

Genesis 45:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

Analysis

So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lor... This passage is part of the Joseph narrative, a masterfully crafted account demonstrating God's sovereign providence working through human choices and circumstances to accomplish His redemptive purposes. The Joseph cycle shows how God transforms evil intentions into instruments of salvation.

Central themes include divine providence orchestrating events toward redemptive ends, the testing and refinement of character through suffering and success, forgiveness overcoming betrayal and injustice, and the preservation of God's covenant people through famine. Joseph's rise from slavery to second-in-command of Egypt illustrates how God exalts the humble and uses seeming disasters for ultimate good.

Theologically, these chapters reveal:

1. God's meticulous sovereignty over all events, even evil human actions
2. suffering as preparation for future service rather than punishment
3. forgiveness as reflecting divine character and enabling reconciliation
4. God's covenant faithfulness across generations ensuring the survival and blessing of His people

5. how present suffering gains meaning when viewed from the perspective of God's larger purposes.

Joseph's words "you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good" (50:20) epitomize biblical theodicy and providence.

Historical Context

The patriarchal narratives (Genesis 12-50) reflect the cultural, social, and legal customs of the ancient Near East during the Middle Bronze Age (2000-1500 BCE). Archaeological discoveries including the Mari tablets, Nuzi tablets, and Egyptian records confirm many details: nomadic pastoralism, covenant-making ceremonies, marriage customs, property laws, and international travel patterns described in Genesis.

The cultural practices reflected include: treaty/covenant forms (Genesis 15), bride-price customs (Genesis 24, 29), inheritance laws favoring firstborn sons (Genesis 25, 27), adoption practices (Genesis 15, 30), levirate-type arrangements (Genesis 38), and Egyptian administrative systems (Genesis 41, 47). These parallels confirm Genesis's historical reliability while showing how God worked within ancient cultural frameworks to accomplish His purposes.

For later Israelites, these narratives established their identity as Abraham's descendants, explained their claim to Canaan, justified their possession of Joseph's bones (Exodus 13:19), and provided models of faith despite imperfection. The patriarchs' failures and God's faithfulness encouraged Israel that covenant relationship depended on God's grace rather than human merit. The movement from Mesopotamia to Canaan to Egypt set the stage for the Exodus and conquest narratives.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does this verse contribute to the biblical doctrine of creation, fall, or redemption?
2. How can we apply the principles from this passage to contemporary challenges in family, work, or church?
3. How does understanding Christ as the ultimate fulfillment illuminate this passage's meaning?

Interlinear Text

כִּי יְהוָה אֱתִי	שְׁלַחְתָּ מִ	אֶתְּ מִ	לֹא וְעַתָּה הֵ		
H853	H7971	H859	H3808	H6258	
		So now it was not you that sent			
לְכָל וּלְאֲדֹנָי	לְפָרֹעַ הֵ	לֹא בִ	וַיַּשִּׁימֵנִי	הָאֵלֹהִים יִמִּי	
H3605	H6547	H1	H7760	H430	
		me a father	and he hath made	me hither but God	
מִצְרַיִם:	אֶרֶץ	בְּכָל	וּמֹשֶׁה לְ	בֵּית וְ	
H4714	H776	H3605	H4910	H1004	
		throughout all the land	and a ruler	of all his house	
					of Egypt

Additional Cross-References

John 15:16 (Parallel theme): Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

Romans 9:16 (References God): So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

John 19:11 (Parallel theme): Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

Judges 17:10 (Parallel theme): And Micah said unto him, Dwell with me, and be unto me a father and a priest, and I will give thee ten shekels of silver by the year, and a suit of apparel, and thy victuals. So the Levite went in.

Genesis 45:5 (References God): Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.

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