

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Afternoon

Date 19th June 2022 Hymns ps 91v1-4, 9 Tune Wiltshire 540, 557 Read: Genesis 39:7-12

Text Genesis 39:7-12

Series: Joseph (22) Title: Joseph's Temptation (1)

When Joseph the chosen and favoured son was despised and rejected by his brethren, he was sold as slave to an Egyptian man named Potiphar.

Potiphar was a man of influence and importance to the King of Egypt. Potiphar **is the captain of the guard**, or as the words mean **the chief of the slaughtermen, or chief of executioners**. He carries out Pharaoh's orders upon the prisoners.

Joseph has been bought by Potiphar, to work in his house, as a slave, a servant to obey the orders given by his master.

(Joseph is not the only one put to work and **verse 11** states **the men of the house**, this may refer to Potiphar's guards or other men who served Potiphar in his house.)

As Potiphar goes to work, His wife who is unnamed remains in the home.

We do not much about her however, we can take from this passage and learn she knows how to make plans.

she is very good at deceiving, she knows when to put plans into action and when not to.

She knows her husband's schedule, when he goes to work, how long he will be away for, as she waits for him to return as **verse 16** shows.

she is completely different when Potiphar is not around. I say that because the details we have before us, is recorded when Potiphar is away.

At some point, and over a period of time, this woman takes a liking to Joseph. Joseph is a young man.

We cannot be exact what age Joseph is at this point, other than to say he is over 17 maybe 18 years old but certainly under 28.

I say that because Joseph is placed in prison at the end of the chapter.

In **Ch 41:1** two years later Pharaoh has a dream, and when Joseph stands before Pharaoh to tell him the dream and is exalted, **ch 41:46** states Joseph was 30 years old when he stood before Pharaoh.

30 take away 2 years in prison is 28. So from the age 17 or 18-28 Joseph has served Potiphar between 10 or 11 years.

After some time, this woman under the influence of the devil looks at Joseph in a way she never had before, and from that point she continually lusts after him and tempts in a sexual manner to lie with her.

This was a time of danger and threat for Joseph.

However, Joseph refuses and resists temptation triumphantly.

To submit to temptation, Joseph says in **verse 9** is **great wickedness and sin against God**.

Joseph's temptation leads us to Christ for He too was tempted, however, Christ was severely aggressively, and supremely tempted.

Christ did not respond to the temptation, rather He refused and rejected it earning the victory for all His people, He resisted the devil and pleased God.

Joseph's temptation, teaches us believer, we will experience temptation in various forms, strengths and at different times.

But there is victory over temptation, there is deliverance from danger and despair, because when we view consequences of temptation, as Joseph did **great wickedness and sin against God**.

then we will strive by the power of the Holy Spirit to Christ likeness in not responding rather, resisting the devil and please God.

Therefore, what we have is Joseph's temptation.

I FIRST, THE PERMISSION OF JOSEPH'S TEMPTATION

In thinking about Joseph's temptation, we must never forget that God was in control of the whole situation.

Nothing was a surprise to God. Everything that took place in Joseph's life in Egypt, was according to God's own sovereign will permitting it.

He allowed authorised or permitted Joseph to be tempted by the devil, as King Hezekiah in **II Chronicles 32:31** "**that he might know all that was in his heart.**"

Now remember, we must be clear on our terms, the Bible teaches that in **James 1:13-14** ***Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: ¹⁴ But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.***

God will test and try His people as Job and Joseph's life showed, God permits a temptation to take place, but in doing so, He NEVER TEMPTS His people to sin, and He NEVER PERMITS, AUTHORISES, His people to sin in that temptation.

Why, because the Bible teaches in **1 Corinthians 10:13** "***there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.***

God has provided spiritual armour, all you need to escape and succeed the temptation no matter how hard and serve it is.

He has provided all we need in Jesus Christ. therefore, if we fail as we often do, in any temptation, it is because we have been draw away by our own lusts, given in, we have not used what God's provided.

God had Joseph where He wanted him to be. He has ordered the events to bring his servant into Egypt, before Joseph will enter into His exaltation he must suffer humiliation.

God's Sovereignly permitted Joseph like Job, to be tempted by the devil, for two reasons,

Joseph is a child of God, his faith rests in Christ alone. Therefore His faith must be tested. A faith that cannot be tested cannot be trusted.

As a young believer, Joseph experiences temptation, however, as he lives in the presence and power of God, he lives to please and honour God. Joseph knows to fall into temptation is great wickedness against God.

He flees temptation.

To put joseph's actions into NT context **James 4:7** "***Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*** don't submit or surrender to the devil, don't give in, rather **resist.**

The word **resist** means ***to stand against, stand your ground.*** the idea is not to be pushed back or give in or give way, rather be firm.

Here is territory in my life, purity, spiritual progress I cannot give up, for to do so is to lose ground, give up blessings.

In the original language the word **resist** it is in **the active voice** meaning ***do it yourself***, use what has been provided, you yourself must take up the weapons provided and use them, to stand your ground, protect her heart and mind, ask Christ for Help and Christ will give victory.

The Bible teaches in **2 Corinthians 10:4** ***For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;***)

Our weapons are Bible, prayer.

Believer your faith will be tested during times of severe temptation, what do you do? submit and yield yourself to God ask Him for help, and the devil will flee you, meaning he will leave or a time, but he will return, and when he does do the same thing,

James continues in **verse 8** ***draw nigh to God and God will draw nigh to you...***”

The Lord allows temptation to come our way in order to train us, to refine us, to strengthen us, to prepare us, to mature us for days of greater service to Him, and blessings from Him.

God tries believers as gold is tried in the fire, to purify it.

God is purifying you believer. God is training and teaching you believer, how to live a victorious Christian life.

Joseph was trained by temptation.

The German Protestant Reformer, Martin Luther declared; ***“My three greatest teachers have been temptation, temptation, temptation.”***

Ultimately in the whole story of Joseph. Since Ruben the first born son and representative of the family has fallen into sin and lost the blessing of His Father, those blessings have been given by the Father to Joseph.

Joseph is the chosen representative of his family and the favoured son. He is set apart by God as the deliverer of His people.

God has a plan for the life of Joseph the He will be exalted and preserve the nation because through Jacob's sons, which make up the tribes of Israel, through the tribe of Judah in the fullness of

time Christ would be born. He would and did come through the seed line of the tribe Judah.

Therefore, if Joseph fails, the nation, the people will not be delivered. If Joseph fails, then the promises concerning the promised messiah will fall.

God permits Joseph to be tempted because, Joseph has the presence and power of God upon His life, he will not fail, but will succeed.

See the gospel message, Christ is greater than Joseph. **Matt 4:1 & Luke 4:1** makes it clear that ***Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.***

See the words carefully, God permitted Christ to be tempted, but the temptation itself comes from the wicked one.

Why because Christ is the chosen Saviour, the Favoured Son, He is the representative of all His people, to succeed in honouring God and secure eternal life, where the first Adam failed by dishonouring God and activating the penalty of sin which is eternal death.

God permitted the first Adam to be tempted. God had provided all that Adam needed to obey and succeed. He placed Adam in a perfect environment.

He gave him His word and told what would happen if he disobeyed. He told Adam which tree to eat of, and which tree not to eat of, to honour God

But the first Adam was tempted of the devil and fell, bringing down with him all whom he represented.

But Christ the last Adam was tempted and stood firm, indicating that He was qualified to save His people and destroy the works of the devil.

Had Christ failed in His temptation then there would be no hope for any sinner in salvation, and believers in temptation.

However, Christ in His sinless humanity, did not fail, rather he defeated the devil, giving hope to all God's people that there is victory over temptation, because only a sinless Saviour can give victory, to the tempted.

Christ is our man of war, He fought for His people. As the captain of our salvation He won the fight for His people, therefore sound the alarm on the battled field, there is victory in Jesus my Saviour for ever.

II SECOND THE PERIOD OF JOSEPH'S TEMPTATION.

Notice the opening words of **verse 7** "***and it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph....***"

What does ***after these things*** refer to?

It is the things that have taken place from **verses 1-6**,

Joseph is put straight to work in the house of Potiphar. But not long into Joseph's time serving Potiphar, Potiphar notices some changes for the better concerning his live stock in the field and the business of his house. He notices that he has prospered more than ever.

verse 3 confirms that Potiphar, saw that the LORD was with Joseph, and the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand. **verse 5** ..."***the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake...***"

(At this stage Joseph is prospering, He has known success, he has been promoted, to oversee the business of the house. Things are going well, advancements have been made in every area, there is growth in Potiphar's house, the business of Potiphar's house has never been as good.)

The Lord is blessing Joseph and those around him share in those blessings.

However, during this time of blessing “...*his master’s wife casts her eyes upon Joseph*....” **Joseph’s temptation starts during a period of blessing, growth and advancement.**

Joseph is a young man of God. He has a good name, he is consistently living a godly life. Having known prosperity, promotion, and the presence of the LORD, now Joseph is under attack, he is tempted day by day.

Surely this was unexpected, but out of nowhere, Potiphar’s wife launches an attack upon Joseph.

The devil could see that God was blessing this young man in an unusual way.

The devil will always target and attack the person who God is prospering, God’s presence making their life to be a channel of blessing to others.

There is a lesson to learn believer in the Christian life, during times of blessing, mountain top experiences or soon after, you will experience the attack and temptation of the devil.

That is striking that during times of blessings, individually, as a church body, God’s people can and do suffer attack.

believer when are walking in the spirit, there is a zeal for the Lord and His work. The devil will aim for you.

when you have had a blessed time reading the word of God, the devil will come to tempt, to steal that word away.

when you have spent time with the Lord in prayer, the devil will tempt to doubt that God hears and answers prayer.

When the work advances, grows, the devil will aim for preaching & people.

When you attend the Lord’s day services, I have no doubt that the devil attacks before, during and after the service, why

because he does not you want to hear and apply the word, to abound more and more, grow and live out that word.

He will cause distraction, disagreements, disappointments, discouragements, disruption, and disharmony,

why is that, because the devil does not want God's people to prosper and enjoy the blessings of the LORD.

In fact God allows the temptation to take place, so we will put into practise what we have learned, to enjoy victory.

Every day you read your Bible, hear the word preached, you are in Christ's school, being educated by the word.

taking what Christ has taught you to live it out.

remember in the life of the LORD Jesus Christ when He started His public ministry at His baptism he was tempted after a time of blessing.

What an occasion that was, for we read in **Matthew 3:16 through ch 4:1** ***And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: ¹⁷ And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*** Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

Matthew 3:15 states, Christ had come ***to fulfil all righteousness.***

Which means Christ provided a perfect righteousness for sinners to enter into heaven, by perfectly obeying the precept's of God's law by Living a sinless life, and by perfectly obeying the penalty of God's law by dying a substitutional death.

Christ lived and minister in the presence and power of God.

The Saviour was tempted of the devil after a time of blessing, when He started His public ministry. The devil wanted Chris to fail in His mission, through Christ nations would be blessed.

Therefore when tempted keep before, what is the blessing I have received or about to receive that the devil does not me have, and then refuse and resist the temptation in Jesus name.