

I. Introduction. *If a calamity occurs in a city has not the LORD done it?* (Amos 3:6)

II. Joseph's last days. Genesis 50:15-26

A. Joseph's brothers plead for forgiveness. v. 15-18

1. Why are Joseph's brothers afraid? v. 15 27:41 Pr. 28:1
2. Did Jacob really give Joseph's brothers such a message for Joseph? v. 16
3. Apparently this is the first time they directly sought Joseph's forgiveness. v. 17-18

B. Again Joseph is gracious towards his brothers. v. 19-21

1. Why does Joseph weep? v. 17b
2. He refuses to judge them. v. 19 Rom. 12:19
3. He does not minimize the wrong (evil) they did. v. 20a 30:2
4. He acknowledges God's good purpose in all they did. v. 20b Ps. 105:17
5. He promises to provide for them. v. 21a 45:11 47:12 Rom. 12:20-21 Ruth 4:11
6. He comforts them. v. 21b

C. Joseph dies well. v. 22-26

1. Joseph lives a full and blessed life. v. 22-23 Ps. 128:6 Pr. 17:6
2. Joseph expresses his faith in God's promises. v. 24 15:14-16 46:4 Heb. 11:22
3. Joseph also insists to be buried in the Promised Land. v. 25-27 Ex. 13:19 Jos 24:32

III. Application.

A. Don't wait to seek forgiveness.

1. Your guilty conscience will make you miserable and fearful. Pr. 28:1 Ps. 32:3-5
2. Confess your sin to God and enjoy the blessings of His grace. Ps. 32:3f I Jo 1:8-10
3. Quickly seek forgiveness from those you have wronged. Mt. 5:23-24 Heb. 12:15
Pr. 3:27-28 Eph. 4:26-27

B. Follow Joseph's example in granting forgiveness.

1. Others may do great evil against you. v. 20a
2. Have a forgiving attitude even before those who wronged you seek forgiveness.
Ro. 5:8,10 Mt. 5:44-45,48
3. Refuse to play God by taking revenge. v. 19 Rom. 12:19 I Th. 5:15 I Pe. 4:19
4. Trust that God will deal justly with the wicked in due time. Ro. 12: 19b I Pe. 2:23
Victims of crime and abuse can find comfort in the justice of God.
5. Acknowledge God's sovereign goodness in the evil done against you. v. 20 45:5-8
6. Do good to those who have hurt you. v. 21 Rom. 12:20-21 Pr. 25:21-22 Luke 6:27f

C. You can only reflect Joseph's godly character when you share his theology of God's providence. v. 20 Jer. 29:11

1. God is sovereign over everything that happens, including both natural evil (hurricanes) and moral evil (looting). v. 20b 45:7-8 Ps. 103:19 78:26 148:8 115:3
Amos 3:6b Pr. 16:9,33 21:1 20:24 19:21 Eph. 1:7 Dan. 4:34-36 Is. 45:6-7 46:9-11
Ex. 4:11 Deut. 32:39 Job. 1:21 2:3,10 Ro. 9:16
2. What is the difference between Providence and fate?
3. God does good through all that happens, even evil and calamities. 50:20b
Ro. 8:28,32 John 18:11 Ps. 76:10 Acts 2:22-24 4:28 13:27 Phil. 1:29
4. No matter what evil touches your life, God intends good for you. Ro. 8:28,32 5:3f
Jer. 29:11 Phil. 1:12,29

5. Because you may not yet understand the good God is doing through evil, you must have faith in God's Word! Rom. 8:28,32,38-39
6. Be careful about trying to interpret God's purposes. Lu. 13:1-5 Jo. 9:1f Dt. 29:29
It is not your place to talk back to God. Rom. 9:20-21 Job 40
7. What good purposes might God have in the Katrina disaster? Ec. 7:2-4 He. 9:27
Mt. 6:19-21 Co. 3:5 Ps. 2 Is. 24:1f 25:12 II Pe. 3:10 Lu. 13:4-5 Ro. 3:10f
8. Those who do evil are held responsible for their actions. v. 20a Isa. 10:5-12

D. Sound theology concerning God's sovereignty is life transforming.

1. It humbles our pride.
2. It removes bitterness.
3. It equips us to move on after calamity has occurred.
4. It enables generous love.

IV. How does this passage point to Christ?

- A. God has visited us in the coming of Christ. 50:24 Ex. 3:16-17 Luke 1:68
- B. The evil of Christ's death was meant by God for good. Acts 2:23 4:27-28 Isa. 53:10
 1. He refused to take revenge on His tormenters. I Pe. 2:23
 2. He submitted to the suffering because He trusted the Father's good purpose in it.
 3. The storm of God's wrath fell upon Him that we might be safe. 50:20 Mark 10:45
- C. Christ forgives us, though we are undeserving. Ps. 32:1,5 85:2 25:18 Ex. 34:1
Nu. 14:11 Eph. 1:7 4:32 Rom. 4:7 Heb. 9:21 Col. 1:14
- D. Christ supplies all our needs. 50:21 Phil. 4:19 II Pe. 1:2-3
- E. Having been reconciled to God by Christ, we can now be reconciled to others.
II Co. 5:19 Eph. 2:12f 4:32

V. Concluding applications. Mt. 7:24-27

Discussion questions

1. How would you answer someone who says natural disasters are the judgment of God upon particularly wicked places?
2. How would you answer someone who says the devil is behind natural disasters?
3. How would you answer someone who says natural disasters prove there is no good God.
4. Why do Joseph's brothers fear him? Does your guilty conscience cause you to fear?
5. How could you use Joseph's story in counseling someone who has been abused?
6. Why is it wrong to take revenge?
7. Where does the Bible teach that God is sovereign over evil?
8. How can God be sovereign over evil without compromising His goodness?
9. What good things might God be doing through natural calamities?
10. Where can we see Christ in this passage?