

Joseph 2 – temptation – refuse, restate and run

Read Genesis 39

Recap Genesis 37: Joseph, son of Jacob, hated by his brothers (dad's favouritism, arrogant proposition: more important than his family), based on a revelation that God had given him:

Given a prophetic word to benefit himself + people around him. Didn't share in an appropriate fashion

His brothers hated him: beat him, took his cloak, tore it up, blood of a goat on it so Jacob would think he was dead. Sold him to a passing Ishmalite caravan and into slavery. Joseph finds himself a slave in Egypt.

Chapter 39: drawn into Joseph's life: Son of a tribal chieftain, living in the desert finds himself sold into slavery, living in another country against his will. His family hate him and his father, only one who loves him thinks that he is dead. 17 years old and the Ishmalite traders sell him to Potiphar.

Specific theme of ch39: temptation & trial.

James 1v13: God cannot tempt anyone (it originates from the enemy), but God is so great that even something that is meant for evil is something that God can use to bring Good.

Context of temptation: Joseph is sold to Potiphar, he doesn't assume that his life is over but assumes that God can work regardless of his circumstances:

Applies himself to being a good servant (slavery is wrong, sold against his will, wickedness of other people) but trusts that God will bring good from evil, therefore **Joseph is promoted** from field-servant to house-servant: he is seen as someone prepared to make something of his situation (after a period of shock/grief).

Promoted again to: assistant master of the house: This becomes Joseph's **context of temptation:**

A position of favour and breakthrough.

That's Joseph's context of temptation – what are **our contexts of temptation?**

Are there particular **Outer circumstances** where we are more vulnerable to temptation?

Seasons, Days, Times, Places, People, Circumstances? External triggers?

Low ebb? Need escapism? Or doing really well? People that influence us?

Inner Circumstances: What are our inner weaknesses that make us vulnerable to temptation?

Imperfect parents, background, in authority over us, imperfectly formed, nurtured and we've all had bad experiences and made bad decisions in our lives. Inner life has weaknesses, vuln: every person has inner struggles & weaknesses. There must be something inside that responds to the temptation:

We may not to pray with people every day, or see the miraculous, but you will face temptation every day:

Hungry, Angry, Lonely, Tired (non-conclusive) = HALT!

Hungry: An inner appetite (any appetite – not just food - nourishment, nurturing, sexual/physical);

Angry: Some frustration, or injustice;

Lonely: A sense of isolation which can happen even in a crowded room

Tired: Stayed up too late... We could add more of our own vulnerabilities & appetites at work within us.

Explain HALT

Our **Conduct** when facing temptation: Joseph was promoted through the ranks & is now the most senior servant. Matthew Mc of the OT, handsome, young & well built. Potiphar's wife takes an interest.

Genesis 39v6b-8: **“But he refused.”** Complicated? First act of conduct: Refuse and **decide now**

Decide beforehand before you're in the situation, before you are H.A.L.T.

Make it your plan, default. Automatic response – don't question your previous decision under pressure:

“I want that, but I want you more, Lord. That calls my name, but you call my name, Lord.”

11-a-side football (12 years ago!) example.

Refuse! Decide beforehand to refuse: plan b4 the emotion, or chemical/psychological triggers overwhelm you.

Genesis 39v8b-9: Joseph **restates** the temptation the way that it really is. Consequence with the proposal.

Joseph's restatement: “Break of trust, how could I do such a wicked thing against my master & God?”

Saying that he would face death and destroy his future.

Tempter doesn't say: "I'd like to: go to bed, passing pleasure, break trust, ruin future prospects, likely to be killed after an indefinite period of incarceration – and there might be some STDs involved too!"

That's not a temptation! But it is the truth! Restate "gain" with conseq. & loss:

What does Joseph do? He refuses, he just says "No!", and then he restates the temptation as it really is.

Jesus restated the temptations in Matthew 4: turn stones into bread, I depend on God & His Word, no thanks!

Restate the temptation. Be clear about what it is that you are going to lose/surrender.

But what if all of that fails? **Genesis 39v10:** Blunt, direct temptation day after day, refused to be with her: wise!

Free person would just leave, Joseph is a slave: "I feel the Lord is leading me to new things, season come to an end, heading off now" Wouldn't go down so well. Refused, Restated, avoided the temptation.

Genesis 39v11-12 – Refuse, Restate, then **RUN!** Get out of there!

1 Corinthians 6.18-20: "Flee from Sexual Immorality." A few chapters later Paul says "Flee idolatry!",

Talking to Timothy "Flee the evil desires of youth, flee the desires of money!"

Flee! Just run away! That's what Joseph did! **So what is our conduct in temptation?** Refuse, Restate, Run!

So **what happens next?** Joseph acts righteously, resists temptation and everything works out all rosey!

No... Everything goes wrong! Explain...

Don't focus on immediate results: resisting tempt. always the right thing to do, always works out better for us eternally speaking - for all his godliness Joseph was thrown in to prison:

Resist temptation and it becomes a Trial! And a Trial is a good thing!:

James 1v2: Consider it pure joy when you face trials of many kinds! (manifold temptations)

Trials will give you spiritual stamina, strength of character, maturity, and victories (mountain, marathon)

Victories: no longer something you can't do, no longer something to fear, no longer impossible: can do it again.

James 1v2-4: Trial is good for your faith, perseverance, maturity: **Zenith of our pleasure!** We hate discipline.

Resist temptation and it will become a trial which will **greatly benefit us:** we should consider it to be pure joy!

And that is what happened to Joseph: sent to prison, and in prison he learnt:

How God would favour him, prosper him,

learnt the humility that God needed to work into him (clearly didn't have at first): for authority

With that Godly authority he saved many lives, the Jewish nation survived its embryonic state and into that nation the saviour of the world, Jesus, would be born: **Significant** part to play in saving the world.

So temptation... It is worth foregoing, it is worth fighting, it is worth fleeing:

Context (outer + inner) and to look at what triggers us, (HALT),

Conduct: RRR so that temptation becomes a trail that God will shape you through and use for good!