



INTENDED FOR GOOD?

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... Joseph said to them, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.

Genesis 50:19-20

I like the story of Joseph. Do you know that there were, according to one source I found, thirteen years between when he was sold into slavery by his brothers and when he became second in command in Egypt? All those years of patient endurance while he went through many kinds of trials. By the end of this time, after much transformation, he had finally become the person God could use. Under his leadership Egypt was able to store away enough grain to save many from hunger.

His brothers came asking for the grain they so badly needed, not realizing that the man they were asking this from was their brother Joseph. When they found out, they were petrified. But Joseph told them how God had meant it all to happen, so that many lives could be saved.

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As you're going through hard times, have you ever thought that God might mean for some good to come out of them? The pain you suffered from rejection, from a painful change in your life, from the loss of a friend. Could all these lead to something good? Something God meant to happen?

That was how Joseph's story went. Might our story not become similar? Is this the way God could work in our lives as well? Even now? I believe it could if we continue following Jesus faithfully.

Through sorrows and grief, Jesus will keep company with us if we draw close to Him and remember that His love is greater and more important than any other love. There is no better friend, no friend more steady, no more forever-friend. Let's cling to Him as we go through our trials, talking with Him, listening to what He has to say.

As the Bible says, through trials God can make us stronger. With our eyes on Jesus and following His example, God will make us into the kind of people He can use. If we listen for His call, He might eventually show us how we could be just the right kind of people to join Him in the work He's doing in our community and in our world.

. . . and we're left thinking: All this trouble and pain—did God intend these to happen all along?

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