

Suffering Evil to Save Lives

Promise: Jesus' innocent suffering and death accomplishes our salvation

Pastor Timothy A. Duesenberg

Genesis 50:15-21; Ps 103:1-12; Rom 14:1-12; Matt 18:21-35

(15th Sunday after Pentecost (Pr 19), 9/13/20)

As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive. – v. 20

Lead In – Some of the most exciting and memorable readings in the Bible are found in the Old Testament! The chronicling of the events and personalities are the stuff of which blockbuster movies are based upon. One such figure is the great grandson of Abraham. I am referring to Joseph. And his life, filled with misfortunes, adventures, and an ironic ending is narrated in Genesis 37 to the end in chapter 50...

I. Brief Review Leading to Our Lesson in Verse 50

- A. Abe's grandson Jacob had twelve sons...
- B. Jacob's favored son had one misfortune after...
- C. The ironic and unexpected climax...

II. Chance to Showcase Three Lessons on Reading

- A. All Scripture points to Christ Jesus... *figure, type*
- B. When reading ourselves into Scripture...
- C. Is the narrative "prescriptive"? or "descriptive"?

III. Even When Gospel-Centered We Can Still Emulate

- A. Although Joseph's life is mostly descriptive...
- B. The reason we can know his example can be...
- C. Our Gospel Lesson and Lord's Prayer prescribe it...

Parting Shot – So are we being taught to forgive those who intend evil against us? Yes. But we are promised even more than we are taught! Beautifully, Joseph prefigures Christ. If Joseph's relative innocent suffering could result in good, imagine Our Lord Jesus! Jesus is the only truly, totally innocent sufferer. And indeed the wicked intended great evil against him, falsely condemning him to death on the cross. But of course it is by his death and resurrection that we have been given forgiveness onto life eternal. That is the most important thing to take from this lesson...

Ge 37:3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his sons, because he was the son of his old age. And he made him a robe of many colors.

Ge 41:39-40 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has shown you all this, there is none so discerning and wise as you are. You shall be over my house, and all my people shall order themselves as you command. Only as regards the throne will I be greater than you."

Genesis 50:15-21 ESV

God's Good Purposes

¹⁵When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him." ¹⁶So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this command before he died, ¹⁷Say to Joseph, Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.' And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? ²⁰As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. ²¹So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

Jn 5:39 You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me.

Col 2:17 These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. (cf. He 8:5; 10:1)

The sending out of the 12 in **Mt 10** and the sending out of the 72 in **Lk 10** with instructions of not going to any Gentile areas, of not taking a money bag or a knapsack, and rely utterly on hospitality of others...

Parable of the Unforgiving Servant: Mt 18:32-33 Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?'

Mt 18:35 "So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

Matthew 6:12 and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

Mt 6:14-15 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

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