

Our Daily Homily - Genesis Part 2

by F.B. Meyer

God's sovereignty is demonstrated through the life of Joseph, and we are called to trust in Him even in times of adversity.

Scripture: Genesis 39:9, Genesis 40:7, Genesis 41:16, Genesis 42:30, Genesis 43:21, Genesis 44:28, Genesis 45:5, Genesis 46:3, Genesis 47:25, Genesis 50:20

Topics: "Faith in Adversity", "Divine Providence"

Description

F.B. Meyer emphasizes the resilience and faith of Joseph in the face of adversity, contrasting his virtuous choices with the failures of his brothers. He highlights how God uses trials to strengthen character and how Joseph's unwavering faith and willingness to serve others, even in prison, exemplify true strength. Meyer encourages believers to trust in God's providence, asserting that even harsh circumstances can lead to divine purposes. He concludes with the assurance that God orchestrates events for good, urging listeners to maintain faith amid life's challenges.

Transcript

How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God? - Genesis 39:9

What a contrast between this chapter and the former: that, like a Rembrandt background, throws up the bright colors of this. Where the older brother fell, the younger stood victoriously; and the light of God shone on the young heart, so that even the dungeon gloom could not extinguish it. Who does not know what it is to be misunderstood, misrepresented, accused falsely, and punished wrongfully? Yet God reigns: and in His own time "He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday."

God allows strength to be tested. - We do not know what we are, or where we stand, till we are compelled to choose. Insensibly character is ever forming - unconsciously we are taking sides; but the testing-hour that compels us to declare ourselves causes the solution suddenly to crystallize, and we know ourselves in our choice. The man who has chosen the pure and good once, will choose them more easily next time; and at each choice will become stronger.

God allows virtue to be maligned. - In all Egypt there was not a purer soul, and yet Joseph lay under a terrible imputation; but he committed his cause to God, sure that He would not leave him in Hades; and the time came when the King's word cleared him, and he stood forth vindicated. "Fret not thyself. Rest in

the Lord, and wait patiently for Him."

God allows conscientiousness to be ill-repaid. - Of what avail that he had so well cared for his master's goods? Ah, but that dungeon was the subterranean passage to a throne; and through those fetters iron entered into that young soul. We all need more iron in our blood!

Wherefore look ye so sadly to-day? - Genesis 40:7

We may learn from Joseph the true method of bearing grief. Joseph might have become moody and sullen, absorbed in his own misfortunes, and pessimistic about the course of human life. How far removed from all this was his behavior!

He filled his time with ministry. - The captain of the guard charged him with two state-prisoners, and he ministered unto them. A new interest came into his life, and he almost forgot the heavy pressure of his own troubles amid the interest of listening to the tales of those who were more unfortunate than himself. Do not nurse your grief in lonely brooding; arise and minister to some one; do something in the world; exert yourself to alleviate the sufferings of those close by your side, who have not so clear a conscience or so bright a trust in God.

He was quick to sympathize and comfort. - Quick to notice traces of sorrow, because he had sorrowed; able to sympathize, because he had wept; adept at comforting, because he had been comforted of God. We gain comfort when we attempt to comfort. Out of such intercourse we get what Joseph got - the key which will unlock the heavy doors by which we have been shut in. Light a fire in another's heart, and your own heart will be warmed.

He kept his faith in God. - Depression, captivity, loneliness, separation from those he loved, could not quench his faith in God. Still God was near and precious to him. The stifling darkness and oppression of the prison were irksome to the free child of the camp; but God was as near as in Jacob's tent. There is no evil to them that love God; and the believer loses sight of second causes in the contemplation of the unfolding of the mystery of his Father's will.

It is not in me; God shall give - Genesis 41:16

It is beautiful to notice Joseph's reverent references to God in his first interview with Pharaoh. When the heart is full of God, the tongue will be almost obliged to speak of Him; and all such references will be easy and natural as flowers in May.

These words might have been uttered by the Lord Jesus. They are so perfectly in harmony with the tenor of His life. He loved to say that His words, and works, and plans, were not His own, but the Father's. Once, when a ruler called Him good, He reminded him that only One was good, and that all goodness was derived from God. Men knew little enough of Jesus, because He sought ever to be a reflecting mirror for His Father, and to glorify Him on the earth. But the Spirit reveals Him to those that love.

These words might have been the Apostle Paul's. He delighted to say that he worked, yet not he, but the grace of God in him; that he lived, yet not he, but Christ in him; that he knew and spake the mysteries of God, yet not he, but the Spirit of God.

Thus we should speak. Our light must so shine that men may turn from us to Him from whom we have derived it. Whenever the temptation arises to revert on ourselves, to attract men to ourselves, to lead them

to think that we can meet their need, let us count ourselves dead to the suggestion, saying, "It is not in me; God shall give" (Act 3:12). What strength and comfort come into our hearts, in view of demands which are too great for our weak nature to meet. "It is not in me; God shall give." If our hearts were inditing a good matter, they would boil over, and we should speak more frequently of the things that touch our King.

The man spake roughly to us - Genesis 42:30

He spake roughly, but he did not feel so.-

When he had spoken in these harsh tones, he restored their money; turned aside to weep (Genesis 42:24); and did his best to alleviate the toils of travel. So sometimes God seems to deal harshly, and speak roughly; but there is no change in the tender love of His heart. It costs Him immeasurably more than it does us. Often when some unusual severity has been evinced, if we could but see His face, it would be full of pity, pain, and pleading on our behalf. He feels yearnings over us which He restrains, and dares not betray till the work of conviction is complete.

He spake roughly to awaken conscience. - It had slept for twenty years. They had almost forgotten that scene at the pit's mouth; but as he repeated their tones, and words, and treatment, it all came back again, and they cried, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother." There must be repentance and confession before God can take us to His heart. We must confess the wrongs done to our Brother in heaven and our brothers on earth; and many of the roughnesses of God's Providence are intended to awaken us, and bring our sin to remembrance.

He spake roughly to test them. - How did they feel toward each other: was there rivalry, or bitterness, or angry feeling? Beneath his biting words, Joseph would mark their behavior! Would they disown each other, or cling to one another? There was an opportunity for their doing one or the other; and he was glad to notice how their love approved itself. So we are led over stony roads, that God may know what is in our hearts. He gives us opportunities of showing our real feeling toward our brothers, that He may test our love toward Himself.

Every man's money was in the mouth of his sack - Genesis 43:21

Joseph, who gave corn to save his own brethren and the Gentiles from starvation, is a type of Him who gives the bread of life to Jew and Greek - to all that hunger and come to Him for supplies. And in this return of the full money in the sack's mouth, we are reminded that salvation and satisfaction are all of grace. They are without money and without price. Whatever we yield to Him, He returns in full weight.

We bring Him works of merit as a price of our pardon; but they are not noticed.

We bring Him emotion, tears, anguish of soul; but He will have none of them.

We bring Him our faith as a price, instead of as a hand that accepts; and He refuses it.

How many are our mistakes and misunderstandings! Yet He does not for that reason withhold His blessed gift. We get the corn as an act of His free grace; and afterward He explains why it was that our careful dues were not accepted.

There is bread enough in God to supply every mouth of desire and hunger in your soul. You may have it for the seeking. The law is - ask, and have. What if you have no money with which to purchase, no

earnestness, no merit! Nevertheless the best wheat of heaven may be yours. Our Father's love is constantly devising means of expressing itself. It puts money into our sacks; it invites us to its home, and spreads banquets before us; it inclines stewards to meet us peacefully; it washes our feet; it takes a tender interest in those we love; it wishes us grace from God; it adjusts itself to our temperaments and puts us at our ease, so that gleams of light as to the love of Jesus strike into our hearts!

And I said, Surely he is torn in pieces - Genesis 44:28

These are words caught from his Father's mouth by Judah; and here repeated, in his most pathetic intercession, with the hope of softening the Governor's heart, and moving him to spare Benjamin at least. They are very sad, and, without doubt, justified by the vision of that bloodstained coat. Yet there was another interpretation to the sad and dark suggestion which it made: Joseph was alive, and they were soon to know that it was he with whom they were dealing, and that he was conducting them through these strange experiences.

We are often tempted to judge hastily, and by appearances; by our own despondent, sorrowful hearts; or by the reports of others. We may say that certain things are against us, when, if we would only look beyond appearances and circumstances to God, we should find that He had been working, and was working, mightily on our be-half - that all was for our lasting good.

Do not say that you have lost your Joseph; he lives, and will yet be a comfort to you. He was taken from you for a little, to bring blessing to your whole family, but to be given back to you, more yours than ever.

Do not look on the sad, but on the bright side of God's Providence. All things are working for the best. "In all these things is the life of the spirit." Do not judge Him, or try to understand; be still and trust. You will some day be ashamed of your little faith.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,

And scan his work in vain,

God is His own interpreter,

And He will make it plain.

God did send me before you - Genesis 45:5

There was great delicacy in Joseph's command, "Cause every man to go out from me." He did not want to expose his brethren; yet he wanted to say words which could not be understood by the curious courtiers. Then he made himself known, and said, "Be not grieved, nor angry, for God did send me before you." This was not only a kind way of alleviating their remorse and sorrow, but was the standpoint from which Joseph was wont to review his life-course. It was his habit to trace the working-out of God's plan, and the interposition of His Providence amid and through the malevolence and treachery of men (Genesis 1:20).

This was also David's habit, who, in the cursing of Shimei and the revolt of Absalom, saw the evolution of God's permissive purposes.

Thus also Jesus spoke, when anticipating the coming of Judas to betray Him. "The Son of Man goeth, as it was written of Him." "The cup that My Father giveth Me to drink."

It is one of the inexplicable mysteries of Providence that bad men subserve God's purposes and unwittingly execute His plans. It is not for us to explain it, but to consider the perplexities and disaster which we suffer at the hands of evil men as being permitted by God for the furtherance of some Divine and hidden purpose. Paul's prayer that he might preach the Gospel at Rome was fulfilled through the hatred of the Jews; and he went to Rome at the Emperor's expense. We may comfort ourselves whenever the storm is high, that God is at the helm, and is making the wrath of man praise Him, whilst the remainder of it shall be restrained. Yes, Joseph, God is sending you through that pit and prison: but there is a way out into sunlight.

Fear not to go down into Egypt - Genesis 46:3

Probably the old man, remembering the experiences of Abraham, was very fearful to adventure himself into Egypt. Besides, was it not as though, in going thither, he renounced the Land of Promise? Therefore this special bidding and assurance were the more necessary.

When our heart misgives us, let us look out for one of God's fearnots. - His eye is ever upon the righteous, and His ear open to their cry. One upward glance or tremulous prayer will make Him ride on a cherub to our side, and whisper, "Be not afraid; fear not, I am with thee."

God's promises are fulfilled in most unexpected ways. - He had always foretold that the seed of Abraham should outnumber stars and sands; but who would have supposed that the promise would be realized amid the pressure and persecution of Egypt? Yet so it happened. "I will there make of thee a great nation." We must not judge after the sight of our eyes, nor act on what is known as our common sense; faith is led by very uncommon paths. Trust and obey!

God's presence in Egypt acted as an antidote to its evil, and delivered from its tyrant's grasp. - Ah, my soul, thou mightest descend without fear into hell itself if God said, "I will go down with thee, and will surely bring thee up again." The Divine Presence is strength to the fearful - security and consolation in life, peace in death. It was probably thus that the Father spoke to the Son by the lips of the Angel in Gethsemane: "Fear not to go down into the grave: I will surely bring thee up again." Thus He speaks to us. He is with us, and will deliver.

Thou hast saved our lives: We will be Pharaoh's servants - Genesis 47:25

Nothing less would have extorted such an acknowledgment from those proud Egyptians. They were willing to serve their saviour. No doubt, had there been no provision made by Joseph, the streets would have been filled by emaciated skeletons picking their way feebly amid the heaps of the dying and the dead. Gratitude brought them into the dust before him who held the keys of the granaries.

The kingdom of Christ is a matter of supreme importance to individuals and the world. - He is not ambitious of power for its own sake; but that He may be able to exercise it more fully for our benefit, and that He may finally render up the kingdom to God, even His Father, that God may be all in all. He will never, therefore, be perfectly satisfied till He has triumphantly entered all closed gates, as King.

His kingdom is given Him by the glad choice of those whom He had blessed and saved. - The song of heaven reflects this thought: "Thou art worthy, for thou wast slain." His empire depends on the sacrifice by which He has saved a multitude whom no man can number. Meditate much on the love of Calvary, and you too will feel that His empire should begin with your heart, and hasten to subdue the kingdoms of the

world.

When He becomes king, He still further blesses us. - The first hour of Joseph's supreme power was the beginning of Egypt's brightest days. The Egyptians could not do so well for themselves as he for them. We shall never know the real blessedness of living, its peace and joy and strength, till we have utterly surrendered to Christ's supremacy. To serve such a Master utterly is to drink of the river of perfect blessedness.

Behold, thy son Joseph cometh - Genesis 48:2

How needful Joseph was to Jacob! The aged patriarch could not die without seeing him. His presence lit the dark valley. His hands closed the tired eyes of the aged pilgrim. And Joseph was as quick to come at the first intimation of his father's desire to see him. There was a perfect sympathy and reciprocity between them, just as there may be between Christ and those who owe all to Him.

Jesus is ever leading us on to new and deeper experiences. - In no true life is stagnation admissible. So the nest is constantly being stirred up, and the trumpets sounded for the striking of our tents. But there is a Divine motive in it all. Jesus cannot rest satisfied with less than the best for those He loves, as Joseph could not permit Jacob to remain in Canaan whilst Goshen with its plenty awaited him.

In all the new experiences Jesus meets us. - When his father entered Egypt, Joseph was waiting for him. When he was summoned to stand before Pharaoh, Joseph brought him. When he lay a-dying, Joseph was at his side to receive his last commissions. So, trembling soul, if Jesus presses you into the unknown, He does not leave you there, but keeps coming again, meeting you at every point of anxiety and distress. Yea, He does what Joseph could not do. He stands, not on this side only, but on the other side, of death. Here to calm with His benediction; there to receive into His glory.

Jesus is careful for body as well as soul. - The dying man was anxious about the disposal of his body, and Joseph readily undertook to see it buried in Machpelah's cave. So Jesus cares for us. He is the Saviour of the body in this life and in the resurrection.

Until Shiloh come, and unto Him shall the obedience of the peoples be - Genesis 49:10

Old experience is said to attain to something of prophetic strain; but there is more than old experience here. From these aged lips the Holy Ghost is speaking.

The mission and work of Jesus are designated. - He is Shiloh - the Maker, Giver, and Bringer of Peace. The troubled conscience, smitten with conviction, finds peace when He reveals His all sufficient sacrifice and atonement. The discordant elements within us settle into a great calm when He enters to reign, bringing every thought into captivity to His rule. Nor is His work for individuals only; it is for man, for the world, the universe. Peace was made at His cross; it is proclaimed by His Spirit; and it will be consummated when God is All in all.

The time of His advent predicted. - Not till the Romans came and annexed Palestine as one of the provinces of the empire, did the semblance of the Hebrew monarchy expire. And it was then that the Shiloh came. Surely these words must often have been quoted by the pious Jews, with whom Simeon and Anna consorted, as pointing to the near advent of the Messiah. Let us be wise to discern the symptoms of His second advent.

The inevitableness of His dominion. - Ah, Saviour, it is predicted that all peoples shall obey Thee; and we know well that it is only through obedience that men can enter into Thy peace. Teach us to obey, to do all Thy commands, to bear all Thy burdens, to wait before Thee, that thus we may know the peace that passeth all understanding.

Ponder this well, O my soul; the Peace-giver must be obeyed. Only so can He give thee peace that floweth as a river.

God meant it for good - Genesis 50:20

God's deeper meanings | We are apt to see a malicious meaning; are we equally apt to detect the Divine and benevolent one? Our enemies are many, and they hate us with perfect hatred; they are ever laying their plots, and working their unholy purposes. But there is a greater and wiser than they, who, through all these plottings, is prosecuting His Divine purpose. There is another and deeper meaning than appears to the short sight of sense.

Let us believe that there is a Divine and deeper meaning in the adversities of our lives. - Joseph might be forgiven for not doing so; but with his history and that of many others before us, we have no excuse for despair in the face of crushing sorrow. Whether it comes from man or devil, all creatures are under the Divine control, holding to our lips cups which the Father's hand has mixed. He has no complicity with their evil, but they unconsciously perform His will. Even if you cannot see the Divine meaning, dare to believe that it is there.

Await the disclosures of time. - Even here we sometimes reach an eminence from which we detect the meaning of the path by which we have been conducted. It may have been rough and circuitous, but there was reason in it all. Often God rewards patient trust by allowing us to see and know.

And for the full revelation of eternity. - One day God will call us to His side in the clear light of eternity, and will explain His meanings in life's most sorrowful experiences; and we shall learn that we suffered, not for ourselves only, but for others, and, as part of His great remedial scheme, "to save much people alive."

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