



TITLE:

“CONVERTING NEGATIVES TO POSITIVES”

Scripture Reading: Genesis 49:22-26

22 Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall:

23 The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him:

24 But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel:)

25 Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb:

26 The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.

If we cooperate with God, YHWH ends everything on the positive. God never ends anything on the negative.

For 13 years Joseph went through one negative circumstance after another.

Joseph kept a positive attitude of faith towards God. He never lost his dream. At the end of his life, God turned everything and ends his life on the positive.

Genesis 45:5, 'God did send me before you to preserve life.'
He saw God. He had God. He believed in God.

To his 10 brethren, in compassion, Joseph did not want them to be grieved or angry with themselves. Joseph was past his grief and anger and wanted his brothers to also be past it.

Every time He saw that God's purpose in it all, was greater than the evil of his brothers.

When we are sinned against, we are tempted to fall in one or both of these areas. We are tempted to pretend that the offending party never did it, or we are tempted to ignore the over-arching hand of God in every circumstances.

'Why was Joseph in Egypt? Was it because of the sins of his brothers or because of the good plan of God? The answer is that both aspects were true

The term '**grieved**' used in the bible; the basic meaning is '**hurt**', '**pain**' or '**grieve**'. The term 'angry' is the term 'burn'.

Joseph was about to make one of the most astonishing faith statements found anywhere in the Bible. The verse is the theological purpose of Joseph account! In the midst of abuse and treachery he was able to see the hand of God by faith.

Genesis 45:5 form one of the strongest affirmations of the goodness and presence of God even amidst the struggles and problems of life.

'Does God act in these ways only towards the covenant family?

But what about ordinary believers

Reading the New Testament, it seems true that God is with us and for us even amidst circumstances that are unexplainable.

1. YHWH is a God of positives

Genesis 1:31 says, 'And God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.'

Literally, Lo! Good. very! Not simply good, but good exceedingly. It is not man alone that God surveys, but the completed cosmos, with man as its crown and glory. It is not merely a benediction which YHWH utters, but an expression of admiration. It is unnecessary to add anymore to this creation.

2. Converting negatives to positives

But then the mood shifted. When Adam sin, everything changed:

- A. All human nature changed from positives to negatives
- B. The earth became negative as a result of sin
- C. Adam's expulsion from Eden was symbolic of man's expulsion from God
- D. Everything in human society became perverted and negatives as a result of Adam's sin

So, what happen?

Everything in life must be converted back from negatives to positives.

A. The ground must be converted by being cultivated, planted and watered. Left to its state, it will only grow wild with weeds

B. Humans. Parents never have to teach their children to disobey. Disobedience is natural. All humanity is negative by nature.

3. Jesus Christ is the great convertor

Let's talk about Human relationship. Many of our problem arises as a result of human relationship. Human relationship has to be converted from negatives to positives.

4. To turn negative into positive and keep it that way one must come to a mindset about who Jesus is.

All of us can turn our negatives into positives by trusting Jesus. How do we apply this principle to our daily living? Having faith is dormant (inactive, undeveloped) till the trust factor in Christ is activated through trials and tribulations.

When Satan comes to attack, when family lets us down, when circumstances in life go beyond our ability to control it even though we are good Christians, we have to turn to the source of our lives who is Jesus.

Going back to Joseph, I can only say that many of the things that happened to Joseph was no fault of his own. Yet he faced excruciating circumstances.

He kept constant communication with God. Communication is the basis of life. When communications stop, abnormalities set in. The ultimate end of abnormalities is death unless there is reconciliation and renewed communication.

5. God will always end on the positive for you

Joseph was singled out among the sons of Rachel to receive the double inheritance. The portion of scripture is a very poetic and yet emphatic statement about the priority of Joseph.

The term 'fruitful bough' is an agricultural metaphor for a vigorous growing and fruitful plant. A bough is the branch of a tree.

Joseph had open communication with God throughout life. The God of Joseph is YHWH. Different titles were used of YHWH in just these short poetic statements which emphasized what kind of God was He, towards Joseph during the negatives of Joseph's life.

- A. The Might One
- B. The Shepherd
- C. The Stone or the Rock
- D. The God of your fathers
- E. The Almighty

Read this poetic statement again and again. You will notice how many times the term 'blessings' are used.

- A.** Who bless you
- B.** With blessings of heaven above
- C.** Blessings of the deep
- D.** Blessings of the breast and of the wombs
- E.** Blessings of your father
- F.** Have surpassed the blessings of ancestors

The word 'heaven and 'deep' are used as metaphors for the widest, greatest possible blessings. Both would relate to moisture for abundant crops and grasses.

Now, how you ever wondered why God put such poetic statement on Joseph. Actually, they are also for you. It is both a description of your life and a personal blessing concerning your descendants. You are already blessed and your children will receive their blessings. It speaks of your being well watered and provided for in your deep and real relationship with God.

Yes, 'the archers have bitterly grieved him'. Yes, you will be shot at and hated but you will still be a fruitful bough. This is because the arms of your hands were made strong by the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob. The idea is that God's hand will be on your hands giving you strength and skill to work the bow expertly. God was there even when you did not know it.

You will experience that your blessings will exceed the blessings of your ancestors.