

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Afternoon

Date 17<sup>th</sup> July 2022 Psalm 98 2<sup>nd</sup> version T- Stuttgart Hymns 5 91 Read: Genesis 39:7-13  
Text Genesis 39:7-13

Series: Joseph Title: Joseph's Triumph Over Temptation

In the house of Potiphar, Joseph was a servant and slave to his master.

The Lord was with Joseph and it was the Lord who made Joseph to prosper, blessing Potiphar's house and lands for the sake of Joseph.

The house Joseph dwelt was the place he lived and daily worked. Joseph's godly character, work, behaviour, and much more caught Pharaoh's eye.

However, it also caught the eye of Potiphar's wife.

This unnamed married woman, lusted after Joseph. Scripture tells us in **verse 7** she "**cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me.**"

The phrase "**...cast her eyes upon**" not only refers to see with the eyes, but it also includes desires of the mind. It is to throw the eyes upon fully.

Joseph is targeted. What Potiphar's wife sees in Joseph she desired for herself.

Therefore Joseph's home life and work place became an arena of temptation. There was constant assaults, pressures, from another person in the home, the work place, tempting Joseph to sin against God.

We have considered that **to be tempted is not sin**; but to respond with favour to that temptation, to **entertain** temptation, or **surrender** to temptation is sin.

Notice the words In **verse 8** *But he refused*, Joseph never gave the temper hope, or put her off for another time, rather *he refused*.

The word **refused** means *to resist*. **Verse 10** “...*he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her*.”

The phrase *hearkened not*, means *not to listen, not to hear, not to heed head*.

We have looked at this word and its meaning already in our studies in the life of Joseph.

It is the same word to describe Jacob's response when he concluded that Joseph was devoured by an animal. **Genesis 37:35** *And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted;*

Jacob's mind is settled, he refuses, resists any comfort.

The same word is also used to describe Pharaoh's response to the word of God as delivered by Moses The Lord said to Moses in **Exodus 7:14** *he refuseth to let the people go*. There is a stubbornness a resistance to let Israel leave the slavery of Egypt.

This is the same meaning applied to Joseph, he refused, he resisted Potiphar's wife, He utterly refused, He won the victory, he overcame Temptation.

Temptation can be placed into one of three categories and Joseph overcomes them all:

- Personal temptation: for fame position & fortune. Vs. 4
- Material temptation: for things, possessions. Vs. 5-6
- Sensual temptation. for people. Vs. 6b-14

Joseph's temptation and the victory over it, is a help to believers who battle temptation daily, there is victory over temptation.

The Holy Spirit has recorded this scene in the life of Joseph to show the steps, guidelines for triumph over temptation.

The triumph of Joseph's temptation points Christ's triumph over temptation. In order to be victorious over temptation, we have to put our focus on the sinless person of Jesus Christ

When it came to his tempter, Joseph refused, saying ***how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?***

when it came to Christ's tempter, He refused saying in **Matthew 4:10** "***...Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.***

Joseph shows there is victory over temptation, it is reality, but Jesus Christ how that victory is won through Him.

(Christ said to the devil in **Luke 4:11** "***Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.***" The word **tempt** means ***to prove, to test a (character.*** The idea to see if it can be done.

(The devil tested Christ to see if there was any failure, sin, in His life against God, then He could not save from sin, because only a (sinless Saviour can save and earn victory for those He saves.

(but there was none, it could not be done, Christ said in **John 14:30** ***for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.*** The phrase ***nothing in me*** means ***not one thing.*** )

The virtue of His life, the value of His blood, the victory of His resurrection is the foundation for victory.

Christ has saved a people to live in victory, not defeat. He has redeemed a people to conquer. Such triumph comes through the name the precious of Him who died for His people.

With the Lord's help we will consider **Joseph's Triumph over temptation.**

**I FIRST, JOSEPH'S TRIUMPHED OVER TEMPTATION SERIOUSLY**

***how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?***

Joseph was serious about God and the honour of God. Joseph did not play with temptation. He did not joke about, give wrong impressions, He did not see how far things could go before it go out of hand.

Rather, acted seriously, was acted Solemnly.

He was serious when put in a situation that urged him to sin against God. He didn't take it lightly. He knew that if he acted upon the temptation he would have done great wickedness against God,

He viewed this scene as an attack on God. Joseph never said ***how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against Potiphar, or his wife, or pharaoh, or against anyone else, not even himself.***

There was only one who Joseph viewed sin was against and it was God.

Potiphar's wife didn't see it this way, being in Egypt she was surrounded by her many false gods, man made idols, she lived as she pleased which was for self.

Joseph's statement to her is a massive statement.

The honour of God was at stake. Joseph loved and lived to serve God. To Joseph, God was not a causal god. Joseph had a supreme view of God.

By saying what he did, refusing temptation, Joseph was sowing the existence and reality of God.

He believed His God to be true, living and real. He lived a serious Christian life.

If God was only an imagination, a fairy tale, an idea, as false cults, Bible deniers suggest, **then Joseph is resisting this woman because the fear of man, this case Potiphar.**

However, Joseph feared God. The fact Joseph says **how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God**, means he believed God was His Creator, Redeemer and sustainer of all things. The judge of all the earth. Nothing is hid from His sight.

Joseph fears, respects, honours God. He stands in awe of God.

**Shorter Catechism Q.4, What is God? Answer: "God is a spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth."** These are God's characters, attributes, essence, nature who He is.

(Joseph knew to do what this woman keeps asking to do, lie with her, get closer to her, by getting involved, taking part, by lusting at she does would be to sin against God, who is He. He lived in the presence of God.)

Joseph took this matter of sin against God seriously, that's why He triumphant over temptation.

David came to this conclusion after he fell into temptation. When He acted upon his desire for another man's wife.

David said in **Psalm 51:4**  
***"Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight..."***

***Believer take sin against God seriously and you will triumph over sin victoriously.***

No one took sin against God more seriously than Lord Jesus Christ. Consider the cross work of Christ. Christ supremely lived to Honour God.

Christ is the revelation and manifestation of God because Christ is God in human flesh. All the attributes of God are found in Christ.

Christ triumphed over temptation testifying to this fact. **Matthew 4:10 *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.***

Christ lived to honour God, to please Him. He came to serve God by ministering to sinners, and by serving sinners He served God.

Believer, take the words of Samuel in **1 Sam 7:3 *prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.***

Learn God is the true and Living God, He knows all, and sees all. There is no action unseen and no thought unknown to Him. There is no place unsearchable, we can hide things, cover up deeds, but sin will find you out.

Therefore, believer, before and at the time of temptation, have the highest view of God, live to serve Him only.

He said in **Psalm 46:10 *Be still and know that I am God, I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.***

when you refuse temptation, when you reject something which is great wickedness, do so because it is great wickedness and sin against God.

stubbornly refuse, because sin displeases, and dishonours God. It grieves the Holy Spirit. stand firm, because God will honour those who honour Him. Do all to the glory of God.

Joseph and Christ loved to honour God. Christ's victory over temptation, is the reason for our victory over temptation.

**II SECOND, JOSEPH TRIUMPHED OVER TEMPTATION SCRIPTURALLY**

**Notice again the same phrase repeated, between verses 7-9.**

**v7,8 *his master's wife*, v9 *thou art his wife: sin against God?***

There are four mentioned, **his master**- referring to Potiphar, **his wife**, and then **God**. Then Joseph who is the one speaking these words.

What is in view is the law of God. It is the breakdown of God's law. God and man. God's law is summarised in His 10 commandments.

The 10 commandments are divided into sections, the first 4 centre upon man's duty to God, how man is to worship and love God alone, then the last 6 deal with man's duty toward his fellowman loving and treating his neighbour as himself.

If Joseph responded to this temptation, he would have broken the law of God.

Though this temptation is directly linked to The **seventh commandment** stated in **Exodus 20:14** ***Thou shalt not commit adultery. But to compromise one command, is to break all the commandments. James 2:10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.***

Joseph views Adultery as an evil thing, killing a marriage by breaking the vow, stealing another man's wife, to covet that which is forbidden, to lie about, its damaging dangerous, deceptive and destructive.

***But Joseph triumphs over temptation scripturally His knowledge of God's law, makes him strong and do exploits.***

***The Lord Jesus Christ when He was persistently tempted, was triumphant. Christ quoted scripture, to answer all three temptations.***

**Matthew 4:4** *“It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, quoting from Deuteronomy 8:3*

**Verse 7** *It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God, quoting from Deuteronomy 6:16*

**verse 10** *For it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve, quoting from Deuteronomy 6:13.*

**Christ could have used any other means of intervention, but He used scripture, because that is what we have to call upon.**

**Oh believer follow Christ’s example when tempted,** in order to share His triumphs, **quote Scripture,**

**Put on the armour of God, take the sword of the Lord,** it is our battle-ax and weapon of war, **wield every verse against the temptation.**

**Memorise and mediate upon the word,** *For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;*

As David said of Goliath’s sword, “There is none like it”; even so we say of the word of God, there is none like it.

Always be ready, be prepared be equipped. I say! load yourself daily with the bullets of scripture, put into your mind and heart verse after verse.

And whatever the temptation use a verse aimed at that particular temptation.

**Paul said to the believers in Colossians 3:16** *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom...”* the word **dwell** means to abide, take up residence.



***The idea is let the word of Christ live in you, and speak through you.***

***Charles Spurgeon said of John Bunyan, if you cut him, he'd bleed scripture. Prick him anywhere and you will find that his blood is bibline, the very essence of the Bible flows from him, he cannot speak without quoting a text, his soul is full of the word of God.***

***John Bunyan said Sin will keep me from this book, but this book keep me from sin;***

He is not preferring to sinless perfection, for no believer is sinlessly perfect this side of eternity, rather he means kept from falling into sin and living in sin. **Psalm 119:11** ***“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.***

***Believer when you are tempted to in various ways and times, being rooted and grounded in the word, is a solid defence, a sure delight***

### **III THIRD, JOSEPH'S TRIUMPHED OVER TEMPTATION SUCCESSFULLY v10-13**

In **verse 10** we know that Potiphar's wife ***spake to Joseph day by day***, but when the temptation intensified. We read in **verses 11-12**, ***“... he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.”***

Joseph got out of the house as quickly as he could. He ran from a tempting situation. He didn't want to be in her company, he avoids her presence. He abstained from all appearance of evil

But these are actions of a believer not only filled with scripture but the Spirit. **Verse 2&21** ***the LORD was with Joseph.***

He was successful because he acted and answered by scripture and the Spirit. He lives in the presence and power of God.

Joseph set his affection, his sights on things above. Joseph's mind is guarded by the presence and power of God.

He is not confused. He uses his mind clearly to put down boundaries. Joseph is a faithful servant. He is trust worthy. He refuses to violate that trust between him and his master. He thinks of how good his master has been to him; the position and privileges he enjoys because of his master's kindness.

But defeating the tempter and temptation didn't destroy her for soon other temptations would come, but victory and success over one showed there can be success over more by following Christ's example.

Think of Christ He triumphed over temptation, successfully, not only by scripture but also by the Spirit.

The devil left Him for a season, but keep tempting Him throughout His earthly ministry, until at the cross the devil suffered great loss, his doom was sealed, pointing to events after the return of Christ, the devil will be dammed eternally in the lake of fire.

Believer Christ has provided victory, but, to live in that victory, and experience it's taste, we must claim it, by living in the presence and power of God.

At salvation, when the continual progress of sanctification begins, we are enabled and empowered more and more to resist, and refuse temptation that is great wickedness and sin against God in order to live unto God.