried along by men who regarded him as property. Yet the Lord was bringing him to the place where he would serve a purpose far greater than he could imagine.

Beloved, there is comfort here for those enduring adversity. We often measure God's care by the ease of our circumstances. Joseph's history teaches us to look to the faithfulness of God while the circumstances remain hard. His appointed work may unfold through seasons we would never have chosen.

God sent a man before them

Psalm 105 gives us an inspired interpretation of Joseph's journey. The brothers sold him, and through that event the Lord sent him ahead of the family.

Psalm 105:16-22

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: To bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom.

The chains hurt his feet. The waiting tried him. The providence of God included those painful realities, and the promise of God endured through them. At the appointed time, the prisoner was released and entrusted with authority.

Years later, Joseph spoke to his brothers with a clarity he had not possessed beside the pit. He could identify their evil intent while confessing the goodness of God's purpose.

Genesis 50:20

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.

Here is the truth that has run through our whole study. Human wickedness remains wickedness, and the Lord accomplishes His good purpose. The brothers' sin served a purpose they neither understood nor intended. Through Joseph, God preserved life and kept His covenant promise moving toward its fulfillment in Christ.

Questions for Discussion

1. Observation: How does Psalm 105:16-22 describe Joseph's suffering, waiting, and eventual release? What does the statement that God 'sent a man before them' reveal about his journey?
2. Scripture connection: Read Genesis 12:2-3 and Galatians 3:16. How does God's promise to Abraham help explain the significance of preserving Jacob's household?
3. Comparison: In what ways does Joseph's history anticipate Christ's work? What differences must we remember when describing Joseph as a pattern pointing to the Saviour?
4. Interpretation: In Genesis 50:20, Joseph speaks of both his brothers' intention and God's purpose. How does this verse acknowledge the wrong done to Joseph while giving God the glory for preserving life?
5. Personal reflection: Joseph could not see the full significance of his trials while enduring them. How can his history encourage you to trust God without assuming that you can explain every hardship?

CHAPTER FOUR

The Beloved Son Sent and Rejected

Joseph was the beloved son of Jacob. His father sent him to inquire after his brothers, and Joseph went in obedience. That journey placed him in the hands of those who hated him.

The pattern directs our thoughts to the eternal Son of God. At the baptism of Jesus, the Father declared His delight in Him. In the fullness of time, this beloved Son came into the world to accomplish the redemption of His people.

Matthew 3:17

And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Galatians 4:4-5

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.

The Son came to do the Father's will

Jacob did not know the betrayal awaiting Joseph. The heavenly Father knew perfectly what His Son would accomplish. Christ came willingly, in full harmony with the Father's eternal purpose. Fully divine and fully human, He entered our fallen world as the righteous servant who would secure salvation for those given to Him.

John 6:38-40

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. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

What confidence these words provide. The Son came to fulfill the Father's will, and that will includes the preservation and resurrection of His people. Our hope rests upon the obedience and faithfulness of Christ.

Joseph left his father's household to seek his brothers. The Son of God came into the world to seek and to save the lost. He fulfilled all righteousness and accomplished the work entrusted to Him.

Luke 19:10

For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Rejected by His own

Joseph's brothers saw him approaching and conspired against him. Their hatred was bound to their rejection of the dreams God had given him. They resented the prospect of bowing before their younger brother, and they imagined that removing the dreamer would overthrow the word he had received.

That hostility reveals the terrible depth of the fallen heart. Men may become so determined to preserve their own place that they rise against the word of the living God. Joseph's brothers acted from envy and hatred. Their conspiracy exposes the rebellion that grace alone can overcome.

When the Lord Jesus came, He too was rejected by His own.

John 1:10-11

*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.*

Religious leaders conspired against Him. Judas betrayed Him, the crowd called for His crucifixion, and Roman soldiers nailed Him to the cross. Scripture identifies the guilt of those involved while also declaring that the death of Christ fulfilled the sovereign counsel of God.

Acts 4:27-28

*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.*

Sovereign purpose and human responsibility

The cross displays these truths with extraordinary clarity. Those who crucified Christ acted wickedly. God accomplished redemption through the death of His Son. His holy purpose does not excuse their sin, and their sin does not frustrate His purpose.

Peter proclaimed both truths in one sentence.

Acts 2:23-24

Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

The pit in Joseph's history stood within that same providential government. Those who dug it did not understand the part it would play in preserving the covenant family. Joseph did not know that he would be cast into it. The traders did not understand the larger purpose unfolding as they carried him toward Egypt. Yet every step remained within the counsel of God.

We must receive this teaching with humility. God is sovereign, and human beings are responsible for their sin. Scripture affirms both. We should be careful to confess

what God has revealed without pretending that our understanding encompasses the depths of His wisdom.

I love theology. The study of God's Word, the doctrine of salvation, and the order in which Scripture presents His saving work are matters worth a lifetime of attention. Yet the more we learn, the more we recognize our dependence upon the Lord to give us light. Our knowledge remains creaturely and limited.

Deuteronomy 29:29

The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.

There is courage in confessing that we do not have every question resolved. A minister should be ready to teach clearly what Scripture says and to bow reverently where God's wisdom exceeds his own. Our calling is to search the Scriptures faithfully, obey the truth He has revealed, and worship Him for the greatness we cannot exhaust.

Romans 11:33

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

Lord, keep us humble. Give us light in Your Word, and teach us to trust You where our understanding reaches its limit.

Questions for Discussion

1. Observation: According to John 6:38-40, why did Christ come from heaven, and what does He promise concerning those given to Him by the Father?
2. Comparison: Compare Jacob's sending of Joseph with the Father's sending of His Son. What similarities help us understand the sermon, and what does the Father's perfect knowledge add to our understanding of Christ's mission?
3. Interpretation: How do Acts 2:23-24 and Acts 4:27-28 present both God's sovereign counsel and the guilt of those who crucified Jesus? Why should we affirm both truths?
4. Case discussion: Someone uses God's sovereignty to excuse harmful conduct. How would you respond from these passages while taking the person's responsibility and the harm done seriously?
5. Reflection and prayer: How can Deuteronomy 29:29 and Romans 11:33 guide us when a theological question exceeds our understanding? What would humble, faithful study look like in practice?

CHAPTER FIVE

Betrayed and Brought Low

The similarities between Joseph's suffering and the suffering of Christ continue as we consider their rejection. Joseph was stripped of his garment and sold for silver. Our Lord was betrayed for silver, stripped, mocked, and delivered into the hands of wicked men.

The brothers valued Joseph at twenty pieces of silver. Judas agreed to betray Jesus for thirty. How grievous it is to see a handful of money placed above a human life, and how much more dreadful to see the Lord of glory betrayed for such a price.

Matthew 26:14-16

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. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

The garment and the shame

Joseph's brothers took his coat and dipped it in the blood of a goat. They carried it to Jacob and invited him to identify it. Their deception allowed their father to conclude that an animal had killed his son. The garment associated with his affection became the instrument of his anguish.

At the cross, soldiers divided the garments of Jesus and cast lots for His coat. The Lord submitted to public shame as He accomplished His Father's will.

John 19:23-24

Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.

We see these connections with sorrow and wonder. Joseph's history gives us a pattern of rejection and humiliation. In Christ, we behold the obedient Son bearing the shame of the cross for His people.

Our Saviour went willingly to His appointed work. The men who betrayed and crucified Him never possessed an authority greater than His own. He laid down His life according to the commandment of His Father.

John 10:17-18

Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

Faithfulness through suffering

Joseph's trials continued in Egypt. Potiphar's wife sought to draw him into sin, and he fled. His refusal was followed by a false accusation and imprisonment. The path of obedience took him into further hardship before the Lord raised him to authority.

That history speaks to believers who have suffered while seeking to do what is right. Faithfulness may be followed by misunderstanding and loss. Joseph had to wait upon the Lord in confinement. At the appointed time, God enabled him to interpret Pharaoh's dreams and brought him from prison into a position of great responsibility.

Joseph's resistance to temptation also directs our attention to the perfect righteousness of Christ. Our Lord experienced temptation and suffering, and His obedience remained without blemish. He is the sinless High Priest who knows the weakness of His people and supplies the grace they need.

Hebrews 4:15-16

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

The sorrow borne for His people

Joseph's suffering served the preservation of life. The suffering of Christ accomplished the atonement of His people. Here we come to the glorious substance toward which the pattern directs us. The Son of God bore our sins and satisfied divine justice on our behalf.

Isaiah 53:4-6

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Beloved, read those words personally. Our griefs, our sorrows, our transgressions, and our iniquities are brought before us. Christ stood in the place of His people. The peace we enjoy with God was secured through the suffering of our Substitute.

This is why the church proclaims salvation full and free in Jesus Christ. His sacrifice possesses the worth required to redeem His people. His obedience supplies the righteousness in which they stand accepted before God.

Questions for Discussion

1. Observation: What similarities do you notice between Joseph's treatment in Genesis 37 and Christ's treatment in Matthew 26:14-16 and John 19:23-24?
2. Interpretation: Read John 10:17-18. What do Christ's words reveal about His willingness and authority in laying down His life? How does this deepen your understanding of the cross?
3. Practical application: Joseph's refusal to sin was followed by false accusation and imprisonment. What does his experience teach us about obedience when doing right carries a painful cost?
4. Scripture study: In Isaiah 53:4-6, identify what belongs to the sinners described and what the suffering Servant bears on their behalf. How does the passage explain substitution and peace with God?
5. Pastoral response: How could Hebrews 4:15-16 encourage a believer facing temptation or suffering today? What might it look like for that person to seek mercy and grace through prayer?

CHAPTER SIX

The Exalted Saviour Welcomes the Guilty

Joseph eventually stood before the very brothers who had rejected him. They came seeking food, dependent upon the authority of the man they had once sold. Their survival was bound to the brother against whom they had sinned.

What could they place before him as a claim upon his kindness? Their history with Joseph testified against them. Yet he wept over them, spoke to them, and provided for them. His compassion toward the guilty gives us a moving picture of grace.

Genesis 45:4-5

And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.

Coming with empty hands

The Gospel brings us before Christ as sinners who need mercy. We approach Him with the confession that our sin required His death. The cross reveals the seriousness of our guilt and the greatness of the grace that saves us.

We have no righteousness of our own to offer as a supplement to His finished work. Our religious efforts cannot strengthen the worth of His sacrifice. Our obedience cannot add to the perfection of His righteousness. Christ Himself is the believer's complete ground of acceptance before God.

The words of the old hymn express the posture of faith: "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling." We flee to the Saviour for mercy, resting upon what He has accomplished. He receives sinners who come to Him.

John 6:37

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

Imagine the relief of Joseph's brothers when the one they had wronged spoke kindly to them. Their guilt was real, and his willingness to provide for them was astonishing. In the Gospel we hear the promise of a greater welcome, secured through the blood and righteousness of Christ.

His righteousness accounted to us

Our sin was laid upon Christ, and His righteousness is accounted to every believer. The sinner's hope before God rests wholly in the person and finished work of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:21

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.

The Lord cleanses His people and clothes them in righteousness. We come with sin and shame, and He supplies what we could never produce for ourselves. All the glory belongs to the Saviour.

Philippians 3:9

And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

At Calvary, Christ accomplished the redemption of His people. His offering needs no additional sacrifice. Faith receives the Saviour and rests in the sufficiency of His work.

Hebrews 10:12-14

But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

From humiliation to glory

Joseph rose from confinement to govern Egypt under Pharaoh. The authority entrusted to him enabled him to distribute bread during the famine and preserve his family. The Lord used his service to sustain many lives, including the covenant household that would grow into a nation.

Christ rose bodily from the grave on the third day. Death could not hold Him. He ascended to the Father's right hand and reigns as Lord of all. His authority extends over heaven and earth, and His priestly ministry continues forever.

Philippians 2:8-11

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: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Hebrews 7:25

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.

Beloved, we have a living Saviour. The One who bore our sins now intercedes for us. His saving work possesses a permanence that no earthly ruler's work could possess. He keeps His people and will raise them up at the last day.

The Bread of Life

Joseph distributed bread to hungry people. Through his administration, the Lord sustained families during a season of famine. This provision directs our thoughts to Christ, who gives eternal life to His people.

John 6:35

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.

Christ Himself satisfies the deepest need of the sinner. He is our life, our righteousness, and our peace with God. The grace pictured in Joseph's welcome finds its fullness in the Redeemer who receives the guilty and gives them everlasting life.

The preservation of Jacob's family also carried the history forward. In generations to come, the Lord would bring Israel out of Egyptian bondage under Moses. His covenant purpose continued from one generation to the next until, in the fullness of time, the promised Christ appeared.

How wonderful to see grace running through this history. The Lord preserved a sinful household, fulfilled His promises, and brought forth the Saviour. Our hearts are drawn to worship the God whose mercy reaches us in His Son.

Questions for Discussion

1. Observation: Read Genesis 45:4-5. How does Joseph identify the wrong his brothers committed while inviting them to come near and explaining God's purpose?
2. Interpretation: What does 2 Corinthians 5:21 teach about our sin and Christ's righteousness? How does Philippians 3:9 help explain the believer's acceptance before God?
3. Case discussion: A person says, 'I must make myself worthy before I can come to Christ.' How would you answer from John 6:37 and Hebrews 10:12-14?
4. Comparison: Compare Joseph's provision of bread with Christ's declaration in John 6:35. What does each provision accomplish, and what makes Christ's gift uniquely sufficient for sinners?
5. Personal application: How do Christ's exaltation and continuing intercession in Philippians 2:8-11 and Hebrews 7:25 strengthen your assurance? Which truth could you share with a discouraged believer this week?

CHAPTER SEVEN

Trust the Lord Until Faith Becomes Sight

Genesis 37 tells of a father sending his beloved son to his brothers. The son obeys. His brothers reject him, strip away his coat, cast him into a pit, and sell him into the hands of strangers. A bloodied garment is carried home, and a father mourns. Joseph disappears toward Egypt, and the chapter closes with him in Potiphar's house.

Through it all, the purpose of God moves forward. The brothers see a troublesome dreamer whom they want to silence. The Lord appoints Joseph to serve in the preservation of the covenant household. Their conspiracy becomes part of the road along which the dreams will be fulfilled.

Then Scripture directs our eyes toward Christ, the greater Joseph. The Father sends His beloved Son. He comes unto His own and is rejected. He is betrayed for silver, delivered to wicked men, falsely condemned, and crucified. His body is laid in a borrowed tomb.

At the cross, redemption is accomplished according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Christ bears the sins of His people, satisfies divine justice, and declares His work finished. On the third day He rises from the dead. The crucified Saviour lives forever, exalted as Lord of all.

John 19:30

When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

Trust Him on the road before you

Joseph would provide bread for the brothers who had rejected him. Christ is the living bread for His people. His grace gives us every reason to entrust our lives to Him.

Trust the Lord when the road is unclear. Trust Him also when the days are bright and the way seems easy. In sorrow and in seasons of waiting, bring your heart before Him. His hand remains strong, His promise remains faithful, and His saving purpose will stand.

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

This trust grows as we hear His Word and remember His mercies. It is sustained by the Spirit who turns our attention again to Christ. When our thoughts become

troubled, we may return to the promise that our Saviour will lose none of those given to Him by the Father.

The Lord's purpose for His children reaches beyond the immediate relief we desire. He is conforming us to the image of His Son, and He will bring His people into glory.

Romans 8:28-30

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. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

The hope of open glory

One day faith will give way to sight. The hidden wisdom of providence will be seen in the light of God's glory. We shall know our Saviour with a fullness that our present experience can only anticipate.

1 Corinthians 13:12

For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

Our minds cannot measure the riches of the life to come. We speak of years beyond counting and find that our words fall short. The glory of being with Christ exceeds our ability to describe it. Yet the promise is certain, and the One who made it is faithful.

The God who held Joseph through the pit and the prison holds His people through every trial. In Christ, He has secured our redemption and our future. We may entrust to Him the questions we cannot answer and the burdens we cannot carry by ourselves.

Revelation 21:4-5

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

Until that day, the church rests in the Lord and gives Him the glory. Of Him, through Him, and to Him are all things. The sovereign hand that governed Joseph's journey has brought us to behold the greater Joseph, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is our Saviour, and He will keep us forever.

Romans 11:36

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

Questions for Discussion

1. Review: Trace the movement from Joseph's rejection to the preservation of his family. How does the sermon use that history to direct our attention to the death, resurrection, and reign of Christ?
2. Interpretation: Read Romans 8:28-30 as a whole. How does God's purpose to conform His people to His Son help us understand the 'good' promised in verse 28?
3. Practical application: What would it mean to acknowledge the Lord in a decision you are facing, as Proverbs 3:5-6 teaches? How can you seek His wisdom while recognizing the limits of your understanding?
4. Hope and reflection: What do 1 Corinthians 13:12 and Revelation 21:4-5 promise about the believer's future? How can those promises comfort someone whose questions remain unanswered?
5. Response: Which truth from this booklet would you most like to remember and share? How could you express that truth in a prayer of trust and thanksgiving shaped by Romans 11:36?

About the Author

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Pastor Jason K. Boothe has served as senior pastor of Redeemer Church of Piketon, Ohio, since 2001. His pastoral ministry centers upon the proclamation of God's free and sovereign grace in Christ, emphasizing the finished work of Jesus Christ and the believer's full acceptance in His righteousness.

Through preaching and writing, Pastor Boothe seeks to help readers understand the Scriptures and find lasting comfort in the faithfulness of God. His sermons and articles bring the doctrines of grace into conversation with the sorrows, questions, and daily concerns of Christian life.

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Learn More About the Gospel

You are invited to learn more about the Gospel of God's free and sovereign grace in Jesus Christ. Visit the Redeemer Church website for sermons, articles, and resources that direct the heart to the person and finished work of our Saviour.

www.RedeemerPiketon.org

Redeemer Church of Piketon, Ohio

768 State Route 220 • Piketon, Ohio 45661

Sunday Bible Study at 10:30 AM • Morning Worship at 11:30 AM

Everyone is invited.

Scripture quotations in this booklet are from the King James Version of the Holy Bible.