

A Lenten Journey with Joseph

Lenten Midweek 1

March 8, 2022 - 7 PM

INVOCATION

Let us begin this Lenten Service, invoking the presence of our Holy God who tested Joseph in the fires of trial and rescued him and his troubled family from unforeseen calamity. Baptized in His name, we gather as His people trusting He is also with us working out our eternal salvation:

**L: In the name of the Father and of the + Son
and of the Holy Spirit.**

C: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES *Psalm 29:1–11*

L: In this Lenten season, we journey with Joseph in Genesis

C: and come to the cross of Christ on Calvary.

L: Joseph's journey, amid injustice and abuse, brings to question the perceived silence of God amid trials. We, too, in our experiences, seek God's voice and presence for our peace and hope. Even when not heard, we with the psalmist are affirmed in the ever-present voice of our Lord:

L: Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

**C: Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name;
worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness.**

**L: The voice of the LORD is over the waters;
the God of glory thunders, the LORD, over many waters.**

**C: The voice of the LORD is powerful;
the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.**

**L: The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars;
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.**

C: He makes Lebanon to skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox.

L: The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire.

**C: The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.**

- L:** The voice of the LORD makes the deer give birth and strips the forests bare,
and in His temple all cry, "Glory!"
- C:** The LORD sits enthroned over the flood;
the LORD sits enthroned as king forever.
- L:** May the LORD give strength to His people!
May the LORD bless His people with peace!

CONFESSION *Psalm 29:4; 32:3–5*

- L:** We come before the Lord not in silence, but in confession of our sins,
awaiting His voice of forgiveness.
- C:** For when I kept silent,
my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.
- L:** For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up
as by the heat of summer. I acknowledged my sin to You,
- C:** and I did not cover my iniquity; I said,
"I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,"
- L:** and You forgave the iniquity of my sin. (Pause for a moment in silence)
- L:** Let us now seek the face of our God in humble repentance:

Most merciful God,

- C:** we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

DECLARATION OF GRACE

- L:** The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty . His voice is full of forgiveness. Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for us, and for His sake forgives us all our sins. In Christ's death and resurrection, "the LORD has given strength to His people! The LORD has blessed His people with peace! (Psalm 29:11). As forgiven people, let us live humble and thankful lives, learning how to be patient with ourselves and with those also needing forgiveness; in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C:** Amen.

PRAYER

L: Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, as we journey with Joseph together in this Lenten season, help us to hear Your voice through Your Word of life that You may guide, direct, and bless us in our earthly journeys, for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

SONG **“We Rise Again from Ashes”**

SERMON READING *Genesis 37:12–36*

L: The Reading serving as the focus for today’s message, from Genesis, the thirty-seventh chapter:

Now his brothers went to pasture their father’s flock near Shechem. And Israel said to Joseph, “Are not your brothers pasturing the flock at Shechem? Come, I will send you to them.” And he said to him, “Here I am.” So he said to him, “Go now, see if it is well with your brothers and with the flock, and bring me word.” So he sent him from the Valley of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. And a man found him wandering in the fields. And the man asked him, “What are you seeking?” “I am seeking my brothers,” he said. “Tell me, please, where they are pasturing the flock.” And the man said, “They have gone away, for I heard them say, ‘Let us go to Dothan.’” So Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan.

They saw him from afar, and before he came near to them they conspired against him to kill him. They said to one another,
“Here comes this dreamer. Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits. Then we will say that a fierce animal has devoured him, and we will see what will become of his dreams.”

But when Reuben heard it, he rescued him out of their hands, saying, “Let us not take his life.” And Reuben said to them, “Shed no blood; cast him into this pit here in the wilderness, but do not lay a hand on him”—that he might rescue him out of their hand to restore him to his father.

So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the robe of many colors that he wore. And they took him and cast him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.

Then they sat down to eat. And looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing gum, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. Then Judah said to his brothers...

“What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother, our own flesh.”

And his brothers listened to him. Then Midianite traders passed by. And they drew Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. They took Joseph to Egypt.

When Reuben returned to the pit and saw that Joseph was not in the pit, he tore his clothes and returned to his brothers and said, “The boy is gone, and I, where shall I go?” Then they took Joseph’s robe and slaughtered a goat and dipped the robe in the blood. And they sent the robe of many colors and brought it to their father and said, “This we have found; please identify whether it is your son’s robe or not.”

And he identified it and said, “It is my son’s robe. A fierce animal has devoured him. Joseph is without doubt torn to pieces.” Then Jacob tore his garments and put sackcloth on his loins and mourned for his son many days. All his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted and said, “No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning.” Thus his father wept for him. Meanwhile the Midianites had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard.

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

HYMN No. 423

“Jesus, Refuge of the Weary”

**Jesus, refuge of the weary, Blest Redeemer, whom we love,
Fountain in life’s desert dreary, Savior from the world above:
Often have Your eyes, offended, Gazed upon the sinner’s fall;
Yet upon the cross extended, You have borne the pain of all.**

**Do we pass that cross unheeding, Breathing no repentant vow,
Though we see You wounded, bleeding, See Your thorn-encircled brow?
Yet Your sinless death has brought us Life eternal, peace, and rest;
Only what Your grace has taught us Calms the sinner’s deep distress.**

**Jesus, may our hearts be burning With more fervent love for You;
May our eyes be ever turning To behold Your cross anew
Till in glory, parted never From the blessed Savior’s side,
Graven in our hearts forever, Dwell the cross, the Crucified.**

Through Your Word are faithful servants Used as instruments by You,
Pointing to Christ's wondrous mission: Perfect Savior, hope renewed.
As we journey now with Joseph, Through his life and lessons bless,
Seeing Jesus as fulfillment, One in whom we find our rest.

Text: Sts. 1–3: Girolamo Savonarola, 1452–98; tr. Jane F. Wilde, 1826–96, alt. Public domain; St. 4: Jonathan Riggert.
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SERMON **"Wondrous Silence: When God is Silent?"**
 Pastor Perry Schefelker (Ret.)

OFFERING

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

L: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

L: O Lord, there are times we come to You in prayer and perceive silence from Your heavenly courts. Yet even in that silence we are still drawn to Your Word trusting in Your promise to hear and answer us according to Your will and ways. Open our ears to hear You in the hour of our great need. O God of mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

L: Ever-present Lord, as we face trials and temptations, injustices and seemingly inescapable situations, we cry out to You. Even in silence, You were with Joseph, and You are with us. In silence before His accusers, Christ went to the cross for us, and cried out for our forgiveness. Be with us in our journey through this life, that we may hear Your voice, witness Your mighty deeds, and hold firm to the faith You have given. Be with those who suffer in mind, body, or spirit, that the needs of all Your people be heard and comforted with Your everlasting peace. O God of mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

L: God of our salvation, Give us humility and repentant hearts as we reflect on Christ's Passion, Your love for this world through and in Him, and the forgiveness and new life He has come to bring through His suffering and death. Keep us steadfast in the faith that amid all we face in this world, our trust and hope remain in You alone. O Lord, we cry out to you on behalf of the Ukrainian people whose cities are being ransacked and many lives destroyed. How easy it would be for Your children to lose hope. Grant them strength, endurance and hope. Let the day of evil pass over them so that they may join the Psalmist who prayed,

“Blessed be the LORD, for he has wondrously shown his steadfast love to me when I was in a besieged city. I had said in my alarm, “I am cut off from your sight.” But you heard the voice of my pleas for mercy when I cried to you for help.” Psalm 31:21-22 (ESV). O God of mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

L: Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Lord who taught us to pray saying:

LORD'S PRAYER (*Matthew 6:9-13*)

**All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

CLOSING PRAYER *Luther's Evening Prayer*

L: Let us pray:

C: I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

CLOSING SENTENCES *Psalm 29:4*

**L: In this Lenten season, we journey with Joseph in Genesis
C: and come to the cross of Christ on Calvary.**

**L: Even in silence, Your deeds are wondrous and mighty,
and Your Word speaks to us.**

**C: The voice of the LORD is powerful;
the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.**

BLESSING OF THE LORD

L: The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ☩ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.

C: Amen.

HYMN No. 878 **“Abide with Me”** **(vss. 1 & 6)**

**Abide with me, fast falls the eventide.
The darkness deepens;
Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.**

**Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies.
Heav’n’s morning breaks, and earth’s vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.**

SENDING

P: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord!

C: Thanks be to God!