



INSIGHTS FOR DARK DAYS FROM ALISTAIR BEGG:

Finding God at Rock Bottom

“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.*** 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. 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.”

GENESIS 39:20–23

After Potiphar’s wife falsely accused him, Joseph hit rock bottom... again. Once more the recipient of undeserved hatred, he found himself condemned—not to a pit this time, but to his master’s dungeon. The bottom had dropped out of his world.

And yet, as a man of principle, Joseph displayed enduring patience. He had fled the seductive temptation from Potiphar’s wife on the strength of his convictions, making his decision on the basis of purity and rightness. Indeed, Joseph feared God more than he feared a dungeon. He couldn’t sin with Potiphar’s wife because to do so would have been to sin against God.

“The Lord’s presence remains with His people even in the most extreme circumstances.”

Such a view of sin will keep us, too, on the narrow way. True faithfulness comes not from pragmatism but from principle. It is the forming of decisions in the quiet place, without all of life’s fanfare going on, so that when everything comes crashing down on us, we will know how to respond.

As Joseph endured wrongful suffering, Scripture tells us, God demonstrated his love by granting him favor with his jailor. There is nothing in the narrative that suggests Joseph tried to manipulate the circumstances to his own end—and even if Joseph had been looking around for a friend or ally, he never would have anticipated the prison warden would fill that role! But God had other ideas. The Lord’s presence remains with His people even in the most extreme circumstances.

From time to time, we all feel as if we’ve hit the dungeon—a new low in our lives—and are confined by chilling isolation. Maybe that’s you today. Maybe you, like Joseph, have been the recipient of false accusations. Or maybe something entirely different is weighing down your weary soul. No matter what, the Lord knows. He’s never been taken by surprise, and He loves you with an everlasting love. Take comfort in knowing that, as the prophet Zechariah declared, “he who touches you touches the apple of his eye.”¹

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¹ Zech. 2:8