

THE MAKING OF A MAN #5

Joseph: Genesis 37-50 Focused Living

*“You meant it for evil, **BUT GOD** meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.” Genesis 50:20*

A contractor submitted the following insurance claim. “Last week I moved 300 lbs of bricks from the roof of a three story building by lowering them to the ground via a pulley. After placing the bricks in the barrel I descended a ladder to the ground to untie the rope. Please note that I weigh 140 lbs. While firmly holding the rope I untied it and began to rapidly ascend the side of the building. Somewhere near the 2nd floor I met the barrel of bricks which was rapidly descending which accounts for my separated shoulder and broken collar bone. I was still holding the rope when I reached the 3rd floor breaking four fingers of my right hand in the pulley. At that same time the barrel hit the ground and broke open spilling the bricks. Please note that I still weigh 140 lbs and the barrel now weighed 40 lbs. This caused me to rapidly descend meeting the now empty barrel which accounts for my broken leg. Upon finishing my rapid descent I landed on the pile of bricks that were previously in the barrel breaking my ankle. Dazed and confused I let go of the rope causing the barrel to rapidly descend causing my concussion. I’m out of work and asking you to pay my medical bills that I might find at least some kind of small **advantage to my adversity!**”

Joseph had an extraordinary ability to see the advantages of his adversity, to shine in the darkness and to thrive while others cave. Why? Because he learned that there is an eternal purpose behind the pain of being chiseled by God into the image of Christ. When we are sometimes jerked up and down by the ‘rope’ of God’s sovereign plan, we must learn that **life isn’t always FAIR but God is always FAITHFUL!** (Job 42:2)

Joseph (‘increase’) was the 11th of Jacob’s 12 sons (‘*deceiver*’ aka Israel = ‘*striving with God*’) and his favorite wife was Rachel. Jacob did not walk with the Lord (Gen 25, 27-28) so Joseph grew up in a very **disfunctional** family of **multiple wives** (29:30), **passive leadership** (34:5, 37:1-17), **favoritism** (29:30; 37:3-4), **manipulation** (27:1-46), **deception/lies** (25:24-34; 27:1-46; 31:1-55;), **strife/anger** (27:41), **envy** (27:1-46), **rape** (34:1-4), **hatred** (37:4-8), **murder/retaliation** (37:19), **sex perversion** (38:1-30), and **broken relationships** at every turn. Do you realize that God is greater than your circumstances and will help overcome any generational patterns of sin? What environment are you creating for your wife, kids and grands (Ps 128. i.e. healthy greenhouse)?



Through it all God masterfully chiseled Joseph to help him overcome his teen age **immaturity** (37:1-5), insensitive **arrogance** (37:1-17), **human trafficking** (37:18-36), **broken family**, **betrayal** (37:18), **slavery** (39:1-3), **sexual temptations** (39:6-12), **false accusations** (39:13-20), **13 years of wrongful imprisonment** (39:20-40:4; 41:46), pschological roller-coaster of **dashed hopes** (40:1-23), **abandonment** by friends (40:23-41:1), and seven years of **famine** (41:53-57). Though perhaps not as dramatic, what adversity is God helping you to overcome?



TAG Teams: What chisels did God use to make Joseph more like Christ? Which one is He using in your life?

(Gen 37:1-5)

(Gen 39:1)

(Gen 39:6-12)

(Gen 39:20-23)

(Gen 41:1)

(Gen 45:1-15)

5 REASONS FOR SUFFERING (John Piper) FLM Youtube website <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4OhZOn4zfxE>

How do you relate to Joseph’s life and how does he encourage you to live all in for God?



REPENTANCE (Luke 13:1-5) Keep us from treasuring anything over God.

RELIANCE (2 Cor 1:8-9) Call us to trust God and not the life sustaining props of the world.

RIGHTEOUSNESS (Heb 12:6, 10-11) Discipline us so that we come to share His holiness and righteousness.

REWARD (2 Cor 4:17) Reveal a great reward in heaven that will more than make up for every loss here on earth.

REMINDER (Phil 3:10) Teach that God’s own Son came to suffer so that our pain would not be condemnation but used for our purification and sanctification.



(Gen 37-41) The Lord got Joseph's attention (and ours!) by teaching that suffering is a part of His grand redemptive plan for the greater good in order to keep His promises to Israel and to bring salvation to the nations through Christ (Ps 105:16-24). God was shaping Joseph for a higher purpose than sailing through life with the least amount of hassel and having his needs met. Like

Joseph, we must learn to regard suffering not as a strange occurrence but a sign of God's work in our lives (I Pt 4:12-19; Rom 9:14-24; Jam 1:1-5; Prov 3:5-7; Heb 12:5-11; 2 Cor 4:17). If PBS did a documentary on Joseph called *'From Pit To Pinnacle'* here are some reasons he would give his suffering. Which most resonates with you? **SUFFERING...**

1. Shows us **His grace, power, wisdom** in a broken world (Gen 37-50)
2. Is a **part of His plan** as our Father as He disciplines us to make us more like Jesus (I Pet 2:21-24; Heb 12:5-11; Rom 5:3-5).
3. Enables us to overcome **prideful attitudes** and **learn humility** especially at a young age. (Prov 15:33)
4. Teaches us to **humbly serve** (Gen 39:4,22-23, 40:4; Mt 20:26-28; Mk 9:33-35)
5. Trains us to be **faithful** and **persevere** with **endurance** and **patience** (Gen 39:2-6; 40:1-14, 23; I Peter 5:10; Matt 25:21; Heb 12:1-3)
6. Tests our **moral purity** (love vs lust. Gen 39:7-20; Matt 5:11-12.)
7. Prepares us to **comfort others** who hurt. (Gen 50:21; II Cor 1:3-5)
8. Challenges us to take the lead in **reconciling broken relationships**. (Gen 45-47; Prov 16:6; Matt 5:23-24; Philemon; I Pet 3:8-10)
9. Includes us in God's **redemptive plan and purposes** to fulfill His promises in saving lives (Gen 37:5-11, 41:32, 42:1-5, 45:4-7; 50:20.)
10. Prepares us to receive **God's favor/blessing** (Gen 39:2-6, 21-23)
11. Matures and **prepare us for leadership** (Gen 41:37-41)
12. Grows a **strong work ethic** (Gen 39 and 41)



What aspects of His character did God reveal to Joseph during these years of adversity from 17-30 years old?
(Gen 39:2, 3, 21, 23)

(Gen 41:15-16, 25, 28, 32)

What facets of His character did God reveal from 30 until death at 110?
(Gen 41:50-52)

(Gen 45:7-9)

(Gen 50:15-26)

How does Joseph's life story destroy the lie that 'God will never you give you more than you can handle'? How does it affirm the truth that the Lord will always give you more than you can handle so that you and He can do it together by being filled with His Spirit so He gets the glory and you get the growth?



How does God use Joseph's life point others to Jesus? In other words, in what ways was Joseph a '**savior**' like Christ?

Like Jesus how did he show amazing **grace** in his life?

Like Jesus how did he **trust** the Father with his life and future?

Like Jesus how did he **give glory to God** like amidst adversity?

Like Jesus how did he learn **obedience** and **faithfulness** through his suffering? (Heb 5:8)

THE AWESOME ADVANTAGES OF ADVERSITY

Adversity clarifies our **PERCEPTION** by increasing our ability to see God more clearly.

Adversity focuses our **PRIORITIES** by increasing our zeal to pursue what is really important in life.

Adversity purifies our **PURPOSE** by developing in us a simple faith based on the facts of God's character.

Adversity increases our **PERSISTENCE** so that we grow strong by not giving up or caving in too early.

Adversity deepens our **PRAISE** as we reflect on God's faithfulness in walking with us through the heartache/ headaches of life.

TAG TEAMS What principle(s) did you learn that will help you to walk through current adversity or help another person through their adversity?