

Genesis 42:28

So he said to his brothers, "My money has been restored, and there it is, in my sack!" Then their hearts failed them and they were afraid, saying to one another, "What is this that God has done to us?"

A real quick Readers Digest version of what's going on, leading up to today's devotional verse. Joseph's brothers hated him and told their dad that Joseph was killed (Or brought evidence that he was, which was a lie). But in reality, they sold him into slavery and he was eventually bought by Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh *and* captain of the guard.

Then Joseph was wrongly thrown in prison for a false accusation by Potiphar's wife who said he tried to rape her, when in fact she tried to rape him.

While in prison, God used Joseph to interpret the dreams of Pharaoh's Butler (Cupbearer) and Baker, and was forgotten about for two years after he did, until Pharaoh had a dream that no one could interpret. Yet God used Joseph to interpret Pharaoh's dream, which was God foretelling of a famine that would happen for seven years.

Then Pharaoh chose Joseph to manage things in Egypt concerning the famine, which was world wide, and had caused Joseph's brothers to come to Egypt to buy food.

Joseph's brothers did not know it was Joseph when they came to Egypt, and he sent them home to bring back their youngest brother, Benjamin (Joseph's full brother) and when he did, they took food with them that they had bought, but Joseph had his men put their money back in their bags with the food that they bought. On the way back, they stopped and found the money in their bags, which leads up to today's verse. Whew...

With all this in mind, look at the last part of the verse and what Joseph's brothers said, "*What is this that God has done to us?*" They thought that they were done for, because they figured that the Egyptians would chase after them to hunt them down, supposing that they had stolen their money and the food they got in Egypt.

Now mind you, this is sixteen years later, after they had sold Joseph into slavery, and I bet they were still feeling the guilt of what they had done; therefore, they figured that God was now paying them back for their evil deed that they had done to their brother 16 years ago. Yet God did not do this, Joseph did, and it wasn't the payback that they accused God of doing to them, "*What is this that God has done to us?*"

But still, God was not punishing them but rather was preparing to bless them and save them, because if they had died in the famine, there would have been no Israel. Yet in God's perfect plan and timing, everything had to happen the way it did for HIS plan to fall into perfect place. So what seemed like a punishment, was actually a blessing to Joseph and his brothers.

Yet how many times have we all felt guilt for one thing or another, and God actually turned it into a blessing?

Looking back on my life, I see how God, and God alone, orchestrated things in my life to bring me to the place where I am right now, with all the blessing He has given me through circumstances and things I did, yet it was God knowing all things and using them to bring me to this place. I think it would be safe to say that you can do the same thing, and look over the events in your life, which God used to bring you to the place you were are right now, even though sometimes it may have felt like God was punishing you.

Sometimes our own guilt blinds us to the sovereignty if God and His love and grace and mercy in our lives. But in our flesh, we think that it's God pouncing on us as we say, "***What is this that God has done to us?***" when in reality, He is using that circumstance to bless us instead.

Now it does not give us a right or an excuse to go out and do wrong things. But isn't it good to know that in some of our own disasters that we brought upon ourselves, that our God is so awesome that He turns that mess that we made into a blessing.

† **Psalm 86:5** *For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, And abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You.*

† **1 Corinthians 2:9 (MSG)** *That's why we have this Scripture text: No one's ever seen or heard anything like this, Never so much as imagined anything quite like it— What God has arranged for those who love him.*