

# 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 4



# Review



- The story of Joseph is a true story involving real people
- They have real emotions and weaknesses and strengths
- If this was not true, then the story would be of no value to us





## Review of Week 2

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

This story shows us how God's sovereign "invisible hand" *weaves* good things out of bad



## Review



### God's means . . .

- God *makes use of* our human nature – our inclinations – so that His plans come to pass or *fall out*\*
- BUT *Great News!!*
  - Our nature – our inclinations – are not static
  - They are *refined* by our response to trials
  - We become *newer* creatures in Christ
  - God can *make use of us* in new and different ways

\*Westminster Confession of Faith (1646)



## Review



take home message . . .

Praying is ok but sometimes you have to look to yourself to get what you need because God only helps those who help themselves.



## Review



*Real* take home message . . .

Our trials are *meant* to teach us to *call upon* God  
and **patiently** *rely upon* His providence

Gladden the soul of your servant, for to you, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

<sup>5</sup>For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you. <sup>6</sup>Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer; listen to my plea for grace. <sup>7</sup>In the day of my trouble I call upon you, for you answer me. *Psalm 86:4-7*



## Review



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

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 (ESV)*

Each trial prepares us – makes us more useful – for the next opportunity

Those natural inclinations are *refined* through *patient acceptance*

Our *character* is defined by our natural inclinations





## Review



“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



One final reminder –

- Joseph was a **real guy**
- He was subject to **real emotions** like anger, resentment, fear, self-pity, discouragement, bitterness, etc.
- The key lesson for us is that, while he felt those feelings, he **did not “stay”** in any of them





# Potiphar's overseer



# Overseer in Potiphar's house





# Potiphar's overseer

There is precious little detail in the narrative but . . .

What do these verses tell us?

The LORD was with Joseph, and he became a successful man, and he was in the house of his Egyptian master. <sup>3</sup>His master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD *caused* all that he did to succeed in his hands. <sup>4</sup>So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him, and he made him overseer of his house and put him in charge of all that he had. *Genesis 39:2-4*





# Potiphar's overseer

There is precious little detail in the narrative . . .

What stands out?

- ❖ The Lord was with him
- ❖ Potiphar saw that the Lord was with him
- ❖ Joseph became a successful man
  - He worked in Potiphar's house
  - Everything he did was successful
  - The Lord caused it to be so
  - Joseph became the overseer

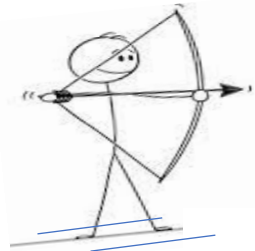




# Potiphar's overseer

“The Lord was with him”

- This phrase is used a few times in the story
- It's obviously an important element
- This story is not just about how Joseph “survived” trials
- It's also **about how we can “survive” trials**





# Potiphar's overseer

“The Lord was with him”

Is just **believing** that God is with you  
enough to get you through a trial?





# Potiphar's overseer

“The Lord was with him”

What does this mean?



**Did Joseph ask the Lord to be with him?**

**or**

**Did the Lord just choose to be with Joseph?**







# Potiphar's overseer

“The Lord was with him”



- Did Joseph **behave** in a “godly way” **hoping** the Lord would bless his work?
- Did Joseph **just believe** God was with him and **assume** that everything he did would succeed?





# Potiphar's overseer

“The Lord was with him”

What about its use in other OT verses?

- 1 Sam 3:19
- 1 Sam. 18:12
- 1 Sam. 18:14
- 2 Sam. 5:10
- 2 Kings 18:6-8
- 1 Chron 9:20
- 1 Chron 11:9
- 2 Chron 1:1
- 2 Chron 15:9





# Potiphar's overseer

“The Lord was with him”

Can we learn anything from David's interaction with God?



- Psalm 86:3-7
- Psalm 25:4-7
- Psalm 27:4
- Psalm 40:1-3
- Psalm 42:5





# Potiphar's overseer

“The Lord was with him”

- David often **talked to God** about his trials.

O LORD, God of my salvation; I cry out day and night before you.  
<sup>2</sup>Let my prayer come before you; incline your ear to my cry! <sup>3</sup>For my soul is full of troubles, and my life draws near to Sheol. *Psalm 88:1-3*

- He had a **personal relationship** with God





# Potiphar's overseer

“The Lord was with him”

- What is the **value** of having a **personal relationship**?
- What is the **value** of having a **personal relationship** with God?
- What does it **feel like** to have the Lord with you?

To "seek God's face" means to have an audience with Him; to get His attention – e.g. Psalm 40:1





# Potiphar's overseer

“The Lord was with him”

There is no detail in the story so far telling us whether Joseph prayed or cried out to God or wept or if he recalled his dreams or became depressed or moody or if he fasted or . . .

BUT – is it likely that he developed a personal relationship with God the same way that David did?



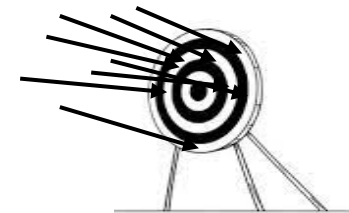


# Potiphar's overseer

“The Lord was with him”

**MORE** than likely!

- **We know** for sure that David became greater and greater because the Lord was with him
- **We know** all that Joseph put his hand to was successful
- **We can expect** that through a **personal relationship** with God we will **KNOW** He is with us and that He will prosper us\*



\*Psalm 1:1-3



# Potiphar's overseer

“he was in the house of his Egyptian master”

What did it take to get there?

- He needed to learn about agricultural methods
- He needed to learn the spoken and written language
- He needed to adopt a totally different culture
- He needed to learn inventory management
- He needed to learn all the duties of an overseer
- He needed to become proficient in all of it







# Potiphar's overseer

## What did Potiphar *see in Joseph*?

1. The Lord was with Joseph
2. The Lord caused all that Joseph did to succeed
3. He saw a man who was unlike any other
  - What caused Potiphar to come to these conclusions?
  - What's the difference between a talented, driven, trustworthy, and successful person and the same but one who also has the Lord with him/her?





# Potiphar's overseer

## What did Potiphar *see in Joseph*?

There was something unique about Joseph.

Perhaps it was because Joseph respected his master:

Let all who are under a yoke as bondservants regard their own masters as worthy of all honor, **so that** the name of God and the teaching may not be reviled. *1 Timothy 6:1*





# Potiphar's overseer

## What did Potiphar *see in Joseph*?

There was something unique about Joseph.

Perhaps it was because Joseph knew who his *real* master was:

Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God.

<sup>23</sup>And whatever you do, do it heartily, **as to the Lord and not to men,**

<sup>24</sup>knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. *Colossians 3:22-24*





# Potiphar's overseer

What did Potiphar *see in Joseph*?

Industrious

Compassionate

Trustworthy

Prayerful

Calm

Respectful

Good Attitude

Humble

Resourceful

Faithful

It appears that Potiphar was a good judge of character!

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

