

Genesis: The Twelve Patriarchs

We begin our final lesson from Genesis with the origin of the twelve sons of Jacob, who would end up moving their families into Egypt once the land of Canaan became plagued with famine. Remember, Jacob “loved **Rachel** more than **Leah**” (29:30) although he was tricked into marrying Leah after having worked seven years for Laban to receive Rachael, years that “seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her” (29:20). Once the deception was discovered, Laban agreed to give Rachel to Jacob “in return for serving [him] another seven years” (v. 27). Now he must have understood what it was like to be on the receiving end of deception. He had to complete the seven days of the marriage custom with Leah before he could marry Rachel the following week. Thus began the feud between the two sisters.

Sister Rivalry

Gen 29:31 When the **LORD** saw that **Leah** was hated, **He** opened her womb, but **Rachel** was barren. 32 And **Leah** conceived and bore a son, and she called his name **Reuben**, for she said, "Because the **LORD** has looked upon my affliction; for now my husband will love me." 33 She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Because the **LORD** has heard that I am hated, he has given me this son also." And she called his name **Simeon**. 34 Again she conceived and bore a son, and said, "Now this time my husband will be attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." Therefore his name was called **Levi**. 35 And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "This time I will praise the **LORD**." Therefore she called his name **Judah**. Then she ceased bearing.

- **Poor Leah.** To be so stayed for the affection of her husband because of his love for her sister. This only proves that she was still loved, even if she did have to play ‘second fiddle’ to **Rachel**. But...

Gen 30:1 When **Rachel** saw that she bore **Jacob** no children, she envied her sister. She said to **Jacob**, "Give me children, or I shall die!"

- Of course **Jacob** became frustrated with **Rachel's** request since it was obvious the two of them must have been trying to have children all along. So, just as **Sarah** went beyond the bounds of marriage to give **Abraham** an offspring by giving him **Hagar**, **Rachel** did likewise in giving **Jacob** her own servant **Bilhah**.

Gen 30:5 And **Bilhah** conceived and bore **Jacob** a son. 6 Then **Rachel** said, "God has judged me, and has also heard my voice and given me a son." Therefore she called his name **Dan**.

- Besides **Dan**, that union produced **Naphtali**. But “when **Leah** saw that she had ceased bearing children” (v. 9) she also took things into her own hands and gave her servant **Zilpah** to **Jacob**. Between working off his debt with **Laban** and his obligation to his wives, **Jacob** had to have been somewhat worn out. **Zilpah** went on to bear **Gad** and **Asher**. Then when **Rachel** requested “some of [**Leah's**] son’s

mandrakes” (v. 14) the bartering began between them on who would have Jacob’s affections. After the ‘mandrake’ incident Leah gave Jacob a fifth son, Issachar (*yis-saw-kawr’*), and a sixth son, Zebulun and a daughter, Dinah. At this point, these, along with the two sons from Bilhah and two from Zilpah, Jacob had ten sons in all. So, as Jacob “increased greatly and had large flocks, female servants and male servants, and camels and donkeys” (30:43), he was accused by “the sons of Laban... saying ‘Jacob has taken all that was our father’s, and from what was our father’s he has gained all his wealth.’ And Jacob saw that Laban did not regard him with favor as before.” (31:1-2).

Gen 31:3 Then the LORD said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your kindred, and I will be with you." 4 So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah into the field where his flock was 5 and said to them, "I see that your father does not regard me with favor as he did before. But the God of my father has been with me. 6 You know that I have served your father with all my strength, 7 yet your father has cheated me and changed my wages ten times. But God did not permit him to harm me."

- Laban got a taste of his own medicine when he dealt with Jacob, after he “cheated [him] and changed [his] wages ten times” (v. 7), concerning the flocks. When “the Angel of God” told Jacob “in a dream” to “lift up [his] eyes and see” what “Laban [was] doing to [him]”, He then told him Who He was in verse 13 and what Jacob was to do next.

Gen 31:13 I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and made a vow to Me. Now arise, go out from this land and return to the land of your kindred.'" 14 Then Rachel and Leah answered and said to him, "Is there any portion or inheritance left to us in our father's house? 15 Are we not regarded by him as foreigners? For he has sold us, and he has indeed devoured our money. 16 All the wealth that God has taken away from our father belongs to us and to our children. Now then, whatever God has said to you, do."

- Rachael and Leah, aside from their rivalry, knew that all Jacob’s increase was because God was on his side. It was now time to return “to the land of Canaan [and] to [Jacob’s] father Isaac” (v. 18). After secretly getting his family and possessions together, Jacob “crossed the Euphrates, and set his face toward the hill country of Gilead” (v. 21). After three days Laban found out about it and pursued Jacob but was warned by God in a dream that he was to “be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad” (v. 24). After catching up with them, Laban asked why Jacob left without permission to “kiss [his] sons and [his] daughters farewell” accusing him of “[having] done foolishly” (v. 28). As shrewd as Jacob was in commerce he was still timid in confrontation, stating to Laban it was “because [he] was afraid, for [he] thought that [Laban] would take [his] daughters from [him] by force” (v. 31). Laban was losing his most trusted hand but what was he to do since it was obvious that God was on Jacob’s side. They made a pact and a pillar of stones as a witness between them (vs. 44-45) and went their separate ways. But Jacob had yet to deal with Esau.

Gen 32:3 And **Jacob** sent messengers before him to **Esau** his brother in the land of Seir, the country of **Edom**, 4 instructing them, "Thus you shall say to my lord **Esau**: Thus says your servant **Jacob**, 'I have sojourned with **Laban** and stayed until now. 5 I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, male servants, and female servants. I have sent to tell my lord, in order that I may find favor in your sight.'" 6 And the messengers returned to **Jacob**, saying, "We came to your brother **Esau**, and he is coming to meet you, and there are four hundred men with him."

- **Jacob**, being "greatly afraid and distressed" (32:7), divided all that he had "into two camps" thinking that if one camp was attacked by **Esau** the other could escape. He then prayed to **God** to keep **His** promise to do him good and deliver him from **Esau**, confessing himself unworthy of all he was given. He then sent a gift to **Esau** while "he himself stayed that night in the camp" (v. 21).

Gen 32:14 two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, 15 thirty milking camels and their calves, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys.

- After sending "his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven children" over "the ford of the **Jabbok**" (v. 22), **Jacob** was left alone to wrestle the heavenly being who changed his name from **Jacob** (*Heb.3290- heel catcher*) to **Israel** (*Heb.3478- he will rule as God*). At sunrise **Jacob** saw **Esau** coming "and four hundred men with him" (33:1).

Gen 33:4 But **Esau** ran to meet him and embraced him and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept. 5 And when **Esau** lifted up his eyes and saw the women and children, he said, "Who are these with you?" **Jacob** said, "The children whom **God** has graciously given your servant."

- **Jacob's** fears of a confrontation were unfounded. For now.

Gen 35:9 **God** appeared to **Jacob** again, when he came from **Paddan-aram**, and blessed him. 10 And **God** said to him, "Your name is **Jacob**; no longer shall your name be called **Jacob**, but **Israel** shall be your name." So **He** called his name **Israel**. 11 And **God** said to him, "I am **God** Almighty: be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come from your own body. 12 The land that I gave to **Abraham** and **Isaac** I will give to you, and I will give the land to your offspring after you."

- **Jacob's** family continued to grow when **Rachel** became with child to bear **Joseph**, **Jacob's** eleventh son, who would become his favorite. **Rachel** would next give **Jacob** his last son, **Benjamin**, but would die giving birth.

Gen 35:16 Then they journeyed from **Bethel**. When they were still some distance from **Ephrath**, **Rachel** went into labor, and she had hard labor. 17 And when her labor was at its hardest, the midwife said to her, "Do not fear, for you have another son." 18

And as her soul was departing (for she was dying), she called his name **Ben-oni** (*Heb.1126- son of my sorrow*); but his father called him **Benjamin** (*Heb.1144- son of [the] right hand*). **19** So **Rachel** died, and she was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem), **20** and **Jacob** set up a pillar over her tomb. It is the pillar of **Rachel's** tomb, which is there to this day.

Gen 35:27 And **Jacob** came to his father **Isaac** at Mamre, or Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), where **Abraham** and **Isaac** had sojourned. **28** Now the days of **Isaac** were 180 years. **29** And **Isaac** breathed his last, and he died and was gathered to his people, old and full of days. And his sons **Esau** and **Jacob** buried him.

- So “**Jacob** lived in the land of his father’s sojournings, in the land of Canaan” (*37:1*) where he reared his family. And, as it is with many families, some parents have their favorites. We saw that with **Abraham**, we saw that with **Isaac**, and we will now see it with **Jacob** who is **Israel** concerning his son...

Joseph the Dreamer

It appears that Joseph was a bit of a tattletale and made enemies of “the sons of **Bilhah** and **Zilpah**” when he “brought a bad report of them to their father” (*37:2*). He was **Israel's** favorite “because he was the son of his old age” so “he made him a robe of many colors” (*v. 3*). Because of that his brothers “hated him and could not speak peacefully to him” (*v. 4*). Joseph magnified their anger against him when he told them of his dreams.

Gen 37:6 He said to them, "Hear this dream that I have dreamed: **7** Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold, my sheaf arose and stood upright. And behold, your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf."

- It wasn't bad enough that he dreamed he would rule over his brothers. His next dream included his parents as being over them as well.

Gen 37:9 Then he dreamed another dream and told it to his brothers and said, "Behold, I have dreamed another dream. Behold, the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me." **10** But when he told it to his father and to his brothers, his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I and your mother and your brothers indeed come to bow ourselves to the ground before you?" **11** And his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the saying in mind.

- After that **Israel** sent **Joseph** to check on his brothers who were supposed to be tending their flocks at Shechem...”and found them in Dothan” (*v. 17*). When they saw him coming from way out because of the robe of many colors, they conspired to kill him.

Gen 37:21 But when **Reuben** heard it, he rescued him out of their hands, saying, "Let us not take his life." **22** And **Reuben** said to them, "Shed no blood; throw him into this

pit here in the wilderness, but do not lay a hand on him"--that he might rescue him out of their hand to restore him to his father.

- **Reuben**, the oldest, and son of **Leah**, was the only one who seemed concerned about sparing **Joseph**, the eleventh son who belonged to **Rachael**. He wanted to return **Joseph** to his father. So before they put **Joseph** in a pit "they stripped him of his robe, the robe of many colors" (v. 23). Then they "sat down to eat"...

Gen 37:25 ... And looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing gum, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. 26 Then **Judah** said to his brothers, "What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? 27 Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother, our own flesh." And his brothers listened to him.

- Remember, the Ishmaelites were descendants **Abraham's** firstborn son to **Hagar** the Egyptian servant of **Sarah**. In Egypt, **Joseph** would fetch a fair price so after retrieving him from the pit his own brothers "sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver" and "they took **Joseph** to Egypt" (v. 28). But **Reuben**, who wasn't with the others when they decided to sell **Joseph**, became so distressed that he tore his clothes in anguish.

Gen 37:31 Then they took **Joseph's** robe and slaughtered a goat and dipped the robe in the blood. 32 And they sent the robe of many colors and brought it to their father and said, "This we have found; please identify whether it is your son's robe or not." 33 And he identified it and said, "It is my son's robe. A fierce animal has devoured him. **Joseph** is without doubt torn to pieces." 34 Then **Jacob** tore his garments and put sackcloth on his loins and mourned for his son many days. 35 All his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted and said, "No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning." Thus his father wept for him.

- The brothers conspired to say they found **Joseph's** robe of many colors on their return home and let **Israel** speculate what had happened to him. They knew he loved **Joseph** best and their consciences might not have allowed them to flat out say they saw **Joseph** "torn to pieces". But it was all part of **God's** plan to save the Israelites once famine hit the land.

Gen 37:36 Meanwhile the Midianites had sold [**Joseph**] in Egypt to **Potiphar**, an officer of **Pharaoh**, the captain of the guard.

- But no matter what, "the **Lord** was with **Joseph**" (39:2) and whatever he did he was successful at it, and everyone, including "his master saw that the **Lord** was with him and that the **Lord** caused all that he did to succeed in his hands" (v. 2). **Potiphar** wanted **Joseph's** success to affect his own home so "he made him overseer in his house and over all that he had the **Lord** blessed the Egyptian's house for **Joseph's** sake" (v. 5). But, because "**Joseph** was handsome in form and appearance" (v. 6)...

Gen 39:7 ... after a time his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, "Lie with me." 8 But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Behold, because of me my master has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that he has in my charge. 9 He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except yourself, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"

- As the story goes, Potiphar's wife persisted until one day when no others were in the house...

Gen 39:12 she caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me." But he left his garment in her hand and fled and got out of the house.

- It was at that point she made it out as though Joseph tried to seduce her and she had 'proof' of it. Of course, who would believe whom in this situation, a Hebrew or an Egyptian? Potiphar became so enraged with Joseph that he "put him into the prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined" (v. 20). But because the Lord was still with him, he found "favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison" (v. 21) who then "put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners" (v. 22).

Gen 40:1 Some time after this, the cupbearer of the king of Egypt and his baker committed an offense against their lord the king of Egypt.

- After committing them to prison and having "continued for some time in custody" (v. 4) they both had dreams that neither could understand. That next morning when Joseph looked in on them he saw how they were so disturbed. They told him of their dreams but had nobody to interpret them. Joseph replied "Do not interpretations belong to God? Please tell them to me" (v. 8). The cupbearer told of a vine with three branches of grapes that he pressed into Pharaoh's cup "and placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand" (v. 11). Joseph told him that within three days he would be restored to his former position. Joseph asked to mention him then to Pharaoh in kindness for what he had done for him. It was next the chief bakers turn to have his dream interpreted. His dream was about three baskets of baked food on his head and there were birds eating from it. His interpretation was that within three days he also would be called by Pharaoh but would be decapitated and hanged in a tree while "the birds will eat the flesh from you" (v. 19). All came about "yet the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph" (v. 23). Two years went by before he finally thought of Joseph when....

Gen 41:1 ... Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing by the Nile, 2 and behold, there came up out of the Nile seven cows attractive and plump, and they fed in the reed grass. 3 And behold, seven other cows, ugly and thin, came up out of the Nile after them, and stood by the other cows on the bank of the Nile. 4 And the ugly, thin cows ate up the seven attractive, plump cows. And Pharaoh awoke.

- Remember, it was the Nile River that was the very lifeblood of Egypt. He then fell asleep and dreamed again, only this time the dream was about seven plump ears of grain and seven ears that were “thin and blighted by the east wind” (v. 6).

Gen 41:7 And the thin ears swallowed up the seven plump, full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and behold, it was a dream.

- After telling the “magicians of Egypt and all its wise men” (v. 8) what he had dreamed, none could interpret until the cupbearer remembered how Joseph made known his own dream two years earlier.

Gen 41:14 Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they quickly brought him out of the pit. And when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came in before Pharaoh.

- Telling Joseph what he heard about being able to interpret dreams, Joseph responded that it wasn't him and how only “God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer” (v. 16). Pharaoh told his dreams and Joseph stated how they were both of the same thing and were doubled which meant “that the thing is fixed by God, and God [would] shortly bring it about” (v. 32). They had to do with seven years of plenty and seven years of famine which would shortly overtake the land. After telling Pharaoh he needed to appoint someone to take “one-fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt during the seven plentiful years” (v. 34) and keep it in storage for the seven years of famine, Pharaoh asked if there was such a person “in whom is the Spirit of God?” (v. 38). He then appointed Joseph, who “was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh” (41:46) over the task and over his own house, just as Potiphar did with his. Joseph then became second in charge only to Pharaoh.

Gen 41:45 And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphenath-paneah. And he gave him in marriage Asenath, the daughter of Potiphara priest of On. So Joseph went out over the land of Egypt. 46 Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh and went through all the land of Egypt.

- Before the famine came throughout the land Joseph had two sons: Manasseh, because “God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house” and Ephraim, “For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction” (vs. 51-52). All came about as Joseph had predicted with the help of God to interpret Pharaoh's dreams. But the famine was not restricted to Egypt only.

Gen 41:57 Moreover, all the earth came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, because the famine was severe over all the earth.

- Now the story comes to full circle. The famine also reached the land of Canaan and “when Jacob (Israel) learned that there was grain for sale in Egypt, he said to his sons, ‘Why do you look at one another?’” (42:1).

Gen 42:3 So ten of **Joseph's** brothers went down to buy grain in **Egypt**. 4 But **Jacob** did not send **Benjamin**, **Joseph's** brother, with his brothers, for he feared that harm might happen to him. 5 Thus the sons of **Israel** came to buy among the others who came, for the famine was in the land of **Canaan**.

- Recognizing his brothers, **Joseph** concealed his true identity with the desire to test them to see if they had remorse for selling him to the Ishmaelites. He accused them of being “spies” and gave them the opportunity to prove him wrong by bringing **Benjamin** to him, after the ten spoke of their father’s youngest son. After holding them for “three days” (v. 17) he told them that one of them (*Simeon, the second oldest of Jacob’s sons*) would have to be left behind while the rest were to go home and bring **Benjamin** to prove they weren’t there to spy out the land. **Reuben** (*the eldest son who wanted to spare Joseph*) told them they were being punished for what they did to him, not knowing that **Joseph**, whom they didn’t recognize, could understand every word they spoke. At that point **Joseph** “turned away from them and wept” (v. 24). When he returned “he took **Simeon** from them and bound him before their eyes”. He then gave orders to return the money they used to buy grain in each of their sacks. When they found what was done they were afraid and returned home to **Jacob** and explained what had happened. They also explained where **Simeon** was and how they were to return with **Benjamin** or be punished as spies.

Gen 42:36 And **Jacob** their father said to them, "You have bereaved me of my children: Joseph is no more, and Simeon is no more, and now you would take Benjamin. All this has come against me."

- But when the grain ran out and they had to return to **Egypt** they convinced **Jacob** to let **Benjamin** go with them to prove their innocence. **Jacob** asked them why they were so foolish to say they were twelve brothers and told them to take double the money, saying “perhaps it was an oversight”, along with some presents of “a little balm and a little honey, gum, myrrh, pistachio nuts, and almonds” (43:11). When **Joseph** saw them with **Benjamin** they explained what they found in their sacks. He assured them that “the God of [their] father [had] put treasure in [their] sacks for [them]... Then he brought **Simeon** out to them” (v. 23). The twelve brothers were once again all together. **Joseph** inquired of **Jacob** and seeing his own brother **Benjamin** he “hurried out, for his compassion grew warm for his brother, and he sought a place to weep” (v. 30). After cleaning up he ordered the food to be served even though neither he nor the other Egyptians ate with the Hebrews because it was considered “an abomination to the Egyptians” (v. 32).

Gen 43:33 And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth. And the men looked at one another in amazement. 34 Portions were taken to them from **Joseph's** table, but **Benjamin's** portion was five times as much as any of theirs. And they drank and were merry with him.

- But **Joseph** wasn't convinced yet that his brothers had changed.

Gen 44:1 Then he commanded the steward of his house, "Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put each man's money in the mouth of his sack, **2** and put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, with his money for the grain." And he did as **Joseph** told him.

- After they set out the next day for home, **Joseph** commanded his steward to go after them and ask them why they repaid him evil for all his hospitality. When they found the silver cup in **Benjamin's** sack, **Joseph** told them that **Benjamin** would have to stay in Egypt to be his servant. "But as for you, go in peace to your father" (*v. 17*). Then **Judah** (*who decided to sell Joseph in order to spare his life*) pleaded with him saying his father would die if **Benjamin** didn't return with them and asked **Joseph** to take him instead. It was at that point that **Joseph** could no longer hide his true identity. He ordered the Egyptians to leave the room and all heard him as "he wept aloud, so that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of **Pharaoh** heard it" (*45:2*).

Gen 45:4 So **Joseph** said to his brothers, "Come near to me, please." And they came near. And he said, "I am your brother, **Joseph**, whom you sold into Egypt. **5** And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life.

Gen 45:12 And now your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother **Benjamin** see, that it is my mouth that speaks to you. **13** You must tell my father of all my honor in Egypt, and of all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here."

Gen 45:25 So they went up out of Egypt and came to the land of **Canaan** to their father **Jacob**. **26** And they told him, "Joseph is still alive, and he is ruler over all the land of Egypt." And his heart became numb, for he did not believe them. **27** But when they told him all the words of **Joseph**, which he had said to them, and when he saw the wagons that **Joseph** had sent to carry him, the spirit of their father **Jacob** revived. **28** And **Israel** said, "It is enough; **Joseph** my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die."

Gen 46:29 Then **Joseph** prepared his chariot and went up to meet **Israel** his father in Goshen. He presented himself to him and fell on his neck and wept on his neck a good while. **30** **Israel** said to **Joseph**, "Now let me die, since I have seen your face and know that you are still alive."

Gen 47:11 Then **Joseph** settled his father and his brothers and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of **Rameses**, as **Pharaoh** had commanded.

Gen 47:27 Thus **Israel** settled in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen. And they gained possessions in it, and were fruitful and multiplied greatly. **28** And **Jacob** lived

in the land of Egypt seventeen years. So the days of Jacob, the years of his life, were 147 years.

Gen 47:29 And when the time drew near that Israel must die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, "If now I have found favor in your sight, put your hand under my thigh and promise to deal kindly and truly with me. Do not bury me in Egypt, 30 but let me lie with my fathers. Carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burying place." He answered, "I will do as you have said."

- After Israel had died his son Joseph did as he promised and "his sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah... which Abraham bought..." (50:13). Now that their father was dead Joseph's brothers feared that Joseph would punish them for what they did to him. He reassured them that it was God's will that he be in a position to take care of the children of Israel in the land of Egypt. He then told them that "God will visit you and bring you up out of this land to the land that He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob" (v. 24).

Gen 50:25 Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here." 26 So Joseph died, being 110 years old. They embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

- Joseph remained true to God until the day he died. His brothers who betrayed him did so thinking they wouldn't be found out. But God can always take something evil and make something good come of it.

Rom 8:28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called (Gk.2822- invited [specifically] a saint) according to His purpose. (But you might ask "How are we called?")

2Th 2:14 To this He called you **through** our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- The gospel is the 'good message' of God redeeming man through the death, burial and resurrection of His dear Son as being the final sacrifice for the sin of the world. When we emulate that death, burial and resurrection through being immersed into a covenant relationship with Jesus by being baptized, we put Him on as a garment (Gal 3:27) that hides our nakedness known as sin. Thus, God only sees us through Jesus. Are you in a covenant relationship with God through obedience to having put Jesus on in baptism?

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