



water from rock

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – May 9, 2024

The Lord be with you.

I heard this story about an old cowboy who applies for life insurance and the insurance agent, he asked the cowboy, he says, have you ever had any accidents? The cowboy thinks for a moment and says, no, no accidents, but a mean bucking Bronco did break three of my ribs and there was this mean old rattlesnake that bit my leg. Would you call those accidents? The surprise insurance agent. Nah, nah, they, they, they weren't accidents at all. Those ding critters, you know, they did it on purpose.

Well, the cowboy reminds us that in this world there are critters and people who sometimes do mean to harm us. They, they, they do it on purpose. It's no accident. And one of my favorite stories in all of the Bible is about some people there. They're actually brothers who intend to on purpose, hurt their brother Joseph.

The story is spelled out in graphic terms in the book of Genesis chapter 37 and following it's all there as we read about jealous brothers who intend to harm Joseph first, plotting to kill him, then changing their minds wanting to make some money out of it all. And they, that they instead, they sold Joseph into slavery in far off Egypt. And the tragic story of intended hurt continues in Egypt where Joseph is falsely accused of rape, he's locked away in prison for years and Joseph loses everything. He loses his home, loses his family, his freedom, he loses his good name. He loses any shred of hope for the future. And then God steps in, he frees Joseph from prison. And in time raises Joseph elevating Joseph to be second to Pharaoh in all the land of Egypt, perhaps, you know the story of how, from that high powerful position that Joseph saves Egypt from starvation, he saves his father, he saves those brothers from, from starvation.

And then in Genesis chapter 50, Joseph is looking back on his life. He's looking on his life through the eyes of faith. And Joseph can see God at work in every detail. So that in Genesis chapter 50 in one of the most remarkable verses in all of the Bible Genesis 50 verse 20 Joseph says to those brothers who had sold him into slavery. He says, even though you intended to do me harm, God intended it for good. I've got to read that again, even though you intended to do me harm God intended it for good. Joseph does not minimize the harm that has been done to him, but Joseph sees the providence of God. He sees the sovereignty of God, who in his love and power is at work on every page of Joseph's life.



water from rock

You know, I've, I've often seen the hand of God at work in my many blessings. I, I can say that I've always been quick to see God's hand at work and those who have hurt me and those who have intended to do me harm. But I'm learning, I'm learning that even though they intended to do me harm, God did intend it for my good. I mean, I can see that now, I know it. And that is because you and I have a God of whom the Apostle Paul says in Romans 828 that God works all things together for our good. It isn't that God works a few things or that God works most things but but God works all things together for our good.

And then there is the Apostle Paul again over in Ephesians chapter one verse 11 where he says that God accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will. And the Lord Jesus says that our heavenly father that, that he sees the sparrow that falls to the ground and he cares and that God numbers even the hairs of our heads. There, there was no detail of your life, my life that is not important to Him. Nothing in your life escapes God's loving concern for you. God is in control. He works all things to fulfill His purpose for you. God's ways are higher than our ways and he turns our pain a blessing. I just look at the cross of Jesus Christ and see there the very worst that people could do, the very worst that people could intend. God used for good, for our good, for, for, for the good of the whole world. And that means that you and I like Joseph and like Jesus, we can let go of, we can be free of feeling any need to hurt that person who hurt us so much. And instead of harboring bitterness or seeking revenge, we entrust ourselves to God's hands knowing that God can turn our trials into triumph for His glory and for our eternal good.

Yes, God moves in mysterious ways. His wonders to perform.

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler. Thank you for listening. Until next time.