

Don't Complain About Your Dice

READING

Phillipians 4

1 Timothy 6

2 Corinthians 12

Romans 8

I'm not saying this because of a deficiency, for I've learned to be content with my circumstances.

My family really loves playing board games. Some are very strategic, and give you a lot of choice and control about what happens to your player. Some are more based on luck. With lots of dice to role, or cards to take, where you don't have so much control.

With those more random/luck based games, it's frustrating sometimes when the dice just don't go your way.

Of course it's not how you wanted things to go. But it's just dice. Even trying to role a particular number with 8 or 10 dice is still a long way from guaranteed.

So we've adopted a saying, "Don't complain about the dice you role". Just accept that as your situation, and do your best with what you got.

The Bible says similar things.

Sometimes in life you do have some control about your circumstances, but not often. And for some people, maybe never.

The Bible says we should be content with our circumstances.

Look at Joseph for example.

His own brothers destroyed the special coat his father had given him.

Then they sold him to slave traders! (Can you imagine! Your own brothers.)

The slave traders dragged him off to a foreign country and sold him to someone there.

Things are looking bad.

Joseph did his best there, and he, (years later), rose up to a more comfortable position.

Becoming his new owner's right hand man.

Things are looking good.

But then his owner's wife tries to seduce him, and because of his honour and integrity he refuses, and he runs away.

She tells her husband that Joseph tried to rape her. And he is thrown in prison.

Things are looking bad.

In prison his character is again on show, and he rises to a position of more authority and freedom.

Then one day, the king, (Pharaoh), becomes annoyed with his two main servants... a cup bearer and a baker... and throws them in prison too!

They have two very similar dreams, and Joseph interprets the dreams that they have for them.

They promise to remember Joseph if their dreams come out as he said.

Things are looking good.

The king calls them both back, but he kills the baker and elevates the cup bearer. Just as Joseph had interpreted from their dreams. But the cup bearer forgets to tell the king about Joseph. And Joseph is still stuck in prison - forgotten.

Things are looking bad.

Then the king has a dream. And the cup bearer suddenly remembers Joseph.

The king calls for him, and he interprets the dream for the king.

The king likes it.

The king elevates him to be second only to the king, in the whole land of Egypt.

Things are looking good.

And then, almost ten years later...

Joseph finally gets to see why God let all this happen to him.

Why he had to be betrayed by his brothers, falsely accused by his owner's wife, forgotten in prison.

Times are tough. In Egypt, and back home in Israel.

Except here, because of the king's dream, and Joseph's interpretation, things aren't so bad because they made preparation.

Back home things are bad. And his father sends his own brothers to Egypt to get some help.

Joseph is able to save his family. And they are able to migrate to Egypt to survive the famine in safety.

Things are looking good.

If Joseph had become suicidal because of his bad "run of luck" ... If he had given up and refused to play any more.

If he had become filled with anger and resentment.

Then his entire family would have been wiped from the planet.

(Not to mention that his family were the physical ancestors of Yeshua. The son of God.)

But each time, he pressed on. He maintained his good character.

And he remained useful to God.

And in the end he was able to realise that all that had happened to him had a purpose, it wasn't just about him.

It was God working through him to bless his family, and in fact to bless the entire planet.

Maybe what's happening to you isn't as full on as that.

Maybe you're not suffering like Bartimaeus who was blind for 30 years so Yeshua could show everyone that he could heal a man born blind, and so challenge the corrupt and misguided leaders of Israel. And to prove that he was in fact the son of God.

Maybe it is that bad for you too. (Sorry if it is).

But it's very easy to focus on ourselves when things aren't going our way, and to become resentful to God and jealous of others who aren't suffering the same way.

The world is not about you. There is a bigger picture going on here.

But God is in control, and he knows what he's doing. He knows what you're going through. And honestly, he wouldn't have chosen you for it if he didn't know for sure that you could make it through it.

Like he did with Joseph, he's building your character while he's achieving his own purposes for the world as a whole.

Trust him.

Don't complain about your dice.

Play the game as well as you can with integrity and character.