

**Read: Genesis 50:15-21**

## God's Plan for You

### **Genesis 50:19,20**

Joseph said to [his brothers], "Don't be afraid. You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives."

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Theodor Seuss Giesel, you know him as Dr. Seuss, was told by 27 different publishing companies that his first book was no good. Retired NBA basketball star, Michael Jordan, was cut from his high school varsity team and moved down to the junior varsity team. Walt Disney was fired from his first job because he "lacked imagination and had no good ideas." It would have been easy for any of those talented and famous people to get angry, yet somehow, they overcame hard times and became very successful.

Joseph's life is like you and Dr. Seuss and Disney and Jordan and every person ever. He experienced hard times. His own brothers sold him into slavery to get rid of him. He was taken away from his home to far-off Egypt. Then he was thrown in prison for something he didn't do. His prison friend who was about to be freed promised to help Joseph. But when he got out, he completely forgot all about Joseph. Yet God used all of those hard times for his purpose. In the end, Joseph became second-in-command of the whole country of Egypt. When he finally reunited with his remorseful brothers, he shared how God worked. "Even though you planned evil against me, God planned good to come out of it" (Genesis 50:20).

Wow! If you were Joseph, would you have said that? If your family sold you, could you forgive them? Here's something to remember: Because God forgave all of our sins through Jesus, we can forgive others as quickly as Joseph forgave his brothers. Because the Holy Spirit lives inside of us, we can learn how to see how God uses our hard times for our good. Through it, he helps us become more forgiving, more patient, and more compassionate with other people.

We can look at all the bad things in our lives and trust that he will make this Bible passage as true for us as he did for Joseph, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for the Younger Children**

- Name a sad thing that happened in your life when it felt like things didn't go your way?
- In today's devotion, what does God promise to do with the sad things that happen in your life?

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- Joseph was treated unfairly. When was the last time you felt the same?
- What are some things we can do to remind each other that God will work back things for good?

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- If something bad happens: *(pick one)*
  - a. It means God is punishing you.
  - b. Wait and see how God works it out for your good.
  - c. Hang in there and hope your luck changes.
- What in your life was hard, but you now see how God worked it for good?

### **Closing Prayer:**

Dear God, I don't always see how you are going to work all things for good, especially when people hurt me. Work in me so I am so thankful for all the ways and times you forgive me that I am quick to forgive others, knowing that even if they mean it for harm, you will work it for good. Amen.