**ALL THESE THINGS…**

Genesis 42:36 (NKJV) 36 And Jacob their father said to them, "You have bereaved me: Joseph is no *more,* Simeon is no *more,* and you want to take Benjamin. All these things are against me."

**Introduction**

* We are still live in uncertain and sometimes intimidating times – pandemic, election uncertainties involving who won and was it fair, racial/social unrest and division, economy, and not to mention other things like global warming.
* In this situation, it is easy to fall into despair and with little or no prodding from the devil to say what Jacob said, “All these things are against me.” We have the benefit of hindsight as we look at Jacob’s story but we are to learn from him.
* Romans 15:4 (NKJV) 4 For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.
* 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NKJV) 16 All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

**Background**

* Book of Genesis can be divided into 2 parts. In the first part the major emphasis is events (Creation, fall, flood, Tower of Babel) and the second half focusing more on people (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph)
* Jacob whose name was changed by God to Israel had 12 sons who became the 12 tribes and later nation of Israel.
* His brothers get Joseph alone one day far away from their father as Joseph volunteered to go find his brothers who were tending the sheep for his father. When his brothers saw him coming they began plotting to kill him but the oldest, Reuben, suggests casting him into a pit. While Rueben was away, Judah persuaded his brothers to make some profit off Joseph by selling him as a slave to some Ishmaelite and Midianite caravanners and finally to Potiphar captain of the guard in Egypt. (Gen 37:20-27, 42:21-22)
  + Note Reuben’s intentions - Genesis 37:22 (NKJV) 22 And Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood, *but* cast him into this pit which *is* in the wilderness, and do not lay a hand on him"--that he might deliver him out of their hands, and bring him back to his father.
* What most scholars say is that Joseph was 13 years as a slave in Potiphar’s house and then, as a result of a lie, as a prisoner in Pharaoh’s prison, Joseph is miraculously not only released from prison but made second only unto Pharaoh. He leads Egypt through 7 years of plenty but as he prophesied this was followed by famine. Our scripture text is 2 years into the 7 years of famine.
  + 17 – Gen. 37:2, 30 – Gen. 41:46, captain of the guard, 2-year famine – Gen. 45:6
* As the famine intensifies, Joseph’s brothers minus Benjamin are sent to get food from Egypt. Being at least 22 years later they do not recognize Joseph in his Egyptian dress and talk but Joseph recognizes them. He is both sharp with them and tender (Rom 11:22) giving them back the money they used to buy food and lavishly entertaining them. But he demands to see the younger brother Benjamin they talked about. As surety he keeps Simeon and sends them on their way unbeknownst to them with their money.

When his sons minus Simeon return and tell the story…

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* + Jacob said “all these things are against me” the Bible says,
    - Romans 8:28 (NKJV) 28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose.
  + Jacob only considered what he saw but the Bible says,
    - 2 Corinthians 4:18 (NKJV) 18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen *are* temporary, but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.
  + Jacob believed he had the whole story but the Bible says,
    - 1 Corinthians 13:12 (NKJV) 12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.
    - 1 Corinthians 4:5 (NKJV) 5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.
    - Deut 29:29
    - Psalm 27
  + Jacob leaned to his understanding but the Bible says,
    - Proverbs 3:5-7 (NKJV) 5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. 7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil.
  + Jacob in his despair felt overwhelmed but the Bible says,
    - 1 Corinthians 10:13 (NKJV) 13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it.*

**Conclusion**

* Life is full of things that we can allow to drive us to despair and hopelessness but when we allow ourselves to get heaven’s perspective we find more things are for me than I think or realize.
* How would you complete the phrase “All these things … “ (e.g. are against me OR work together for my good)