

**Genesis 48:8–20**

This is not the most exciting event in Jacob's life, compared to stealing the birthright and the blessing, the stairway from heaven, moving the stone, kissing, weeping, waking up to Leah, wrestling at midnight with God!!

Here he is old, blind, and blessing his grandchildren of Joseph. In Hebrews 11:21 - By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.

Of all the moments in Jacobs life - The writer of Hebrews grabs this one? Why?

The last scene of Jacob's life is culminating in the basic theme of his life which has been the overpowering grace of God

In Jacob's blessing - he acknowledges the need for God's grace, the experience of God's grace, and how to look at life through the lens of Grace. Grace is a way to look at all of life.

in verse 15, "... the God who has been my shepherd ..."

First time God is called a shepherd - implied is that we are sheep - to admit this required great humility

Unlike other animals - sheep without a shepherd die. Sheep are the most helpless and stupid. The sheep need a shepherd. The shepherd has to come to the sheep and constantly rescue the sheep.

**Personal Experience of God's Grace**

"May the God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day, the Angel who has delivered me ..." The Angel is a synonym of God. The night Jacob was attacked and he wrestled the mysterious stranger, that was the Angel of the Lord. That night, God blessed him.

Wrestling God Jacob saw his lostness. He saw his foolishness. He saw he had been fighting God all of his life. He got a deeper view of his own brokenness and stupidity. He saw his "sheepness." He saw his cluelessness.

The more sheep you see in yourself the deeper you experience his blessing, you see he is more committed to you, in love with you, patient with you and a shepherd than you ever dared hope.

**Jacob in the end had a Gospel of Grace - worldview**

Jacob saw that God has been his shepherd all of his life - through all of the drama, not loved by his father, hated by his brother, sent away by his mother, deceived and exploited by his uncle, his favorite son torn from his life.

Jacob was a professional shepherd - he knew that when a shepherd would seek and save a lost sheep - sheep would fight, rebel, kick bite, run .. shepherd - tackles - ties - and carries - sheep screaming

Sheep never feel loved when they're being loved. Sheep never feel safe when they're being made safe.

When God crosses your will - He is the GOOD Shepherd - seeing with eyes of grace

Instead of saying, "Why does God let this happen? Why does God let that happen?" now through the lenses of God's grace, he is able to say by grace, "Thy will be done."

God does saving work through defeat, suffering, pain, confusing, inexplicable, tragic, difficult situations - he is a shepherd. He is bringing you home.

verse 16 when it says, "... the Angel who has delivered me from all harm ..."

The word he has used for delivered there is the Hebrew word ga'al. It's really the word for redeemed. - When you were in debt beyond your ability to pay, and a ga'al would pay for you. The night Jacob wrestled God, he knew He received a blessing beyond his abilities to earn.

A sure way to intimacy with God is to have something horrible happen in your life that makes you really doubt God's love and go to him anyway and say to him by God's grace, "Thy will be done." Must see Jesus as the Good Shepherd - if this pain is for my good, By God's grace, Thy will be done.

### **Genesis 50:12-21 - Romans 8:28 - Working For Good**

God works all things together for good - acknowledgment of evil - and the wait of guilt is upon Joseph's brothers.

Dad dies, and Joseph's brothers are afraid that the hammer is going to come down now. They don't trust Joseph.

The brothers are guilty and feel guilty - and they concoct a letter from Jacob (Dad) to Joseph.

Send Joseph a text message - tweet.

#### **read verses: 50:16-17**

Dad said brothers - they said they worship the same God

Full confession of sin - they admit that what they did was evil, a transgression, trespass (rebellion, crime, a breach in a relationship) - Sin creates a reality that wasn't there before - someone does someone else wrong and there is something new in the room that wasn't there before.

Sin as in wrong - they admit what they did was evil, wrong, harm, abuse - when they sold Joseph into slavery. No where in this little letter is sin treated lightly.

Guilt due to their sin - has been weighing on them - eating away at them for decades now.

Joseph has forgiven them - that already is a done deal - Joseph has released them in his heart. But there is no record of the brothers admitting to Joseph that they had sinned against Him. Not taking responsibility for what they did to him.

If you have sinned against someone else - it is important to confess that sin to the one you have wronged, burdened, pained, stained, soiled - and ask for forgiveness.

Joseph weeps - because of their lack of trust - undulate with guilt

The theological statement of the entire book of Genesis - answers what happened in Genesis 3 - How can God allow evil in the world? Why would He let evil to continue to exist? Why didn't God just take out everything and start over when Adam and Eve? Why did God let even the possibility of evil.

see vs 19-20 Joseph said do not fear, am I in the place of God

The brothers meant it - intended it for evil - God meant it for GOOD! This is the key word GOOD.

When God created the heavens and earth - day by day - he created - and He spoke, saw, and said it was GOOD.

Genesis begins with all things being good, and it ends with God saying, evil doesn't win. Even with evil there is no plan B - Jesus wins - evil doesn't win. From Gen 3 onward - we see the unraveling of the shalom of God, everything is falling apart - flood - languages - two cities fired up - and then focus on a family - and they are a total mess. They all sin - Abraham - Isaac - Jacob.

Gen 3 - 1 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"

2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; 3 but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'"

4 Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

Up to this point God has provided everything good and needed for humanity - everything is perfect for human flourish - climate - garden - companion - Himself - all GOOD.

Adam and Eve were the main characters in God's expression of Love and creating all good, and humans very good. But they wanted more - to be like God - to be in the place of God.

Major problem is when Eve SAW that it was Good - up until that time - God SAW that it was Good - she is overstepping her bounds.

Her last thought before the fall - I saw and I know what is good - that was God's job, not hers.

The main idea is that we can become good, define good, determine what is good apart from God, rather than trust God to know what is good.

We will decide for ourselves what is right and wrong apart from God. We can become our own moral authority. We can stand in the place of God.

In the temptation - the serpent basically asked Eve - would you like to be in the place of GOD.

Genesis began to unravel as soon as Adam and Eve put themselves in the place of God

We see restoration, healing, reconciliation - when at the end of the book - Joseph - acknowledges that he is not in the place of God. **He avoids God's chair**

In perfection - they usurped God's authority. In the wake of tremendous injustice, and being sinned against - Joseph kept himself under God's authority.

Adam and Eve tried to blur the line between God and Humanity - Joseph solidified the line.

The whole book of genesis is about the grace of God is the foundation to trust God - and never put yourself in the place of God. Putting yourself in the place of God is at the heart of almost all of our problems.

The tree in the garden - was a permanent question before Adam and Eve - Do you trust me?

If you decide what is right or wrong for you rather than following God's Word, you are de facto putting yourself in the place of God.

They went up to the tree and in essence said - we don't trust God, that He can provide all the Good.

How do we put ourself in the place of God? We try to run our own little sub-universe? or The second way you can put yourself in the place of God, when you let people look to you to meet their deepest needs.

Leads to a life of anxiety, worry, despair and depression. This is why you worry

Matt 6 - Jesus said why do you worry about your clothes, what you eat, tomorrow? Can you add an inch to your height, can you make any of your hair grow. Only God knows what you truly need. And He is the only one with the power to give you what you truly need. You just need to trust!!

Worry comes from when you are sure, you know exactly what has to happen in your life for your life to be good. This is how my future needs to go, relationally, financially, geographically, socially, emotionally, occupationally. educationally, etc.. Then as we move forward we are afraid that God is not going to get it right. In other words we are afraid that there is going to be disagreement to what God says is Good and what we say is Good.

Life of scheming, rebellion, manipulation, lying, faking, trying to control every situation - anxiety, fear, worry - then when things don't work out the way you thought they should - get bitter.

The best thing to do with worry - be agnostic when it comes to your future (here on earth) and Christian when it comes to your hope.

You may think you have a great plan for your future - it seems good - like everything will work out - if it happens the way I want it to - give it over to God - admit you don't know the future - and determine in your heart to act and react in a way that is submitted to God - trust Him - make all your dreams subject to His will. trust the outcome to God - admit you don't know - our Hope - no matter what happens - good and and -

Ultimately, your deepest needs can only be met and your deepest problems can only be solved in God - The fastest way to become like Satan is to try to be God. The fastest way to become like God is to refuse to be God.

**Joseph took God's View from the mountain - instead of the valley**

Joseph says. "Life is terrible, life is hard, life is filled with pain, my life was filled with pain, but God is good."

Joseph is saying is, "The reason I can forgive you is that you can't sink me. You tried, but you can't sink me. Nobody can sink me. You meant it for evil, and it was evil, and it hurt, and it was painful, but ultimately, you couldn't even sink me. You could hardly touch me in the end, because God meant it for good."

Romans 8:28 -28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

All things - means all things - sufferings, evil, injustices, persecutions, loss, failures, even our own sin - the only way this can be true - is God is in control - God is working out all things.

Things are working it out - God is - God works - moves - remains in authority.

Things that happen in your life are not always good - they are often wicked, evil, sin, trespass, and transgression -

We don't look at tragic events and say - its all good. We can say that - because we believe in evil and sin, and that bad things do happen.

Things are not always good. There are bad things! Injustice, abuse, rape, murder, betrayal, divorce, etc.. are not good. Life circumstance will come against you, your own sin nature will rise up against you.

Promise - **all things may be against you, but never with final success.**

Evil will come upon you, evil will cross your path, enter into your life, and evil will not have the last word. Evil doesn't win! Jesus wins.

Spurgeon - he who said all things work together - will soon prove to you that there is harmony in the most discordant parts of your life - you shall find when your biography is written, that the black page did but harmonize with the bright one, that the dark and cloudy day was but a glorious foil to set forth the brighter noontide of your joy

In the end your story will be glorious and good.

How do we take the promise of Goodness to the bank in the darkest days of our lives - Paul shows us in Romans 8 - He Loves us - His love for us - is what keeps Him working all things for good in our lives, even though there is much evil in the mix -

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." 37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

More than conquerors - not that you just made it through the tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness...etc, but that these things become your servant - pulling me more toward Christ - and proclaiming Christ in and through me.

The reason why this is all possible - through the greatest - persecution tribulation distress, nakedness, famine - The love of God was shed abroad in our hearts - the salvation for our souls was accomplished.

Jesus was also betrayed, and Jesus was also given a cup of suffering, but Jesus Christ, though he deserved to be in the place of God, didn't do it. Why? For you. You see, Joseph was given a cup by his brothers but said, "This isn't something my brothers really gave me; it's something God gave me." He embraced it, and as a result he could forgive them.

But Jesus Christ was given a cup. They were betraying him, they were killing him, but he called it the cup of the Father. Jesus is the ultimate Joseph. Jesus is the ultimate example of good being brought out of evil. Jesus is the ultimate example of people meaning it for evil but God bringing good out of it. Jesus says, "Here's the good. I died for you. I was in the place of God, but I didn't put myself in the place of God; I became a servant. I became poor. I became killed for you."

The cross, the ultimate example of God bringing good out of evil, will make you much humbler than Joseph was, because you see more than Joseph just how bad we are.