

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 19) – September 13, 2026

“As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive as they are today.”

- Genesis 50:20 -

Joseph had every right to demand justice against his brothers. Jealous of the interpretation of his dreams, his brothers sold him into slavery. They further deceived their father into thinking that Joseph had been devoured by an animal (Genesis 37).

Joseph would be taken to Egypt where he would serve Pharaoh by interpreting the dreams about a coming famine. This led the Pharaoh to put him in charge of storing up the food in preparation for the famine (Genesis 41:25-57). As the famine became widespread, Joseph’s brothers come to Egypt looking for food.

Eventually, Joseph makes himself known to his brothers. “And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life.” (Genesis 45:9).

We live as sinners in a broken world. There are things that we endure that are meant to harm, wound, and inflict suffering upon us as was the case with Joseph. A mother gives birth to her only son who was conceived in rape. She had the opportunity to get an abortion but chose not to punish the son for the father’s evil act. She recognized that even in horrible circumstances God can bring good from it.

A young man is on life-support after being caught in the crossfire of rival gangs. On his driver’s license he has indicated the willingness to be an organ donor. From this one man’s tragic senseless death came life for three others awaiting a transplant. God brought forth life from death.

This is what God does through Jesus. God sent his son into the world, enduring the evil and hatred of sinners who saw to his death on the cross. God did not let death have the last word. God raised Jesus from the dead! What was intended for evil, God brought about our redemption through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help us to trust in you to bring forth good from the evil that we experience, with the assurance that whether we live or whether we die, we belong to you. In Jesus’ name. Amen.