



A LIFE OF MANY COLORS

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THE INTERWOVEN STORY OF JOSEPH & GOD

YES, NO & MAYBE

1 If I could, I would swap some of my family members for some of the people in this room.

2 My family has highly dysfunctional members in it.

3 There are members of my own family that I have a nearly impossible time communicating with.

4 None of the bad things that have happened to me were outside of the will of God.

5 God sometimes reveals my sins publicly.

DIG DEEPER:

Then Joseph could no longer control himself... (Gen. 45:1 NIV)

The Buildup:

Genesis 43

- Jacob's family runs out of the food from Egypt. They must return for more.
- Jacob acts as if Benjamin is his only son. Wants to protect him, but has written off Simeon in Egypt's prison.
- When Joseph sees Benjamin with the brothers, he invites them to lunch in his house. He gives Benjamin 5 times more food than the other brothers.

Genesis 44

- Joseph has his silver cup placed in Benjamin's sack, and the silver placed in the mouth of each of the brothers' sacks of grain.
- When confronted outside of town, the brothers offer themselves as slaves, and death to the one, if the accusation is true. The cup is found in Benjamin's sack.
- They all tear their clothes, pack up donkeys and go back to town, even though the steward says they're free to go (except for Benjamin).
- Judah begs Joseph to be his slave in place of Benjamin.

READ: Genesis 45:1-11

Then **Joseph could no longer control himself** before all his attendants, and he cried out, "Have everyone leave my presence!" So there was no one with Joseph when he made himself known to his brothers. 2 And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh's household heard about it.

3 Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still living?" But his brothers were not able to answer him, because they were terrified at his presence.

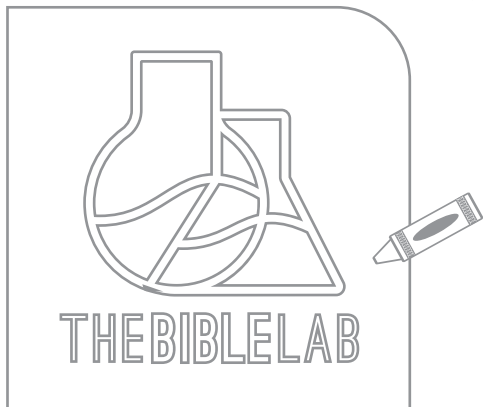
4 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come close to me." When they had done so, he said, "I am your brother Joseph, **the one you sold** into Egypt! 5 And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that **God sent me ahead of you**. 6 For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no plowing and reaping. 7 But **God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance**.

8 "So then, **it was not you who sent me here, but God**. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt. 9 Now hurry back to my father and say to him, 'This is what your son Joseph says: **God has made me lord of all Egypt**. Come down to me; don't delay. 10 You shall live in the region of Goshen and be near me—you, your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all you have.

Processing Your Purpose, and the Pain It Costs:

○ (Vs. 7a) **God Sent Me** - This reiterates Joseph's interpretation of his trials in Egypt. The term "sent" (šālah) often describes someone dispatching a **person on a mission**, as when God sends forth his prophets.

△ (Vs. 5,7) **God sent me...To save your lives** - Joseph explains that the purpose of God, "to save lives" (lēmīḥyâ), surpassed the malicious intent of the brothers.





Δ (Vs. 8) **It was not you who sent me here, but God** - According to Joseph, God permitted the brothers to do what their wicked hearts led them to do, but by his goodness and grace he had turned their evil into blessing. Joseph was focusing his attention on what God had done to bring about the fulfillment of his purposes, not on what the brothers had done. In spite of them, even because of them, the ultimate will of God was accomplished.

Ø How have you seen God turn evil into blessing, and what are the challenges we face in trying to keep the focus of our attentions purpose-driven?

Ø Nothing which happens to you is outside the power and care of God. How does that affect you now as you look back at your personal history?

READ: Genesis 45:14-15

14 Then he threw his arms around his brother Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin embraced him, weeping. 15 And he kissed all his brothers and wept over them. Afterward his brothers talked with him.

○ (Vs. 15) **His brothers talked with him** - Healing is happening. The brothers, who could not say a peaceful word to Joseph when the story began (37:4), now speak to him. But what do they say? Most situations like this include apologies, acceptance of blame, regrets, separation from the person they used to be, etc.

Ø Jacob's family was broken and dysfunctional. How did God heal this family? Does he still work this way today?

READ: Genesis 45:21-24

21 So the sons of Israel did this. Joseph gave them carts, as Pharaoh had commanded, and he also gave them provisions for their journey. 22 **To each of them he gave new clothing**, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred shekels of silver and five sets of clothes. 23 And this is what he sent to his father: ten donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain and bread and other provisions for his journey. 24 Then he sent his brothers away, and **as they were leaving he said to them, "Don't quarrel on the way!"**

○ (Vs. 22) **New clothing** - The clothes (festive garments) were intentioned symbols of reconciliation. Joseph's clothing had been central to his rejection, and now, memorably, clothing was bestowed by Joseph in reconciliation—and five changes for Benjamin—and no one cared!

Δ (Vs. 24) **Don't quarrel on the way!** - "Quarrel" translates a verb meaning to be "disturbed," "upset," "worried." It has mainly to do with emotional states. Joseph knew that the brothers' greatest challenge lay ahead--they had to finally confess to their father that they had sold Joseph into slavery. There would be arguments and accusations as they struggled to determine how to do this.

Ø Does God typically reveal our sins to others in order to encourage us to ask God for forgiveness, or to ask others for forgiveness? Why?

MY PRAYERS THIS WEEK:



1. How am I connecting the trials of my life with the purposes of my life?
2. What is God doing to bring healing to my family?
3. What new aspect of God's character do I understand better this week?

