

Where is God in Times of Betrayal

Gen 39:1-23



*Kiss of Judas (1304-06), fresco by Giotto di Bondone
Scrovegni Chapel, Padua, Italia*

Background: One of the greatest difficulties in the Christian life is bridging the gap between the promises of God and our everyday life. A powerful truth believers celebrate is the fact that the Lord is “with us.” But what happens when you pray for God to be “with” you or your children, and tragedy occurs? Or to be “with you” at work, and you are laid off? Or to be “with you” in your marriage and you end up divorced? Or to be “with you” in your cancer treatments and they are unsuccessful? What then? Come this week and discover how God is “with Joseph” even in the midst of betrayal and prison.

Sermon Text: Gen 39:1-23 (ESV)

I. Joseph Exalted in Potiphar’s house (39:1-6a ESV)

A. Joseph sold as a slave in Egypt (39:1)

¹ Now Joseph had been brought down to Egypt, and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard, an Egyptian, had bought him from the Ishmaelites who had brought him down there, and because of him he had no concern about anything but the food he ate.

B. The Lord was with Joseph (39:2-6a)

² The Lord was with Joseph, and he became a successful man, and he was in the house of his Egyptian master. ³ His master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord caused all that he did to succeed in his hands. ⁴ So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him, and he made him overseer of his house and put him in charge of all that he had. ⁵ From the time that he

made him overseer in his house and over all that he had, the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; the blessing of the Lord was on all that he had, in house and field. ^{6a} So he left all that he had in Joseph's charge, and because of him he had no concern about anything but the food he ate.

II. Joseph Betrayed in Potiphar's House (39:7-19)

A. Resisting temptation (39:6b-9)

^{6b} Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. ⁷ And after a time his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, "Lie with me." ⁸ But he refused and said to his master's wife, "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. ⁹ He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"

B. Fleeing seduction (39:10-12)

¹⁰ And as she spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not listen to her, to lie beside her or to be with her. ¹¹ But one day, when he went into the house to do his work and none of the men of the house was there in the house, ¹² she caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me." But he left his garment in her hand and fled and got out of the house.

C. Trumped up witnesses (39:13-15)

¹³ And as soon as she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and had fled out of the house, ¹⁴ she called to the men of her household and said to them, "See, he has brought among us a Hebrew to laugh at us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice. ¹⁵ And as soon as he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried out, he left his garment beside me and fled and got out of the house."

D. Betrayal accomplished (39:16-20)

⁶ Then she laid up his garment by her until his master came home, ¹⁷ and she told him the same story, saying, "The Hebrew servant, whom you have brought among us, came in to me to laugh at me. ¹⁸ But as soon as I lifted up my voice and cried, he left his garment beside me and fled out of the house." ¹⁹ As soon as his master heard the words that his wife spoke to him, "This is the way your servant treated me," his anger was kindled. ²⁰ 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.

III. God has the Last Word (39:21-23)

*²¹ **But the Lord was with Joseph** and showed him steadfast love and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. ²² And the keeper of the prison put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners who were in the prison. Whatever was done there, he was the one who did it. ²³ The keeper of the prison paid no attention to anything that was in Joseph's charge, because the Lord was with him. And whatever he did, the Lord made it succeed.*

Discussion Questions

1. Preparation

- a. As you reflect on the sermon, what stands out to you most?
- b. What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- c. What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?

2. Sermon questions (pick 3)

- a. What good news did you hear from the service Sunday?
- b. Four times in the text, the narrator states that **“the Lord was with Joseph.”** What does it mean that the Lord is “with you”? Reflect on how the Lord has been “with you” throughout your life and how would you like him to demonstrate that he is “with you” in the future?
- c. Like Joseph, have you ever experienced a direct attack by the enemy after a time of sweet success? What was the context and how did you respond? What was the outcome? How has that prepared you for the future?
- d. Have you ever had to **run** (physically remove yourself or rescue someone you love) from the path of evil? Where you successful? What impact did that have on you?
- e. Like Joseph, have you experienced false accusations made by someone about your character or that of a loved one? How did it make you feel? How did you respond? What was the outcome?