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A Joseph Experience By Elise L. Moore

Frankly, I was devastated. A new boss had stripped me of my most meaningful and enjoyable responsibilities. All efforts to reason about or change the situation completely failed. After years of steady progress and success, this seemed more than I could bear.

From the beginning of my business career I had relied on God for guidance, intelligence, and fresh ideas. My reliance was more than an act of positive thinking or blind faith in God. I had come to know and rely on Him as divine Mind, the source of all right ideas.

As all my human efforts to regain favor failed, I realized a solution could only be found in prayer-by my turning humbly to God and listening meekly for His lesson. Immediately the experience of Joseph came to thought. Envied by his brothers, he was thrown into a pit, which led to his being sold into slavery and brought to Egypt. Later, after faithfully and prudently conducting all the business affairs of his master in Egypt, he was falsely accused by his master's wife and thrown into prison.

As I pondered this familiar Bible story, a new significance of the pit and the prison occurred to me. God had not abandoned Joseph, nor was He punishing him for some unknown deed. The pit and prison proved to be safe havens where Joseph was shielded from his enemies.

Certainly God doesn't throw us into a pit of adversity. Infinite good doesn't impart any degree of evil. But the action of divine law can be discerned in what would ordinarily seem an undesirable condition.

In the first instance, Joseph's brothers were planning to kill him. It was the eldest brother who suggested placing him in the pit, and this preserved Joseph's life. Likewise, the prison proved to be a haven. Free from incessant immoral pressure, Joseph continued to hear God's message and was able to interpret the dreams of fellow prisoners and of Pharaoh. This led to his release and to appointment as ruler over all Egypt, second only to Pharaoh.

So in a certain sense the pit and prison were a protection from the further envy and malice of his foes. No matter where Joseph was, he felt God's presence and care. In the midst of each adverse circumstance he continued to listen diligently for God's direction, look for opportunities to do good, and faithfully perform the task at hand.

It became clear to me that my situation, while it seemed to be terrible, was actually a haven. I thoroughly banished feelings of guilt and self-recrimination, and conscientiously strove to express "the fruit of the Spirit": love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.

In fact, my position did prove to be a refuge from the storm. Within months, a serious shake-up radically affected the entire department except those working for the new supervisor. Soon afterward, my supervisor's attitude changed, and all the projects that had been mine were returned. I even took on several new, challenging, and important assignments.

God's wisdom and intelligence are available to all. They're not the private property of one person. To hear Mind's direction clearly, one must first quiet fears and preconceived notions through prayer and then listen expectantly for God's thoughts.

In truth, all individuals, as offspring of God, reflect the one divine Mind. In a sense, then, the credit for a good proposal rightfully belongs to God. As Christ Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

In some offices, political maneuvering creates pressure to take selfish credit for innovations. Yet doing so denies God as the source of all that is genuinely good and progressive. No good comes from actions that exclude the original authority of God.

Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, says of the one infinite, omnipresent God: "Now this self-same God is our helper. He pities us. He has mercy upon us, and guides every event of our careers." Certainly as we humbly and honestly strive to glorify God as the source of all wisdom and creativity in business, we will be guided and protected by Him.