

God's Restraining Hand

Scripture Reading — Genesis 37:21-30

*The cistern was empty; there was no water in it.
—Genesis 37:24 —*

The hatred of Joseph's brothers was white hot. They were out for blood. Most of them wanted to kill Joseph immediately and throw his body into a cistern where it likely would never be found.

But God ensured Joseph's survival, using Reuben, an empty cistern, and even Judah's cruel-heartedness to work out his plans for the family of Jacob. Reuben suggested a way to do away with Joseph that would avoid shedding his blood: dump him into an escape-proof pit where they could leave him to die. The others went along with this idea, not knowing Reuben was planning to rescue Joseph later. And the cistern, designed for collecting water in that arid land, happened to be completely dry, sparing Joseph from drowning in water or in deep mud. Further, the callous argument of Judah persuaded his brothers that they could "kill two birds with one stone." They could make money by selling Joseph to the caravan passing by, and they could be rid of him without having to kill him. Greedy hands sealed the deal, but this was all part of a bigger plan God had in mind.

In our own lives we too can sometimes see that God protects us despite the evil intentions of others. "In all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according his purpose" (Romans 8:28).

Prayer

We stand in awe, O God, as you work out your good purpose despite the evil plans of others—especially in and through Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Devotion topics: [Bible](#), [Bible Characters](#), [Joseph](#)

Written by Kenneth Koeman — <https://today.reframemedia.com/authors/kenneth-d-koeman>

<https://today.reframemedia.com/devotions/gods-restraining-hand-2014-09-06>

Printed on March 20, 2019

