

**The God of Heartache**  
**A Painful Fall**  
**Genesis 50:19-21**

There is certainly a lot of sin to go around in Joseph's early life.

- Jacob favored his son, Joseph above his other sons Gen 37:3
- Joseph took advantage of that favoritism Gen 37:5-7 & 9-10
- His brothers hated him for it Gen 37:4

Just like Joseph and his brothers

- 1 – People hurt us, and we hurt people
- 2 – God, not people, rules heartbreak
- 3 – God uses heartbreak to cure us of heartbreak

*<sup>9</sup> But Joseph said to them, “Do not fear, for am I in the place of God?<sup>20</sup> As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. <sup>21</sup> So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones.” Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.*

1<sup>st</sup> sermon theme: **God sinlessly uses sin for redemptive good**

**First: The World is Fallen**

Think of how Joseph experienced the world's fallenness –

- \*A father's favoritism
- \*His brothers' hatred
- \*Potiphar's wife's lie
- \*The cupbearer's forgetfulness

You have also experience repeated pain.

But, the first time we hurt ourselves physically we endure more than physical pain. The shock of being hurt is as painful as the pain.

**Job 5:7 - ...man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward**

**John 16:33 – In the world you will have tribulation**

**James 1:2 – Count it all joy, my brothers, when [not 'if'] you meet trials...**

If, to be forewarned is to be forearmed, then God forewarns us about heartache to prepare us for heartache

**Picture 1** – Like the little boy in this picture, we shouldn't attempt to deny the fallenness of the world. We cannot shut it out. We cannot hide from it. The world is fallen, and we will suffer the repercussions. This means people hurt us and we hurt people.

IMP: It is often

- the unexpectedness of heartache, and often
- the source of heartache (a trusted person), that multiplies its intensity

### **Second: Jesus serves as our model for suffering**

If any heartbreak clearly reveals the world we live in, it is the way the world treated Jesus.

Fundamentally, the Jews hated Jesus because they were envious of his popularity, which, in turn, diminished their influence and lifestyles

**Matthew 27:18** – *“...it was out of envy that they had delivered him up.”*

As Jesus's reputation as a healer and miracle worker spreads, the crowds come to him in larger and larger numbers, prompting the elites to despise him more and more. As a general rule, Jesus was popular with the masses (the exception being in his hometown of Nazareth), and as his popularity increased with the crowds, so did the opposition from the Jewish leaders.

Scripture forewarns us about heartache

Knowing the world for what it is, Jesus attempted to prepare his disciples for his unavoidable death. But they either intentionally refused to accept that view of reality or they naively didn't understand the radical brokenness of a world that crucified truth and beauty personified

**Mark 8:31-32** - *And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again. <sup>32</sup> And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.*

In other words, if Jesus suffered in this world, you will also. The fallen nature of the world and its treatment of Jesus, demonstrated by its treatment of Jesus, insures your heartache. (

This hatred is to be expected. What was worse was the source of Jesus' betrayal.

**Psalm 41:9** - *Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.*

Joseph knew his brothers disliked him, but he undoubtedly had no idea they hated him to the extent of plotting his death and selling him into slavery. We are left to wonder about the greater pain: betrayal from brothers or living as a slave in Egypt.

But the Scripture makes it clear that Jesus is our model for living in a fallen world

1 Peter 2:21 - *Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example...*

Jesus' suffering teaches us that we also will suffer. But Jesus' model also insures you can forgive and that God works heartache for redemptive good

### **Third: Heartache is Intentionally and Purposefully Built into the World**

It is true that people crucified Jesus.

Acts 2:23 - *this Jesus...you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.*

People sin freely. It is no redemptive value to deny it.

ILL – **Picture 2** - Rachel Denhollander spoke publicly at the trial of Larry Nassar, the former USA Gymnastics and Michigan State University doctor recently sentenced to 175 years in prison for systematic sexual abuse. She was also the first victim to publicly speak about the abuse after the Indianapolis Starr broke the story. Denhollander's husband is an MDiv student at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

*"Should you ever reach the point of truly facing what you have done, the guilt will be crushing. And that is what makes the gospel of Christ so sweet. Because it extends grace and hope and mercy where none should be found. And it will be there for you.*

*I pray you experience the soul crushing weight of guilt so you may someday experience true repentance and true forgiveness from God, which you need far more than forgiveness from me — though I extend that to you as well."*

The truth about sin is valuable because it leads to guilt and repentance and forgiveness. It is unhealthy to deny we have been hurt; both for us and the person who hurt us.

At the same time, Acts 2:23 also says – *this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God,*

The people who killed Jesus acted freely and are wholly responsible for their sin

But Jesus' death was also planned before the world began

1 Peter 1:18-20 - *you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold,<sup>19</sup> but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.<sup>20</sup> He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you*

And prophesied in the first book of the Bible

Genesis 3:15b - *he [Jesus] shall bruise your [Satan's] head, and you [Satan] shall bruise his [Jesus'] heel."*

Isaiah 53:4 & 10 - Jesus was “*stricken, smitten by God and afflicted....it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief*”

Psalms 105:16-19 -

*When he summoned a famine on the land  
and broke all supply of bread,  
<sup>17</sup> he had sent a man ahead of them,  
Joseph, who was sold as a slave.  
<sup>18</sup> His feet were hurt with fetters;  
his neck was put in a collar of iron;  
<sup>19</sup> until what he had said came to pass,  
the word of the LORD tested him.*

This is Gospel. This is good news. Why?

This takes heartache out of the hands of a mean person and places it in the trustworthy hands of your good God.

Question: Doesn't this make God mean or a monster?

Answer: Are you a monster parent? You knew before you had children that they would fall off of bikes, have to get shots to prevent disease and be rejected by friends. Yet you still had them. Now that you have them, you know they will fall off of a bike but you let them ride. You know they will fail tests but you send them to school. You know a shot will hurt them but you take them to the doctor anyway.

Are you a monster? No. Is God a monster? No.

James 1:4 - *And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*

Hebrews 12:11 - *For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

God really loves you. He loves you perfectly. He knows what is best for you and he does what is best for you. And yes, that best includes breaking your heart to save you from this world.

#### **Fourth: God Exchanges Redemptive Good for all Heartache**

1 John 2:17 - *And the world is passing away **along with its desires**, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.*

- The world is passing away
- Only those who love God will not

God loves you enough to break your affection for things that won't satisfy you temporarily and will eternally hurt you.

God will exchange heartache for a greater good.

God's work isn't just for good but redemptive good. He isn't just making life better. He is saving our lives.

Genesis 45:5 - ... *God sent me before you to preserve life*

Genesis 45:7 - *And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors.*

Genesis 50:19 - *As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.*

God uses heartache in a unique way –

Hebrews 12:11 - *“...all discipline seems painful...” but God has divinely insured that “later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness”*

This is why we need to be

- a) Patient
- b) Wise

James 1:4-5 - *And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. <sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.*

- Don't waste your heartache. God doesn't. It is all purposeful.
- Don't misinterpret your heartache.

You may feel out of control but the person causing you heartache is not in control. There is a great and good God who is in control.

- God uses heartache to conform us to Jesus
- God uses heartache to demonstrate the worthlessness of other gods

Conclusion: It is heartbreaking to live in a fallen world. But God has promised that he is and will make all things new. Just as he made your heart new, he is making everything new. How new?

Romans 8:16-18 - *The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer*

*with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. <sup>18</sup>For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.*

Application:

- Jesus' suffering proves that God has purposefully built redeeming heartache into the world. How does this truth change your mind about your heartache, in particular, the circumstance or people who have hurt you?
- Heartache turns your heart to God. How specifically, has your heartache refocused your heart on the eternal? on God himself?
- How does knowing that your heartache is Father-filtered, perfectly measured for you, provide you with patience? How does it give you hope? How does it give meaning to your heartache?
- What fruit has your heartache yielded?