

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – August 15, 2020

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The lord be with you.

Now, I'm thinking that you have probably had some people do you wrong, that there have been some people who have taken advantage of you, misused you, told lies about you. Am I right? And maybe just maybe you're having a hard time letting go of all that, a hard time moving on. A hard time seeing good in it. Hey, well join the club.

But I've got a Bible verse for you today that I think might help. It's a verse, that has helped me a lot of mid the slings and arrows of life. Today, I'm back in the Book of Genesis and the story of Joseph, to see how people have heard Joseph and how he deals with it. And to see how God works, not just in case, it's been a while since you were in the Book of Genesis. I wanna give you the back story, and I'll try to be brief as it is a story that stretches from Genesis 37 to Genesis 50, it's a big and important story in the Bible, and the story starts out with a teenager, Joseph. Our text says it, he's 17 years of age, and he's part of a family that today, I think we would probably call a dysfunctional family, I mean, there's Jacob, the father, who is partial to Joseph and you know that that's going to mean trouble. And there were brothers who were jealous of Joseph and they hate the man, they want Him dead, and one day where they're plotting to kill their brother. They decide instead to make some money off of him and to sell Joseph for 20 pieces of silver into slavery in far of Egypt. I'll fast forward to Egypt as the heartbreaking story continues as Joseph is falsely accused of rape, he's thrown into prison and they throw away the key and Joseph spends most of the decade of his 20s in prison.

I mean, Joseph loses everything. His home, his family, his freedom, his reputation. Joseph has nothing left to him but a prison cell. But as God always is, God is at work behind the scenes. And through a series of events, we see Joseph elevated from a prison cell to be the second most powerful man in Egypt, if not the whole world. Okay, now 40 years of pass. 40 years have passed as we come to the text that we're looking at today, Joseph's brothers are facing famine that come in Canon, and they're coming to Egypt looking for food. I mean, Shakespeare couldn't write it any better than this. And so hat in hand, the brothers are standing before the mighty Joseph. Hey, but they don't know that it's the teenage they sold into slavery.

And then Joseph reveals himself, and they're scared out of their wits. I pick-up reading in Genesis 50-19, But Joseph said to his brothers, do not be afraid. Am I in the place of God? Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it to a good... I'm gonna read that again, even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it, we are good in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. Notice, Joseph does acknowledge that his brothers intended to do him harm... Joseph does not gloss over it, it has to be owned that their intentions were evil against him, potentials with explains that although they intended to do him or God intended it for good.

For Joseph. Good, yes, yes. But it will prove to be for the good of a whole nation, so through all of those years of heartache, pain, frustration, Joseph can see that God was at work. God was working, His is greater plan. Much like the Apostle Paul says in Romans 28 about God, who works all things together for good, for those who love Him, who are called according to His purpose. Now that it is

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Joseph's confidence that God has intended at all for good that enables him to let go of wanting to get even with his brothers, of wanting to settle the score to the... Did you catch that phrase, where Joseph said, Do not be afraid, and I in the place of God. I mean, God didn't die, make me the judge.

So Joseph is content to lead to God the writing of any wrong. I see a freedom here for Joseph, he's free of bitterness, free of wanting to get even so of knows that evil intentions don't have the last word God does, evil intentions are not in his control. God is.

Let's look at the next verse, verse 21, So have no fear. Notice he has already said that, Don't be afraid, but... But he repeats it. So have no fear. Joseph could have said, off with their heads, but he says, have no fear, I myself will provide for you and your little ones. In this way, Joseph reassured them. Speaking kindly to them. I don't know about you, but I'm pretty quick to see God's hand in my blessing, but Josh helps me to see God's hand even in my hard times.

So the same God who was with Joseph is with you today. He's been with you your whole life and all the things that have happened to you, God has intended for good. Christians have always seen Joseph as a type of our Lord Jesus Christ, who He Himself suffered horribly at the hands of others, and he forgave and he blessed. Then he said, do not be afraid. Evil men intended harm to Jesus, they sold him not for 20 pieces of silver as they sold Joseph, but they sold him for 30 pieces. Evil men intended harm to Jesus, and God intended it for good. For the redemption of the world.

So when you struggle, when you suffer, remember Joseph, but most of all remember Jesus, and God take the harm intended for you and bless you and bless others.

I'm Tim Smith a fellow traveler on the pilgrim way.

Thanks for listening until next time.

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