

What Joseph's Heartache Can Teach Us About the Father's Love

Love covers a multitude of sins." The words rang in my ears, and I couldn't get the six-word phrase off my mind. At 17, already an alcoholic and an addict, I was working at a summer camp in Lake Tahoe. Although I was raised in church, I had never been around Christians like these. They didn't tell me to change anything about my appearance, my attitudes or my addictions. "Love covers a multitude of sins," they said when I smoked cigarettes or dope or threw fits over doing my chores.

"Love covers a multitude of sins." Was God's love enough to cover all the wrong, illegal and immoral things I had ever done, including my alcohol addiction, lying, bad habits, promiscuity and even my drug-dealing? Was it true that I didn't have to clean up my act before coming to God and that He loved me passionately just the way I was?

One night, in the quietness of my cabin, I submitted to the overwhelming love of God. I agreed with him about my condition and allowed His grace to cover my multitude of sins. That was June 1974, and God hasn't let go of me since. He delivered me from my drug and alcohol addiction.

"How quickly we forget God's great deliverance in our lives. How easily we take for granted the miracles he performed in our past." –David Wilkerson

God's name "Deliverer" reminds us He will rescue us if we call on Him. He will give us victory over the most difficult circumstances and will see us through. "He rescued me from my strong enemy, from those who hate me; for they were stronger

than I" (2 Sam. 22:18).

When you need deliverance, read Ps. 107, a beautiful song written about liberation. It was sung to celebrate the Jews' return to freedom from bondage in Egypt and from their exile in Babylon.

Remember Joseph's story? Through his brothers' jealous mistreatment, God allowed Joseph to be taken away as a slave to Egypt. He ultimately became Pharaoh's right-hand man and planned ahead for years of famine. He led the country to become the world's economic leader. Through Joseph, God provided for the Israelites to thrive in the land of Egypt. Decades later, there was a pharaoh on the throne who didn't know Joseph; God allowed the Israelites to be oppressed by the Egyptians. The Israelites grew in numbers and power, and the pharaohs began to eliminate them. Moses was sent by God to lead the Israelites to freedom:

"Oh, give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for His mercy endures forever! Let the redeemed of the Lord speak out ..."
(Ps. 107:a-b).

Thankfulness to God should always be on the lips of those he has saved. This verse is a beautiful picture of the response of the Israelites after they had been freed, though they deserved only judgment. They had been in bondage, yet the Lord heard their cries, and He freed them. A definition of redeemed found at says "redeemed means to extricate from an undesirable state: reclaim, recover, rescue." God rescued His people. The Israelites experienced the God who redeems.

Another definition is to "restore the honor, worth or reputation of." You botched the last job but can redeem yourself on this one. What about you? Have you truly experienced what redemption means? We can trust God to redeem us in impossible circumstances and claim his promises:

"Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses" (Ps. 107:6).

God the Deliverer heard the cries of the children of Israel; He knew their situation: "... the children of Israel sighed because of the bondage, and they cried out, and their cry came up to God on account of the bondage. God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant ... God looked on the children of Israel, and God had concern for them" (Ex. 2:23-25).

God promised deliverance in Exodus 6:6b, "I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage ..." God also said in verse 7, "And I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you a God. And you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians."

God's people had cried out to God. They were in anguish because of their oppression. He heard them. God delivered them; he brought them out of slavery. He freed them from captivity. Have you cried out to God in your trouble?

When I was given a diagnosis of stage 4 non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, I prayed to God for my healing, and so did others around the world. We prayed nights and days; we anguished in prayer for my healing. I was delivered from disease. I thank God for delivering me from cancer.

God wants to deliver you.

Are you worried about the future? Is. 40:31a is for you: "Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength" (NIV).

Are you worried about the unknown test results, finances, a prodigal child? Is. 54:10 is for you: "For the mountains may be removed, and the hills may shake, but My kindness shall not depart from you, nor shall My covenant of peace be removed.

And when the Deliverer carries you through, thank Him and praise Him for the satisfaction He brings: "Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love ... for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things" (Ps. 107:8-9).

Hope in things = Distracted

Hope in people = Disappointed

Hope in myself = Devastated

Hope in Christ = Delivered

—Rachel Wojo

Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, we give thanks to You, for You are good. "Your love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord tell their story" (Ps. 107:1-2, NIV). Thank You for hearing my cries, as I cry out in time of trouble. Thank You for delivering me (v. 6). Thank you, Lord, for your unfailing love. Thank you for satisfying the thirsty and filling the hungry with good things (vv. 8-9). Thank you, my Deliverer, You are so good. Thank You, my God. In Jesus' name, amen.
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*Exchanging hurt for hope is **Sheryl Giesbrecht's** focus—a message she shares with audiences as a radio personality, author, speaker and global influencer. A dynamic teacher and motivating leader, she has endured many changes and challenges, moving her to a deep faith, trust and dependence on God. Giesbrecht's radio show, "Transformed Through Truth," is nationally syndicated and heard daily by more than 21 million listeners on networks around the world. Her latest book is Experience God Through His Names.*

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