

“God in the Details of Life—Purposefully and Personally”

Mother's Day 2025

May 11, 2025

Special MOTHER's DAY Edition ...of Our “Ministry of the Word” Year

"You Can't Live Your 'Little Story' without First Getting God's 'Big Story'"

?? – How Does God's Story Inform Your Mom Story?

...God is “Telling a Story”—better... “Bringing Forth a Story”!! – God is “Sovereign” & “Providential”

Jer 1:12 “[...] am watching over my word to perform it.”

Eph 1:9-11 “making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

¹¹ In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will,

- **The Storyline: Creation** (Gen 1-2) ...**Fall** (Gen 3-11) ...**REDEMPTION!** (Gen 12, 15) = God Has a PURPOSE to Invade Our Broken World and to Act Intentionally and Meaningfully to Restore it!

>> That “Story of Restoration” begins with Promises & Covenant made with Abraham—and extends to the “Children of Abraham by faith” “the Elect”

...Today is MOTHER's DAY! ...So, what happens when THIS “PURPOSE” of God Intersects with Mothers!

...TITLE: “God in the Details of Life--Purposefully and Personally”

Gen 12, 15 ...Told the Story of God Making a Covenant with Abraham & his Descendants ...the Rest of the O.T. is about Those Particular Descendants

The Story of Joseph (Gen 37 - 50)

...another way to read/study the Bible is to do a Character Study (Abraham ...Joseph ...David)

From Abraham to Isaac to Jacob to Joseph...

...Remember that powerful verse we met last week in Rom 9:11 “though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls.”

“they” = Esau & Jacob/Israel (Joseph's father) ... “God's purpose in election might continue” = God's REDEPTIVE Purpose! (ie, His intrusive activity to overcome sin, Satan, the fall, and His judgment ...and restore to us what was lost and distorted!)

...to Paul to Timothy to You/Me

2Tim 3:15 “...from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.”

2Tim 1:8-9 “Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, ⁹ who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began,

v. 15 ...Childhood Dreams and Bible Verses! ...

... But Notice, these "Sacred Writings" have a MAIN GOAL (they can have secondary goals that connect with our "Anthropology" ...but the MAIN Thing the Bible is Trying to Engage us about is "REDEMPTION"!!!) ie, God "SAVING" us and Restoring Us to what was Lost in Eden!!

v. 8-9 ... "SAVED us and CALLED us to A HOLY CALLING" ... "because of His own PURPOSE" ...This is HUGE LANGUAGE!!!

-- This isn't "Abraham, Moses, David or other Members of the "ELITE HOLY CLUB"!!! ...This is Paul the Persecutor and Timothy the nobody little boy in Lystra ...This is YOU & ME!!— Individuals with a "Holy Calling" that is associated with "God's own purpose and grace"!!!

>> Notice These Familiar Parameters in v. 9

>> Notice that you can be right in the middle of God's Purpose and His Holy Calling ...and "be a prisoner and experience suffering"

...When we arrive at Joseph's Story we meet an individual who has a "holy calling" BECAUSE of God's Own PURPOSE and GRACE

-- But His Story is ANYTHING but a "Straight Line" from Promise to Fulfillment! ...AND... His Story Lands in a Location He would Never Have Dreamed of!!

Gen 37:1-3 Jacob lived in the land of his father's sojournings, in the land of Canaan. ² These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was pasturing the flock with his brothers. He was a boy with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives. And Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father. ³ Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his sons, because he was the son of his old age. And he made him a robe of many colors.

Gen 37:4 But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peacefully to him.

Gen 37:5 Now Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers they hated him even more.

Gen 37:18-20 ¹⁸ They saw him from afar, and before he came near to them they conspired against him to kill him. ¹⁹ They said to one another, "Here comes this dreamer. ²⁰ Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits. Then we will say that a fierce animal has devoured him, and we will see what will become of his dreams."

Gen 37:26-27 ²⁶ Then Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? ²⁷ Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother, our own flesh." And his brothers listened to him.

Gen 39:19-23 ¹⁹ 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. ²⁰ 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. ²¹ But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. ²² And the keeper of the prison put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners who were in the prison. Whatever was done there, he was the one who did it. ²³ The keeper of the prison paid no attention to anything that was in Joseph's charge, because the LORD was with him. And whatever he did, the LORD made it succeed.

The Earthly Elements of Joseph's Story

...**Sibling Rivalries** (pecking orders, ambition, competition) ...**Parenting Problems** (favorites).
...**Immaturity** (Joseph's flaunting) ...**Jealousy & Anger** (the brothers) ...**Deception & Lying** (the brothers plot) ...**Human Enslavement and Trafficking** (it should have been hard to find a purchaser!) ...**Sexual Temptation** (Potiphar's Wife's various issues) ...**False Accusations** ...**the Abuse of Power** (Potiphar & Jail system) ...**Human Forgetfulness** (cell mates - cupbearer) ...**Worldwide Famine** ...**Grain in Egypt** ...**Starvation in Canaan** ...**Mysterious Dreams** ...**the Insight to Interpret Dreams** ...**Unique Wisdom amidst Global Crisis**

—There's a Lot of Stuff that can go SIDEWAYS in His Story!

...But Remember—This is a “Historical Narrative Genre”!! ...Which means it is a “hand-selected” event from history that is intended to reveal God & His Ways to Us!

Gen 50:15-20 ...Insights Into What All This “MEANT”

...a Lot of People Have Their Own “Intentions”!! ...A Lot of Events Feel “Randomly Unhelpful”!!! ...But every day of God's Unfolding Purpose is Mysteriously MEANT for Something!

"God Meant it..." ...This is a HUGE Phrase of Revelation! ...all this stuff wasn't random nor was it merely man!—Even the "Bad Stuff"!! ...There is a "Meant-Factor" in the events of our lives! There is a "Meaning" thread running in the background. ...God Has INTENTIONS!! He's Doing Something!

...Woven into EARTH's REALITY is a Mysterious Divine/Heavenly Engagement! ...Something that is described by words like "PURPOSE" ... "ORDAINED" ... "PREDESTINED" ... "FOREKNEW" ... "DECLARED" ... "MEANT"

...God is Advertising This About Himself! It matters to God that you KNOW that HE IS THE SOVEREIGN LORD

Is 46:8-10 ⁸ “Remember this and stand firm, recall it to mind, you transgressors, ⁹ remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, ¹⁰ declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,’

...Unique to God AND Intended to be Known = a Being Who is SOVEREIGN Over All that Exists!!—Time, Matter, People, Outcomes, Events, etc.!!

"...we have seen so many instances of God's governing the details of nature's events, Satan's action, the deeds of kings, the movements of nations, and the moments of life and death that we are led naturally to think of God's providence as all-encompassing—all-pervasive. ...our expectation is that there is no sphere of life--no matter how ordinary or seemingly insignificant—where providence is suspended or limited in its ultimate and decisive dominion." **John Piper**, "Providence", p. 385

HONESTLY ...the Sideways Moments of Life + the Evil Intentions of Man—Make it Hard to make it hard to draw a straight line from “Promises Made—to—Purpose Fulfilled”

...So what God does in His Word is NOT to detail every moment of our lives, but rather to Reveal Himself and say, “Just Trust ME”!

God is Present and Active in both the "Theology" of Your Life and the "Anthropology" of Your Life... Consider:

"When Joseph was sold into slavery in Egypt, the favor that he found in the eyes of his master Potiphar (Gen 39:3-4), and then in the sight of the jailer after he had been put in prison, was not a mere outcome of social forces or human nature. It was a work of God upon the hearts and minds of Joseph's captors... *"The Lord was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison."* (Gen 39:21)

...This favor that God gave to Joseph was a disposition in the heart and mind of the jailer (as it was in Potiphar's) to treat Joseph well. This means that God acted on the mind and heart—the will—of the jailer (we are not told how) so that he had an inclination to treat Joseph this way. The effect was astonishing. We are meant to feel the wonder of this. The jailer put all the prisoners in the charge of a prisoner! And everything that happened in the prison was in the charge of Joseph. The picture of this incredible trust is designed to make us feel how thoroughly God is able to govern the hearts and minds of his people's adversaries. The focus is not on Joseph's winsome personality, but on God...

...The same amazing influence is seen in God's providence over Pharaoh's disposition toward Joseph. The jailer put Joseph in charge of the whole prison. Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of the whole nation. The description of Pharaoh's lavish trust in Joseph, whom he scarcely knew, is meant to take our breath away and cause us to wonder why..." **John Piper**, "Providence", p. 386