

#85 “God Knew What He Was Doing the Whole Time”

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Perhaps there has been a time in your life (probably more than one) in which you came to wonder why God led you to do something or to go somewhere. You were sure that God’s hand was involved in directing you one way, and yet things only seemed to end up going poorly. Perhaps you encountered a lot of conflict and struggle and experienced a lack of smooth sailing, to say the least. If you can at all relate to this dilemma, the story of Joseph is highly applicable to you.

Joseph didn’t do anything wrong to be the preferred child of his father, Jacob. That was Jacob’s issue, yet it led to his brothers hating him. Joseph did nothing wrong for God his brothers to hate him for the dreams that God had given him about them bowing down to him. He didn’t deserve to be thrown into a pit by his brothers only to be sold into slavery by the very ones who should have been looking out for him. Yet Joseph is such a remarkable story because he kept believing and persevering. He didn’t give up, throw a pity party, or develop a seething, hateful, vengeful personality. He just kept being faithful, and he lived to please God. He sure didn’t understand why this all happened as it happened, but he had faith nonetheless.

The interesting thing about Joseph was that, despite the many challenges and hardships that he encountered, his life was noticeably blessed by God. Scripture says repeatedly that God was with Joseph (Genesis 39:2, 21, 23), which resulted in blessing, favor, prosperity, and success. Joseph became a blessing to Potiphar while he was a servant in his house (Genesis 39:4-6). While Joseph was in prison, he was given charge over all the prisoners because the chief jailer trusted him (Genesis 39:22-23). Eventually, he would interpret Pharaoh’s dreams and be appointed second in command over all of Egypt (Genesis 41:43). God never abandoned Joseph, but He had a purpose in all of the things that He allowed into Joseph’s life. He knew things that Joseph didn’t know about the future, particularly that a famine would occur which could wipe his entire family out. By God orchestrating his steps into Egypt and into a position of great power, God would use Joseph to spare his family and provide them food in Egypt. The entire future of the nation of Israel was at stake, and through Joseph, it was preserved.

God could have used someone else to deliver Jacob and his family, or He could have spared the land from experiencing a severe famine. But that is not what God did; rather, He chose to work things out in such a way that all would be in awe of His providence. The very evil that his brothers committed turned out to be used by God for their own survival. As Joseph said to his brothers, “As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive” (Genesis 50:20). This is such a wonderful picture of God’s grace and sovereignty. **We might not know what God is doing in our lives much of the time, but God knows**

what He is doing all of the time. It took many, many years before Joseph had an answer to some of the why questions which he likely had in the back of his mind. In this instance, God allowed Joseph to see some of the reasons why such awful things happened to him as he was blessed to be the savior of his family and the nation of Israel. God does sometimes let us see glimpses of why He does what He does, but He owes us no explanation this side of eternity. In eternity, we will praise Him for His wonderful plan and purposes, and the right thing to do now is to praise and thank Him because He is good, kind, and in complete control, even if we are confused about what He is doing.

People might intend evil for us, and Satan will try to attack us. But what is sure is that God is ultimately working behind the scenes for His children such that all is intended for a blessing and for our good and even for the good of others as we remain faithful to God. Joseph didn't let the unfair treatment that he received cause him to wallow and give up. It is a good thing, too, that he kept believing, or the consequences of his rebellion could have bled over into the survival of his family. Every life matters, and every decision matters. Joseph remained obedient to God, and God blessed Him and watched out for him every step of the way. God was sovereign over his circumstances, and he recognized that and trusted God in that, as difficult as that was. He realized that he was not the maker of his own destiny in terms of where he would live and what he would end up doing; however, he controlled what he could control, which was his faithfulness. No matter where God takes us, He has a plan and a purpose for our good and for the good of others. Even evil things that happen to us can be used of God to work for good on our behalf. Joseph saw that God knew what He was doing the whole time, and Joseph's God is our God. He knows what He is doing, and we must trust Him. His mercies will be there every step of the way. Let us be faithful and obedient as we wait and watch for the good that only God can do.