

May 4th

OUR STORY GOD'S GLORY

"But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? 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, as they are today."

GENESIS 50:19-20

"My story, Your glory. My pain, Your purpose. My mess, Your message. In all things, I know You're workin.' One life, one mission. One reason why I'm livin.' All for You, not for me. My story, Your glory." These are lyrics of a song written by Matthew West entitled: "My Story Your Glory." Sounds very similar to Joseph's story. Here we are finally at the top of the mountain of Joseph's story. The despicable events have all led up to the salvation of all of Israel's house. Joseph gives God credit for all of it. What does God teach us here men as we approach Him in His Word?

Place yourself in the shoes of the brothers for just one minute. The great father Jacob is now dead. Now they expect to finally get what's coming to them. Jacob had been a buffer between Joseph's revenge and their lives. But God. Do you see how Joseph responds? He credits God's purposes for what happened to him. But at the same time, the brothers are not left off the hook. This is a key point that we can't overlook. We can't overlook the brother's being held responsible for their ugly actions of betrayal. That's not what Joseph is doing here and it's not what we should be doing either. God uses the actions of people to accomplish His purposes. The actions of men are the means that God uses to fulfill His purpose. They are still sinners that have sinned against their brother. And God gives them mercy by saving them and all of Israel's family from starvation. But it was always God's purpose to save through the evil actions of Joseph's brothers.

How can God be fully involved in planning the destiny and yet hold humans responsible for their actions? We are at the place of divine mystery. This is exactly what Paul asks in Romans 9: "So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills. You will say to me then, "Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?" But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, "Why have you made me like this?" Moses speaks also of the mysteries of God in Deuteronomy 29:29: "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." These questions are profound and deep, and we should be willing to ask and seek for answers. What these events describe is the concept known as concurrence. God works 100% in the event and man is 100% involved and held accountable. Three huge doctrines confirm the truth of this concept: The incarnation of Jesus in Mary's body, Jesus' crucifixion, and the process of writing out God's Word.

Even as we can say that we believe this doctrine, what difference does it make in our lives? Great question! God's sovereignty over all our lives confirms that there are no accidents. As some may say, there are no "maverick molecules." God orchestrates it all. And it all carries purposes. Suffering and joy carry God's purposes. God uses all of it to bring Him glory. One day we will see the purpose of all of our pain and sorrow. Our tears will be wiped away. God will remove the curtain and show His grand plan. Today, you can trust His plan because it's a plan that has been confirmed by brothers and sisters who have gone before you. You're not different from Joseph, or Moses, or Joshua...you just happen to be born in a different millennium than them. But God is constant and the way He used these men is the same way that He will use you. Will you trust in your God?

Spend some time praising God for His perfect plan over your life. Ask Him for wisdom how to live for Him today in such a way that it glorifies Him.

For Further Reading: Acts 4:1-31

