

For Such a Time as This

A Daily Devotional

Monday, June 14, 2021



From Genesis 45:

So, Joseph said to his brothers, “Come near to me, please.” And they came near. And he said, “I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So, it was not you who sent me here, but God.

The Men’s Breakfast Bible Study has been reading Genesis for some time and now, this week, we get to a crucial moment in the great saga of the people of God. The brothers of Joseph, who once threaten his life, threw him in a pit and then sold him into slavery in Egypt, have now traveled to Egypt and found that Joseph has risen to preeminence in the eyes of Pharaoh. (If you’re not familiar with the story, you might want to read at least the full chapter from whence the above quote is drawn).

We can easily imagine the brothers great fear once they realize that the one whom they betrayed so many years ago, now holds ultimate sway over their lives and their future. But Joseph is not the vengeful soul they fear him to be, he sees something that they cannot or refuse to – that God is at work in all of this to save his own people. God has been at work in all the decisions that have been made and, in the end, the good will be done.

Walter Brueggemann, who wrote a commentary on the Book of Genesis, writes:

The narrative now hinges on the conviction that God is free. He is at work for his purpose in spite of, through, and against every human effort. Such a reading collides with any easy humanism. It also collides with a kind of supernaturalism which wants to distinguish between God’s work and human work. Against such humanism which separates God’s work and human work, this narrative affirms that the arena of human choice is precisely where God’s saving work is done. ... The narrative affirms that God’s purpose is hidden and mysterious. It is hidden so that no participant in the story has a clue about it until now. The purpose does not depend on human resolve or willingness.

Brueggemann’s point should be well received; we may be active and agents in this life, but God is at work even in our actions. It is NOT that God takes our freedom from us and that is a great puppet-master, but rather God works through, despite and against our choices so that eventually, God’s will be done ...

Prayer for the Day: (From *the Book of Common Prayer* – 1662 edition)

O Lord, keep us, we beseech thee, under the protection of thy good providence, and make us to have a perpetual fear and love of thy holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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