



THE ORCHARD

The God Who Is With Us

Genesis 39:1-23

In Our Temptation

Pastor Tom Yoon

September 27, 2026

Introduction:

- Last Sunday, we looked at the story of Judah.
 - And we saw how wicked and coldhearted he was.
 - How he was filled with greed and lust.
 - But then, he acknowledged his sin, and he began to turn away from his wicked ways.
 - God's grace was working in Judah's life.
- And it's the same for us.
 - No matter how deep our sin, God's grace is even deeper.
 - And he's able to redeem broken sinners and use them for his glory.
- As we continue in our series this morning.
 - We come to Genesis 39.
 - And today, we return to the story of Joseph.
- When you look at Joseph's life.
 - You can't help but notice how he can't seem to get a break.
 - He goes down into the pit.
 - He goes down to Egypt and becomes a slave.
 - And then, he ends up in prison.



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- But what's amazing is how he continues to remain faithful to the Lord.
 - Even when his circumstances get worse.
 - Even when doing what's right gets him in jail.
 - He continues to honor God.
- How was Joseph able to remain faithful to God despite all his suffering?
 - We see the answer right here in Genesis 39.
 - It says 4 times, how God was with Joseph.
 - God's presence didn't keep Joseph from suffering, but it did sustain him through dark times.
- And that's what we'll see today.
 - How we can remain faithful to God, even when it's costly, because the Lord is with us.

Point 1:

- First, we see from our passage, how Joseph honored God, in the midst of success.



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- In verse 1, we're told that Joseph was sold to Potiphar, an official of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard.
 - Potiphar wasn't a low-ranking officer.
 - He worked directly with the King of Egypt.
 - His house was filled with servants.
 - And as we'll see, he was also in charge of the king's prison.
 - Joseph was bought by a powerful man.
- But despite being sold into slavery, Joseph began to prosper.
 - He probably started by working in the field as a low-ranking slave.
 - But then, we're told he became overseer of the house.
 - Eventually, he was even put in charge of everything that Potiphar owned.
 - Listen to verse 6.
 - **"(Potiphar) left all that he had in Joseph's charge, and because of him he had no concern about anything but the food he ate."** Genesis 39:6
- You could say Joseph had a successful career in Egypt.
- And I have no doubt he worked really hard.



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- Most likely, he didn't speak the language.
 - So, he had to work hard at learning a foreign language.
- He also had to work hard in the field, to work in the house.
 - Can you imagine this 17-year-old kid?
 - Who was rejected by his family.
 - Working in the field as a slave?
- He also had to be a trustworthy worker, for Potiphar to put him in charge.
 - That's probably why Joseph's father asked him to check on his brothers when they were caring for the sheep.
 - Joseph was someone you could rely on.
- And even though Joseph had every reason to feel that life was unfair, he faithfully served the Lord.
 - Even in this unjust situation, Joseph gave his best.
- In Ephesians 6, the Apostle Paul commands servants to obey their earthly masters, rendering service, with a good will, as to the Lord.
 - And that's exactly what we see Joseph doing here.
- Whatever work you're doing right now.



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- The Lord has called us to render good service, with a good will, because we are serving him.
- Furthermore, I want you to notice how much time it took for Joseph to reach the position God has prepared for him.
 - If Joseph was 17 when he was sold.
 - And he was 30 when he began to serve Pharaoh.
 - That means it took 13 years for him to stand before Pharaoh.
 - His success didn't happen right away.
 - It took a long time.
- I know waiting is hard.
 - But one pastor writes:
 - "The worse thing that can happen to a man is that he should succeed before he is ready." ([LINK](#))
 - It's better to wait for the Lord.
 - Because he's the one who knows when we're truly ready.
- In the meantime, we need to be faithful with the work God has given us to do right now.
 - Let's remember this:
 - "There are no perfect places or circumstances."



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- “Rather, the best place to flourish is where God has placed you right now.” ([LINK](#))
- Joseph was sold as a slave.
 - But he faithfully served.
 - He patiently waited.
 - And when God gave him success, he also gave God all the glory.
- It says in verse 2 that the Lord was with Joseph and became a successful man.
 - Then in verse 3 the Bible says:
 - **“His master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord caused all that he did to succeed in his hands.”** Genesis 39:3
 - Potiphar saw that Joseph was blessed because of God.
- Later on, when Pharaoh asks Joseph if he can interpret his dreams.
 - Joseph tells Pharaoh, only God is able to interpret dreams.
 - He gives credit to the Lord.
 - He didn’t think to himself:
 - “It’s my chance to get out of jail.”



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- “I’ve got to tell Pharoah what I can do.”
 - Instead, he gave God all the honor.
- And even to Potiphar, I imagine Joseph probably gave all the credit to the Lord.
 - That’s why Potiphar saw it was the Lord who make Joseph succeed.
 - Joseph could’ve said:
 - “My brothers left me for dead.”
 - “But look at all that I’ve achieved.”
 - “Look at how important I am now.”
 - But instead, the Bible says:
 - **“His master saw...that the Lord caused all that he did to succeed in his hands.”**
- Whenever we experience success.
 - Let’s remember that whatever gifts and opportunities we have, ultimately come from the Lord.
 - And so, let’s work faithfully, wait patiently, and give God all the glory.
- In the midst of success, Joseph honored the Lord.



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Point 2:

- Second, we see from our passage how Joseph stood firm in the face of temptation.
- After some time in Potiphar's house.
 - We're told how Potiphar's wife asked Joseph to lie down with her.
 - She took notice of this young man.
 - This phrase, "Lie with me," literally meant something like, "I want you right now."
- And one reason she took notice of him was because he was good looking.
 - In verse 6 it says that Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.
- Some people are more gifted in this area than others.
 - But if you're gifted with beauty, there will be extra temptations you may have to face.
 - You may draw more attention than others.
 - And you need to guard your heart.



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- And that's exactly what Joseph did.
 - He refused to sin and sleep with this woman who wasn't his wife.
- And I want you to think about how strong this temptation was for Joseph.
- He was probably in his mid-to-late 20's at this time.
 - His desire to be with a woman would've been very strong.
 - And yet he was able to resist.
- Furthermore, this temptation was strong because it was after many years of very hard work.
 - He could've felt drained from all his work.
 - And he could've said:
 - "You know what, you deserve this."
 - "After all you've been through, why not?"
 - Temptation can be very strong after you've worked hard and have been successful.
 - He may have felt, he deserved a reward.
- This temptation was also strong because he was far away from home.
 - Joseph was away from his family and his community.



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- He was probably the only person in that house who believed in God.
 - And without any accountability.
 - Feeling alone.
 - He could've thought:
 - "No one will know."
 - "After all I've been through, God will understand."
- Joseph's temptation was also strong because it came from an important person.
 - It wasn't some random person who was tempting him.
 - It was Potiphar's wife.
 - If he didn't give in, she could jeopardize everything he achieved.
 - After being sold as a slave, he finally found his place.
 - But by rejecting Potiphar's wife, he could lose everything he gained.
- Finally, Joseph's temptation was difficult because it was a daily battle.
 - The Bible says how Potiphar's wife came after him, day after day.
 - Can you imagine how hard it was for Joseph to resist?



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- But Joseph refused to listen to her.
 - He was able to overcome this strong temptation.
 - But how?
 - How was this young man able to resist?
- First, he was able to resist because he thought of the pain it could cause.
 - He says in verse 8:
 - **“Behold because of me my master has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that he has in my charge.”** Genesis 39:8
 - He didn’t want to betray the man who entrusted him with everything in the house.
- Think about Judah for a moment.
 - Did God forgive Judah for all his sin?
 - Yes, he did.
 - Was God able to use Judah for his glory after his repentance.
 - Absolutely.
 - But did Judah’s sin hurt those around him?
 - Sadly, it did.
 - It caused great pain for his father, for Tamar, and of course for Joseph as well.



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- Our sins can be forgiven.
 - But they can also hurt those around us.
 - So, before you sin, think about the pain your sin can cause to those around you.
- Second, Joseph was able to resist because he kept clear boundaries.
 - In verse 10 it says how Joseph:
 - **“Would not listen to her, to lie beside her or to be with her.”**
 - He kept his distance from Potiphar’s wife.
 - He didn’t see how close he could get to the fire before getting burned.
 - He tried his best to avoid being alone with her.
 - And when she grabbed him by his garment, he fled from the house.
- (Pain and Boundaries)
- Third, he was also able to resist, because he saw the wickedness of sin.
 - In verse 9 Joseph says:



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- **“How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?”**
- One reason many people fall into sexual sin is because they justify their behavior.
- Instead of calling it adultery, they call it love, or just having a little fun.
- They minimize the seriousness of sin.
- But Joseph was able to resist, because he saw it for what it was.
- He said:
- **“How then can I do this great wickedness...”**
- When someone looks at inappropriate videos or images on the internet.
 - They may think it doesn’t hurt anyone.
 - They may convince themselves it’s not that bad.
 - That it’s only natural.
 - But what if it were their own daughter or son that others were looking at?
 - Wouldn’t they feel anger and see how wicked it was for someone to lust after someone they loved?
 - Do you see how easy it is to minimize sin?
- Joseph didn’t make excuses.
 - He recognized sin for what it was.



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- Fourth and finally, Joseph was able to resist, because he saw how this sin would ultimately offend God.
 - **“How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?”**
 - Sin can definitely cause pain for those around us.
 - But more than anything else.
 - Our sin is first and foremost offensive against God.
 - It’s a rejection of his love.
- Think about Adam and Eve.
 - Instead of enjoying all that God had given to them.
 - They wanted to be like God.
 - And so, they betrayed his trust.
 - They rejected his love.
- Joseph was able to stand first:
 - Despite being thrown away.
 - Despite being sold into slavery.
 - Despite being taken away from his family.
 - Because he knew the pain it would cause others.
 - Because he kept clear boundaries.
 - Because he saw the wickedness of sin.
 - Because he saw how it would offend the Lord his God.



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- But ultimately, he was able to resist temptation and stand firm, because God was with Joseph.

Point 3:

- Third, we see how Joseph remained faithful, even when he had to endure great injustice.
- One day, when no one else was in the house.
 - Potiphar's wife grabbed Joseph's garment.
 - And demanded that he sleep with her.
 - He was able to flee, but he had to leave his garment behind.
- As soon as Joseph left, Potiphar's wife called out to all the men in the house and she lied to them.
 - She said that Joseph tried to assault her.
 - She said that he ran away after she cried out.
 - She showed everyone his garment as proof.
- She made herself the victim.
 - She even calls Joseph a Hebrew.
 - It's like she's saying to everyone:



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- “Don’t you see how this foreigner is taking advantage of us?”
 - She starts to sow doubt among all the servants.
- And once Potiphar came home, instead of just playing the victim.
 - She shifted the blame to Potiphar.
 - In verse 17 she says:
 - **“The Hebrew servant, whom you have brought among us, came in to me to laugh at me.”**
 - It’s like she was saying:
 - “This is all your fault, what are you going to do about it.”
- Why did she turn on Joseph so quickly?
 - We’re not told.
 - Perhaps she was afraid that Joseph might tell her husband what happened.
 - So, before she got in trouble, she decided to make the first move.
- There’s an important lesson we learn about love here.
 - One Bible scholar writes:
 - “If your love is pure, it will remain even when you don’t get what you want. But if your love is selfish, it’s intensity



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can easily turn into hatred when things don't turn out as you had hoped." ([LINK](#))

- Pure love continues to treat others with kindness, even when others don't give us what we hoped they would.
- But selfish love can quickly turn to hatred.
- Potiphar's wife just wanted to use Joseph.
 - And so, when she couldn't get what she wanted.
 - She robbed him of his reputation.
 - She made him lose his position.
 - And she caused great pain for Joseph.
- After hearing this story from his wife, you can't help but wonder if Potiphar truly believed his wife.
 - In fact, when you look closely at this story, it seems to indicate that he didn't.
- If he truly believed his wife, Potiphar could've killed Joseph.
 - But instead, he put Joseph into the king's prison.
- Not only that, but when you look at Genesis 40 verse 4, it says that the captain of the guard, that is Potiphar, appointed Joseph to attend the cupbearer and the baker, when they were put in prison.



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- And so, it seems that Potiphar still had some level of trust in Joseph.
- And when it says that Potiphar was angry after hearing from his wife.
 - The Bible never says he was angry at Joseph.
 - In fact, it may be that Potiphar was angry at the position he was in.
 - It could've been costly for Potiphar to protect Joseph.
 - It could've been a headache to go against his wife.
 - And so, instead of seeking the truth, he locked Joseph in prison.
- Joseph was put in prison for resisting temptation and for doing what was right.
 - Can you imagine how Joseph felt?
 - Joseph was being punished for a crime he didn't commit.
- We're not told.
 - But I'm sure that Joseph cried out to the Lord.
 - I'm sure he prayed.
 - "Lord, please help me."
 - He must have been discouraged about this situation.



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- But interestingly, the Bible never tells us what Joseph said or how he felt when he went to prison.
 - Rather, the Bible shows us something more important.
 - It shows us that even in prison, the Lord didn't abandon Joseph.
- **“And Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined, and he was there in prison. But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.”** Genesis 39:20-21
 - God's presence didn't remove Joseph's suffering.
 - But rather, it gave him strength to stand firm in the midst of suffering.
- And it's the same for us.
 - If you feel you're at a low point in your life.
 - If you can't seem to understand God's plan.
 - Remember that you can stand firm, because the Lord is also with you.
- In fact, even in the lowest point of his life, even in prison, Joseph was able to bless others.
 - Joseph was put in charge of all the prisoners.



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- And whatever he did, the Lord made him succeed.
- And isn't this what happened with Jesus Christ as well.
 - He was falsely accused by the people, just like Joseph.
 - Even though he was innocent.
 - And just like Potiphar probably knew it was a false accusation, Pilate also knew that Jesus was innocent.
 - But it was too costly for Pilate to defend Jesus.
 - And so, he condemned him to death.
- And when Jesus was on the cross, he didn't endure in prison, but he endured the judgement that our sins deserved.
 - He died for our sin.
 - Through his suffering and death, Jesus brought salvation to the world.
 - Not by saving us from a famine.
 - But by saving us from our sins and giving us life.
- And so, let's make this our prayer:
 - Lord, if you were to bring me to the lowest place, help me be the person who brings blessing to others who are there as well.
 - If you bring me to a place of sorrow, let me be the person who ministers to those in sorrow.



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- If you bring me to a place of loss, use me to bless those who've experienced loss.
 - If you allow me to face false accusations, let me reach out to others who suffer the same injustice.
 - And as we say this prayer, let's remember that God can use even our hardest experiences to bring blessing to others.
- And you now what's so incredible is how God used Joseph's righteousness to save his family.
 - If Joseph didn't faithfully serve, he wouldn't have been promoted.
 - And if he didn't resist temptation, he would never have been thrown in prison.
 - And if he didn't get thrown in prison, he wouldn't have met the chief cupbearer.
 - Who would later introduce Joseph to Pharaoh.
 - And if Joseph never interpreted Pharaoh's dream, he wouldn't have been used to save Egypt and the rest of the world from the famine.
 - And if he didn't save his family, they wouldn't have been used to bring forth the Savior of the world.
- Last week, we saw how God used Judah's repentance for his kingdom and glory.



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- Today, we see how God used Joseph's righteousness for his kingdom and glory.
- And so, when we experience success, let's give all the glory to God.
- When we face temptation, let's stand firm, knowing God can use our faithfulness for his glory.
- And when we face injustice, let's remain faithful, because God can use us, even in our darkest moments.
- We can remain faithful to God, even when it's costly, because the Lord is with us.