

Does God Partner with Evil to Bring about Good?

From: In Defense of My Father:

Toward a Better Understanding of the Sovereignty of God

Taken from Chapter 7: Addressing Misconceptions

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One of the most beautiful stories in the Old Testament is that of the life of Joseph. He was the eleventh son of the twelve sons of Israel whose life God chose to save the burgeoning nation of Israel. All along the way, efforts were made to destroy Joseph and defeat God's purposes for him, even by his own brothers.¹ When finally reunited with them, Joseph says the following to his brothers who had sought to kill him.

Genesis 50:20

But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.

Joseph understood well that his brothers meant to harm him, but he also knew that God had changed their plots to destroy him and instead prospered and promoted Joseph to save the nation of Israel.

The word “meant” used twice in the above passage is “chāshab” in Hebrew. This word can be used to refer to evil or good actions.

Chāshab- to plait or interpenetrate, that is, (literally) to weave or (generally) to fabricate

The brothers were plotting to destroy Joseph, but God intervened to bring about His will regardless of their attempts to thwart it. Amazingly, God was able to weave His plan for Joseph's life even though they plotted against him.

We see throughout this very lengthy account of Joseph's journey that repeatedly, there were attempts to defeat the plan of God in Joseph's life, but God interpenetrated what was meant for evil and promoted and prospered Joseph instead.

This might surprise you, but it is so important to note that nowhere in the lengthy story of the account of Joseph's life does it say that God *caused* those who meant evil against Joseph to commit evil against Joseph. Read the story again. It simply is not there.

¹ Joseph's life is also a type of the life of Christ who was also sent to deliver His people but who was then rejected and betrayed by them, suffered and died for them, and now delivers all of them who believe in Him.

We assume it is there because so many teachers have said, “Now God *caused* these things to happen so that Joseph would make it to the palace, and God is sending difficulties into your life to get you where He wants you to be. So, embrace these attacks against you. Don’t fight them. God has a plan.” This is nowhere to be found in the story of Joseph.

It was God’s will for Joseph to end up in Egypt, and He was perfectly capable of getting him there without all the roadblocks that came his way. Think about this for a moment:

God doesn’t *need* evil to bring about good.

Does He?

Are God and satan partners?

God forbid!

God’s calling on Joseph’s life was to use him to deliver his family. How much better it would have been if they had supported his dreams instead of rising up to defeat them. Their jealousy and murderous plans were solely their responsibility. God didn’t inspire any of the injustices against Joseph. Rather, God did not allow anything or anyone to frustrate His plan for his life.

What we should take from his story instead is that nothing is able to keep us from what God purposes in our lives. If the enemy tries to thwart God’s plan, God will see to it that even his evil attempts will work in our favor.

When we more carefully examine the assaults against Joseph, this truth is evident. We see that every time someone sought to destroy him, Joseph was instead caused to prosper and was promoted. It wasn’t his fault or God’s that he landed in jail, but nothing could prevent God from doing what He planned for Joseph and the Children of Israel. His destiny was to provide deliverance for them. God simply took what was meant for evil and turned it for good—He wove (interpenetrated) the events of Joseph’s life into His plan to save the nation of Israel.

Acts 7:9-10

*“And the patriarchs, becoming envious, sold Joseph into Egypt. **But God was with him** ¹⁰ and **delivered him out of all his troubles**, and **gave him favor and wisdom** in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house.”*

My friends, unlike Joseph, God is not only with us but inside us, and we are seated together with Him in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Satan has been destroyed, and we are the very children of God. How much more will He deliver us.

The enemy’s purpose is to steal, kill, and destroy. Jesus comes to give us abundant life. He interpenetrates the plots of the enemy and instead

brings about good. The enemy is seeking to destroy us, but God is also with us and weaves His will into our lives no matter what comes our way, not through *allowing* evil, but by taking the inevitable troubles we will face in life that He does not cause (I repeat myself deliberately) to bring us closer to where He wants us to be.

**Just as with Joseph,
God is with us.
He delivers us out of all our troubles.
He gives us favor and wisdom.**

How can we resist the enemy if we think God is sending the troubles we face? We need to affix these truths in our minds and hearts permanently. God is not our enemy. He does not send or allow evil to bring about good. Instead, God is constantly at work in our lives to bring about good by thwarting the enemy's attempts at destroying us. We are told to stand against the wiles of the devil, not to embrace them as from God!

Instead, let us embrace the truth about God's character. He is not joining Himself with evil. He can bring about His will apart from adversity, but even when we face opposition, God will miraculously override the attempts to cause us to fail.

Romans 8:31-32

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?