

# The **Story** of **Joseph**

## God's Invisible Hand in Our Lives

Genesis 37:1 – 50:26

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# The Story of Joseph

Welcome to Week 5



## Review



*As for you, you meant evil against me, **but God meant\* it for good,***  
[Gen. 50:20]

This story shows us how God’s sovereign “invisible hand”  
*wove together* good things out of bad

God gave us this story so we would understand *how* He  
works through the trials in *our* lives today



## Review



God's means . . .

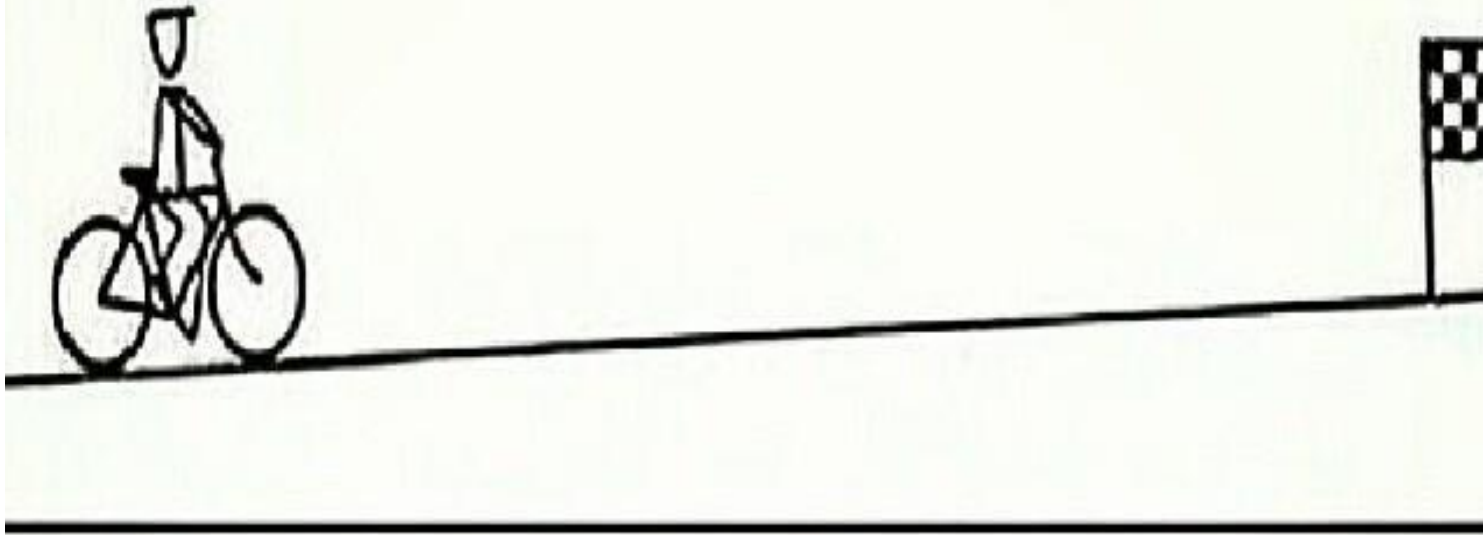
*God makes use of trials to refine our nature  
– our character –  
so that He can make use of us in new and different ways*



# Review



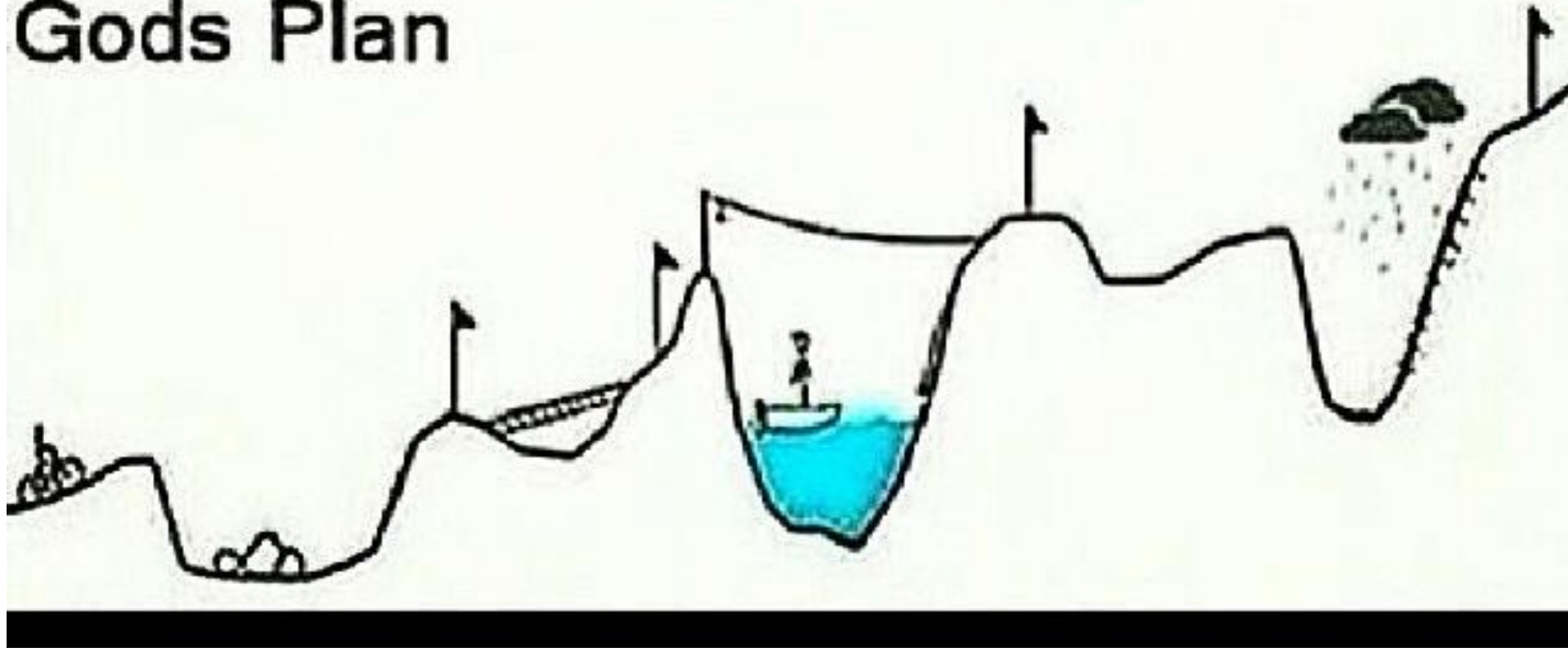
Your plan



# Review



## Gods Plan



## Review



Consider the work of God: who can **make straight** what He has made **crooked**?

<sup>14</sup>In the day of **prosperity** be joyful, and in the day of **adversity** consider:

God has made the one **as well as** the other, so that man **may not find out** anything that will be after him. *Ecclesiastes 7:13-14*



## Review



And I commend **joy**, for man has nothing better under the sun but to eat and drink and be joyful [*in the Lord*], for this will go with him in his **toil** through the days of his life that God has given him **under the sun**.

When I applied my heart to know wisdom, and to see the **business** that is done on earth, how neither day nor night do one's eyes see sleep, <sup>17</sup>then I saw **all the work of God**, that **man cannot find out the work** that is done **under the sun**. However much man may toil in seeking, he will not find it out. Even though a wise man claims to know, **he cannot find it out**. *Ecclesiastes 8:15-17*





## Review



### The Purpose of Trials

Count it all *joy*, my brothers, *when* you meet **trials** of various kinds, <sup>3</sup>for you know that the **testing of your faith** produces **steadfastness**. <sup>4</sup>And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be **perfect and complete**, lacking in nothing. *James 1:2-4*



## Review



### The Purpose of Trials

. . . we rejoice in our trials, knowing that trials teach patience, <sup>4</sup>and **patience refines character**, and character increases hope . . . *Romans 5:3-4*

*Refinement* of our character is a continuous process . . .



## Review



### The Purpose of Trials

“It takes the **test of trials** to make us **useful to God**. Some of us are not as useful as we might be, for in shunning trials we have missed God’s blessings. . . . **And they will come** so that we might be **prepared** to accomplish His will in our lives *and* in the lives of others.” Alistair Begg



# Review



## The Purpose of Trials

- Joseph patiently trusted God throughout his ordeal and God blessed him
- NO doubt his interaction with others blessed them:
  - Individuals in the caravan
  - Other slaves he worked with
  - Supervisors he worked for
  - Slaves he supervised
  - Potiphar



# Review



## The Affect of Trials

“ . . . patience produces character . . . ” *Romans 5:4*

- Good attitude
- Humility
- Integrity
- Compassionate
- Faithful
- Respectful
- Resourceful
- Trustworthy



# Review



## The Truth of Trials

And “the Lord was with Joseph” . . .



# Potiphar's wife





# Potiphar's wife

Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. <sup>7</sup>And after a time his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, "Lie with me." <sup>8</sup>But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Behold, because of me my master has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that he has in my charge. <sup>9</sup>He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" <sup>10</sup>And as she spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not listen to her, to lie beside her or to be with her. *Genesis 39:6-10*







# Potiphar's wife

But one day, when he went into the house to do his work and none of the men of the house was there in the house, <sup>12</sup>she caught him by his garment, saying, “Lie with me.” But he left his garment in her hand and fled and got out of the house. <sup>13</sup>And as soon as she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and had fled out of the house, <sup>14</sup>she called to the men of her household and said to them, “See, he has brought among us a Hebrew to laugh at us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice. <sup>15</sup>And as soon as he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried out, he left his garment beside me and fled and got out of the house.” *Genesis 39:11-15 (ESV)*





# Potiphar's wife

Then she laid up his garment by her until his master came home, <sup>17</sup>and she told him the same story, saying, “The Hebrew servant, whom you have brought among us, came in to me to laugh at me. <sup>18</sup>But as soon as I lifted up my voice and cried, he left his garment beside me and fled out of the house.” <sup>19</sup>As soon as his master heard the words that his wife spoke to him, “This is the way your servant treated me,” his anger was kindled. <sup>20</sup>And Joseph’s master took him and put him into the prison, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined, and he was there in prison. *Genesis 39:16-20*





# Potiphar's wife

In this story it was the false accusation by his master's wife that resulted in Joseph's incarceration

She persisted with her temptation but Joseph vigorously rejected her advances citing respect for his master and fear of the Lord





# Potiphar's wife

**BUT . . .**

Within the context of Joseph's work history

– from “intern” to overseer –

he was bombarded with all types and sizes of temptations





# Potiphar's wife

## A Description of Temptation

“In our members there is a slumbering inclination towards desire which is both sudden and fierce. With irresistible power desire seizes mastery over the flesh. All at once a secret, smouldering fire is kindled. The flesh burns and is in flames. It makes no difference whether it is sexual desire, or ambition, or vanity, or desire for revenge, or love of fame and power, or greed for money, or, finally, that strange desire for the beauty of the world, of nature. Joy in God is in course of being extinguished in us and we seek all our joy in the creature. At this moment God is quite unreal to us, he loses all reality, and only desire for the creature is real; the only reality is the devil. Satan does not here fill us with hatred of God, but with forgetfulness of God. . . . The lust thus aroused envelops the mind and will of man in deepest darkness. The powers of clear discrimination and of decision are taken from us. . . . It is here that everything within me rises up against the Word of God.”

D. Bonhoeffer





# Potiphar's wife

Increased temptations come with Increased success

- Increase in the sheer number of temptations
- Increase in the types of opportunities
- Increase in the persistence of temptations





# Potiphar's wife

Increased temptations come with Increased success

There is a temptation to think too highly of ourselves.

- Self-absorbed
  - Self-assured
  - Self-congratulatory
  - Self-important
- As a consequence our character can be compromised.
  - As a result there is a temptation to be domineering.
  - And then we can fall prey to behaving unethically.





# Potiphar's wife

## Un-Ethical Behavior in the Workplace

Cultural Ethics



God's Ethics







# Potiphar's wife

## Un-Ethical Behavior in the Workplace

Theft . . .

Lying . . .

Fraud . . .

Withholding due credit . . .

Misuse of company time  
or equipment . . .

Abusive Behavior . . .





# Potiphar's wife

## Un-Ethical Behavior in the Workplace

Can I afford it?

Am I really willing to compromise my character?

If you want it bad, you get it bad!





# Potiphar's wife

But sometimes . . .

even though you've done everything ethically and your character is intact, there are some who will be jealous of your success and seek to destroy it and you. **You will be treated unfairly!**





# Potiphar's wife

## Falsely Accused!

“And when those [*unfair*] things happen, the greatest test of that experience is the test of **attitude**. If we're ripped off, we want to rip in return— only worse! It's our **human nature**. We want to get **revenge**; we want to get even. Just wait, we say. We'll get even. We'll get our own back. And so we wait for the perfect moment to pounce. And as we do, we feel the restricting confinement of that attitude. It binds us until we're **held hostage** by it, unable to be free, unable to live an **enjoyable life**.” C. Swindoll





# Potiphar's wife

## Falsely Accused!

In spite of:

- all the years of good work
- the position he had earned
- the success he brought to Potiphar

Potiphar:

- “his anger was kindled”
- believed the false accusation
- ignored the many years of good service

- Potiphar's blind trust in his character
- Potiphar saw that the Lord was with him

- no longer saw the Lord was with Joseph
- immediately sent him to prison

re: Gen. 39:19-20





# Potiphar's wife

## Falsely Accused!

**BUT** in spite of the false accusation and harsh sentence,  
Joseph knew that the Lord was still with him.

**AND** so “the **LORD** was with Joseph and showed  
him steadfast love and gave him favor in the sight  
of the keeper of the prison.” *Genesis 39:21*

