

# How God Makes Evil Actions Serve Him

*“You intended to harm me,  
but God intended it for good.”  
Genesis 50:20 (NIV)*

**A**t times our suffering is the result of evil actions by others against us. Gossip is one of the most efficient ways to assassinate the character of another person.

There is something attractive to sinners about hearing of alleged sins of other people. When the rumour chain passes on some tidbit of scandal to us, we can easily find ourselves drawn to the misinformation and desiring to repeat it to others.

Having someone whisper in our ear, “Have you heard the latest about so and so?” is an exciting opportunity to have our minds filled with the gossip of someone who is likely hurting and in need of help, not criticism.

I recall a dear friend of mine was told a piece of gossip some years ago about me that indicated I had a certain problem. The person who told my friend this piece of gossip about me had heard it from someone else and had no evidence of his own to accuse me with. Even the information he had received from the other person was vague and only an assumption with no real evidence. But my friend knew me quite well and had no reason to believe that I had the

problem I was being accused of.

My good friend was able to tell the gossiper the truth about me. That is, I did not have the problem for which I was being accused. So the person who was spreading the gossip was put straight but unfortunately the rumour kept spreading.

There are many other ways that people can reach into our lives and cause us pain and suffering. Rumours are just one of many hurtful avenues into our personal space.

What is remarkable about having people attack us with their words, or through other channels, is that God can take their sinful attacks and cause them to become channels of blessing for us and for those around us.

The man we quote in our verse today was named Joseph. As a young person he was favoured by his father, and this caused much jealousy on the part of his older brothers. To make matters worse, the young Joseph also chose to tell his brother things that fuelled their hatred for him. It was unwise on Joseph’s part and, along with the favouritism of his father, led to his brothers decision to sell

Joseph into slavery.

Joseph spent some years as a slave and in jail in Egypt. All of that time he likely wondered why his life was so messed up. It is certain that he did not understand how any good could possibly come from being abused in this manner.

Then he was released from prison, raised to the highest ranking office in the government of Egypt beside Pharaoh, and was given understanding by God about a coming famine and the need to prepare for it. The varied circumstances of his life brought him ultimately into a position where he could do great good for millions of people.

Your trials today may not prepare you for such a high calling, but God guarantees that it will produce good under His sovereign hand. Wait patiently for the Lord to reveal to you His purpose in the day of evil things. In the end you shall see that what you now know to be evil shall eventually turn into a wonderful conclusion just as it did for Joseph.

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