

GOD BRINGS PROSPERITY OUT OF ADVERSITY

⇒ **Text:** Genesis 28:10-22

⇒ **Intro:**

- God often leads us through great trials in preparation for some greater service or blessings.
- Whenever bad things happen to a believer, God can bring good things out of them.
- Almost every person whom God used greatly, was first put through a wilderness experience in preparation and training for the best plan God had for them.
- God brings good out of evil for the person who loves God and seeks to do His will. - **John 12:23-26**
 - In our sorrows, there are joys;
 - In our crosses, there are crowns;
 - In our miseries, there are mercies;
 - In our losses, there are gains;
 - In our disappointments, there are God's appointments;
 - In our contradictions, there are compensations.
- **Question:**
 - What can we learn from Bible characters who went through wilderness trials and testings?
 - Consider these Bible characters to see how good came out of trials so as to encourage us in difficulties:

⇒ **1. JACOB.**

- After Jacob had fled from his home and his murderous brother Esau, he slept on a stony pillow (**Genesis 28:11**).
 - In Jacob's stony pillow he saw the Lord on top of a ladder leading to heaven. He received 5 promises from God.
 - He called it the *House of God, Bethel* (v.17) and the *Gate of Heaven*.
 - He made a four-fold vow and promised to give one-tenth of all that God gave him to God.

⇒ **2. JOSEPH.**

- After spending about 10 years in jail, Joseph found that God was preparing him for the palace to do a mighty work of saving many people's lives.
 - **Genesis 50:20; Psalm 105:17-22**
- He became second-in-charge of Egypt.
 - Pharaoh changed his name to Zaphnath-Paaneah (**Genesis 41:45**) meaning 'Revealer of secrets and Saviour of the world'.
- Joseph's sufferings and exaltation became a wonderful prophetic picture of Jesus Christ's future suffering and exaltation.

⇒ **3. MOSES in the wilderness in Exodus 3:1-4:13.**

- Moses spent 40 years learning to be great in Pharaoh's palace;
- Moses spent 40 years learning to be a nobody in the wilderness;
- Moses spent 40 years serving God doing a great work of delivering Israel from Egypt, receiving the 10 Commandments, writing Scripture, seeing God, and learning God's Name 'I AM' (**3:14,15**).

- ⇒ **4. DAVID.**
- David turned the taunts of Goliath into a great triumph.
 - Goliath humiliated the Israelite army for 40 days.
 - God used a little boy, David, to humiliate the Philistine army and win a great victory for God and Israel. (**I Samuel 17:43-50**).
 - David experienced great suffering in being chased by Saul for many years through the wilderness.
 - One day, God turned David's suffering to great joy when he was crowned King of Israel.
 - **Question:**
 - What giants such as Goliath and Saul do we need to conquer by faith?
- ⇒ **5. ELIJAH.**
- Elijah fled into the wilderness after being threatened with death by Jezebel.
 - God encouraged Elijah by sending an angel to encourage him, giving him a new ministry and a new friend in Elisha to carry on his work, as well as a chariot ride to heaven without seeing death.
- ⇒ **6. PAUL.**
- Paul's two wilderness experiences led to great blessing:
 - a) Paul spent three years in the Arabian desert, studying to get his doctrine clear (**Galatians 1:17**), which helped him in his preaching, his letters to the churches and his missionary journeys in the years to come.
 - **Lesson:** Years spent in studying God's Word and in learning to be a nobody are laying solid foundations for future service.
 - b) Paul spent many years sacrificing, suffering and being persecuted on his missionary journeys and in jail (**2 Corinthians 11:21-30**), which led to:
 - - many churches being started;
 - - writing much of the New Testament which has blessed millions of Christians;
 - - becoming a great example who inspired much soul winning, missionary activity,
 - and was a model for future missionaries.
- ⇒ **7. JOHN.**
- While banished to the isle of Patmos, John was given a glorious revelation of heaven, of the end of the age, and of eternity future. (**Revelation 1:9**).
 - God sent him away from people, to give him the visions of Revelation.
 - What seemed like a bad thing (his exile on Patmos), led to a very good thing of the book of Revelation being written.
 - This book has given blessing and hope to millions of Christians' lives.
 - It has greatly informed believers on Christ's return.
 - It shows us the ultimate defeat of Satan and victory for believers at Christ's coming.
- ⇒ **8. JESUS.**
- Jesus had two main wilderness experiences:
 - a) In **Luke 4:1** the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil for 40 days.

- The result of His victory over Satan here was fame, power, glory and teaching God's Word with power. (**Luke 4:14,15,31,32**).
- b) Jesus knew that the valley of suffering on the cross that He was to endure, would lead to the glory of His resurrection, ascension and final victory over sin and Satan.

⇒ **Conclusion:**

○ **Question:**

- What wilderness experiences or valleys are you going through?

○ **Answer:**

- These can be the precursors to great blessings. (**Romans 8:28**).
- The way to cure despair is to give yourself to prayer, for prayer is the great cure of every ill.
- Sufferings and wilderness experiences for God's best servants are part of our training for a bigger work for God.

○ **Question:**

- Will you see wilderness experiences as being for your learning and future blessing?

