

# But God was with him. (Quality: Very good)

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Preacher: Hyde, Leslie S B (1916-2001)

[ 0 : 00 ] With the Lord's help, I would direct your attention to the Acts of the Apostles, the seventh chapter, the last clause of verse nine.

The Acts of the Apostles, the seventh chapter, the ninth verse, and the last clause. But God was with him.

But God was with him. The life of Joseph is somewhat remarkable because of the detail which we have in the scriptures of truth and the variety of trials and testing times that came upon him.

We need to read from various parts of the scripture, not only in the book of Genesis, but also in the Psalms and even in other parts to get some idea of the extremities into which Joseph came in his life.

And yet, throughout his life, and by reason of the many changing scenes, difficult occasions, trying circumstances that impose themselves upon him, one thing is clearly observable.

[ 1 : 50 ] And we find the words of our text to be that. But God was with him. But God is with everyone whose names are written in heaven, and who are born again of the Spirit, and who are led by the Spirit of God.

In the Romans, we read, as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the children of God. We may also say that such that have a clear evidence that God is with them have also a clear evidence that they are led by the Spirit, that they are the children of God.

There are times when God's people come into anxious moments, and they wonder, some after a long period of profession, as to whether they have made a mistake, as to whether their whole profession has been hypocritical, and as to whether, in the end, after such a long life, so many years, with a name upon the church book, that they should come to the end of their journey, only to hear those solemn words, depart from me, I never knew you.

When the children of God come into such exercises, such fears, such temptations, then, they will require something stable, upon which they may base their faith to believe that they are the children of God.

In the words that we have before us, we have that stable foundation for our faith. But God was with him.

[ 4 : 16 ] Undoubtedly, if God is with us, then it is a clear mark of his favor, and we sometimes sing the lines whom once he loves, he never leaves, but loves them to the end.

So then, may it not be profitable for us this evening to examine, by the help of God, a few indications that will show us whether God is with us or not.

I'm sure we have read through the account of Joseph maybe many times, and we can clearly see that God was with him.

We may look at the days of his prosperity, when he was brought to a place of high office in Egypt, Egypt. And, we may readily conclude that God was clearly with him.

But we should not overlook the point that God was with him in the prison. God was with him when he was sold into Egypt. God was with him when he was in the pit.

[ 5 : 45 ] God was with him in the sad affair of which we read. And we read in that chapter on three occasions, and the Lord was with Joseph.

We are reminded that that which is written before time is written for our learning. That we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope.

There is sufficient of Joseph's life recorded to show us the many sides to his life, the variety of circumstances.

there he was in the low dungeon. There he was exalted to be after Pharaoh, the first in the land. And yet, in all these situations, God was with him.

Now, first of all, God was with him because Joseph's name was written in heaven.

[ 7 : 05 ] If God is with us, it is not the result of the Lord suddenly looking upon us and something in us which appeals to him.

that would not be a sound basis for his looking upon us and being with us.

It is a wonderful truth that the Lord is with the poor and the lady in their distress. but we should not be wise to consider that it was the very need and the very distress and poverty that we were in that attracted the Lord Jesus Christ to be our companion.

The Lord Jesus, God was with him, basically is the result of divine sovereignty and of working out of the divine purposes of God.

Now let's look at our lives as we go along. is God with us? If he is, on what basis? Do we feel our feet upon a sound bottom when we say, well, it is because of the sovereignty of God?

[ 8 : 47 ] It is because of his divine purposes being brought to pass a purpose of love and a purpose of mercy that God is with me.

Now, we shall not feel strengthened in our faith unless we can have some assurance that God is with us, that we have some particular and abiding feeling in our own souls, that the Lord is with us.

Now, surely God will give us an indication of his presence. One can hardly feel that Moses was merely satisfied with the presence of God, the promise of it.

My presence shall go with thee and I will give thee rest. We can prove it from our own experiences. Has God given us a promise?

Then haven't we watched it? And if God has said that his presence shall be with us, then we've watched it. And we wanted to feel that it is true.

[ 10 : 16 ] not merely to consider a blessed doctrine in an abstract fashion. And God was with him.

If people observe that concerning you and me, we also want to be able to say, that is true, for God was with me. And the reason he was with me, because of his covenant love.

There's no other reason for God to be with any person. So, if we have even a few instances in our lives where we can say, well, God was with me, undoubtedly he was with me, then we must consider this.

It is the result of God's sovereignty and the development of his divine purposes. The world, the ungodly, they're not interested in God being with them.

We read that God is not in all their thoughts. Maybe we could go a bit farther and say God is in none of their thoughts in many cases. But what do we say about ourselves?

[ 11 : 50 ] Are you thinking about God? Is God in your thoughts? Do you wake up with God in your thoughts? Do you go to bed with God in your thoughts?

And how many times is God in your thoughts during the day? Well, why is God in your thoughts? Is it not because of this truth?

But God was with him. It is a wonderful thing to have God in our thoughts, thoughts, especially when we so sadly consider sometimes that we have a mind, a verse from all that's good.

And then for God to come perhaps in answer to our burdened spirits cry and change the scene completely.

Now we have an evidence now that God was with him, God is with us if we pray unto him.

[ 13 : 14 ] And we pray unto him because God is in our thoughts. If God is not in our thoughts we shall not think about praying to God. But what about today's experience?

Has God been in your thoughts? And has the throne of grace been in your thoughts so that whatever might have arisen in your life, perplexity, difficulty, trying, circumstance, immediately you cried out unto God and it was because God was in your thoughts.

and therefore there was a prayer up unto God, Lord help me. But then God may be in our thoughts when we think of our own poverty, our own paralysis of spirit.

How paralyzed we are sometimes. we hear the word and it may attract us drawn near to God and yet we cannot move a single step.

Well, what is it that causes us to draw near to God? The scripture will surely explain it. none can come unto me except the father which hath sent me draw him.

[ 14 : 54 ] God therefore is with us teaching us that he must draw if we are to come to Jesus Christ. We're not speaking to you in a fatalistic way, but we are speaking to you of that which is experimentally true.

How you might sometimes have longed to draw near to God, yet you've needed a drawing power. And when you've needed a drawing power, has it not been you've been thinking about God?

And if you've been thinking about God, will not this demonstrate that God is with you? I know we read, well, when wilt thou come unto me?

Though scriptures tell us that he's not far from any one of us. Though in our feelings we may have a different mind, yet, let us behold the truth as it is.

He is not far from any one of us. There's an expression which to my mind is very beautiful in the Acts of the Apostles, and that is this, that we may feel after him.

[ 16 : 29 ] maybe we've had a proof that God was with him.

God was with us because there's been that in our soul that has caused us to feel after him.

Straight forth the hands of our faith, if to be that we might find him. Are we in a mist? Are we in a deep fog?

Are we in the darkness? Under such conditions naturally, if we knew or thought somebody was near, we would put out our hands to feel.

Now, there is a spiritual counterpart. Is God with us in the darkness, in the midst, in the mist, in the fog?

[ 17 : 40 ] Do we put out our hands, if so be, we might feel after him? Surely this is an indication that our little faith sets forth that we are with God and God is with us.

And God was with him. We find some of the characters in the scriptures like Noah and Enoch that they walked with God.

We have it expressed from the other angle here, but God was with him. It would not be possible for God to be with a person and that person not to be with God.

Now do we feel that God is with us? How do we prove that God is with us? The three Hebrew children that were cast into the burning fiery furnace were put to a severe trial when they made a declaration of their faith before Nebuchadnezzar.

If we may wonder whether God is with us, it may be that God will demonstrate it in a similar way.

[ 19 : 20 ] Not to be cast into a literal fiery furnace, but nevertheless to be cast in our soul's experience into a fiery furnace. Circumstances that arise are under the ordination of God.

what an amazing thing that the king Nebuchadnezzar should have set up such an image that a golden image that should be worshipped by everybody.

We may be getting to a place in our own nation's history where compulsion would cause everybody to do the same thing.

How should we act? We may well tremble at the prospect. How did these men act? wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near and accused the Jews and they spake and said to King Nebuchadnezzar O king live forever.

Then they go on to describe the edict of the king and then they say there are certain Jews whom they have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon Shadrach Meshach and Abednego these men O king have not regarded thee they serve not thy gods nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach Meshach and Abednego then they brought these men before the king Nebuchadnezzar he couldn't believe it he couldn't believe that there should ever be any people that would not immediately obey his command therefore he addresses them and he says is it true O Shadrach Meshach and Abednego do not ye serve my gods nor worship the golden image which I have set up now god was with these men not visibly perhaps not visibly to others but god was with these men and because he was with them he enabled them to answer

[ 22 : 18 ] O Nebuchadnezzar we are not careful to answer thee in this matter if it be so our god whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace and he will deliver us out of thine hand O king but if not oh what a faith there is in god here but if not be it known unto thee O king that we will not serve thy gods nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up the faith of these people is quite remarkable because sometimes in thinking about our faith in god we only think about one thing and that is deliverance and you know some have been unwise in saying well if god doesn't deliver me then my faith will fail but not so these men not so these men god our god will deliver us but if not be it known unto thee we will not fall down and worship the golden image which thou hast set up and nebuchadnezzar as you doubtless remember heated the furnace seven times hotter and god was with these men in the burning fiery furnace and they were cast into the furnace bound what a spiritual sight we have here is there that which is in your life at the moment which is a furnace and you're bound you cannot move there's only one thing you can do and that is to fall down as these men did but god was with them and nebuchadnezzar was to see this for soon after he said did not we cast three men into the burning fiery furnace behold

I see these three men bound he said behold I see them walking and there are four and the fourth is like unto the son of god i am with thee israel passing through the fire spiritual fires come into the hearts of the people of god nobody knows what people pass through what other people pass through you know what you're passing through at the moment the fire of temptation how fierce it is nobody can know what your soul is passing through if you may try to tell it out the more severe and heated the fire the less you'll be able to say but at the same time are you proving that god was with him the flame shall not hurt thee i only design thy dress to consume and thy gold to refine we may be afraid of the flame but god speaks and when he speaks we know that he is with us surely we do how precious are those words by the prophet isiah where he says fear not for i am with thee where he says when thou passest through the waters i will be with thee and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee and when thou walkest through the fire these men were able to walk through the fire had they have been bound they would have had to stay where they were but god loosed their bonds in the fire when their walk is through the fire thou shalt not be burned neither shall the flame kindle upon thee and one of the remarkable points concerning those men was that the smell of fire was not upon them but god was with him god was with joseph as a young man because he was only a young man a very young man in his teens when his father sent him to his brethren to inquire how they were are there not many circumstances in our lives that begin with such an innocent thing we don't know how things are going to develop such an innocent thing his father sent him on an errand of mercy and of inquiry jacob said all these things are against me but god was to prove that all things work together for good to them that love god and to those who are the called according to his purpose and god was with him with

him in his youth has he been with us in our youth it may not be so with all but perhaps we can see something similar in our own lives where things have altered as we've gone along disaster has taken the place of hope of a successful conclusion but god was with him we're not told the details of the workings of god in the soul of joseph but we are told that he was with him and we're told that there was great anguish in joseph's heart when his brethren were to sell him to the ishmaelites we have to read very closely into the scriptures i think in the mind of prophets to discover that truth he was filled with anguish to read in genesis it may appear that he was quite agreeable that he made no fuss at all but the scriptures tell us what a burden it was what a frightful situation it was what a trying situation it was and yet god was with joseph have we been handled badly by some and we have been in anguish of spirit and we wish we could have gone away got away we couldn't imagine that all these things were working together for good but what were we learning we were learning that god was with us with us to strengthen and support and uphold us and then we can read of the other changing scenes in joseph's early life we can go along to the book of samuel and see the changing scenes in david's life something between the same age group from 17 to 30 oh what painfulness was in the experiences of both those men but god was with them undoubtedly he was delivering them from their persecutors and from their enemies and causing them to feel that the lord had not left them we see david in the early stages when he went to meet goliath he god who delivered me out of the paw of the lion and the bear shall he not deliver me from this uncircumcised philistine god tries his people in order that they may know that god is with them i come to thee in the name of the god of israel not just a pigment

of the imagination but a reality of divine presence it is the reality of divine presence that we are we must have if we are to know something of this but god was with him and then we think of the words in romans he led him as many as are led by the spirit of god they are the sons of god now what about our leadings people talk about leadings what about your leadings now is god leading you he is if he is with you and furthermore he is leading you unsafely if god is with you your enemies can never prevail against you two are better than one if you are alone your enemies may be bold to attack you but if you are not alone they may come as near as they dare but they will not attack you because you are not alone have you wondered sometimes why satan has got so near fear and yet he has done you no harm except perhaps filled you with fear at his roarings or blinded you with his light it is because god has been with you and he came as near as he dare but no closer and so we prove from that point of view that god is with us but then we shall surely want something shall I call it more tangible to feel that the lord is really close to us in the song of

Solomon we have these words his left hand is under my head and his right hand doth embrace me there's no doubt under those circumstances that we shall say god is with me of a truth because i feel his support i feel his loving embrace i am my beloved and my beloved is mine but nonetheless though you may feel it so clearly at such a time even so when you do not feel it his love is just the same his support is just the same cheer up desponding soul on jesus aid rely he sees you when you see not him and always hears your cry are you tempted to think that god will never hear your cry and saty may suggest why the person sitting next to you can't hear your cry how do you expect god to hear your cry and yet god does surely hear the cries of his people though those cries are never emitted from the lips because god looking at the heart and god is near to all his people and then again we may come under a temptation which the psalmist describes where he says if i regard iniquity in my heart the lord will not hear me in other words he will remove from me but barely god hath heard me he hath attended to the voice of my prayer there is such a thing as satan whispering and imitating our own voice so that we think the thoughts of iniquity which may sometimes arise even when we may be on our knees before god are such that proceed from our own heart but we may see iniquity that's one thing but do we regard it iniquity is looking at it being attracted to it not removing our eyes from it being magnetized by it if i regard iniquity in my heart god will not hear me but when iniquity comes before us when evil thoughts may arise in our hearts do we spiritually close our eyes or attempt to stop our ears because the words that are spoken and the things that are set before our eyes are such things that fill us with dismay if i regard iniquity the lord will not hear me but god hath heard me he hath heard me he sees us when we see not him and always hears our cry the lord then

[ 39 : 08 ] the lord even god was with him it is important that we should feel this because if god before us who can be against us if god be with us then why need we fear we do have fears and the voice of our kind of mind is very loud sometimes will attempt to blot out the truth of the scripture but what a blessing it is when by the grace of god we are able to believe what the scripture says i will be with thee now god cannot lie dare we go so far as to say when our god is not with me surely it would be a bold person that would go so far as to say god is not with me do you realize the dreadfulness of the situation if god is not with you if thou shouldst leave us we must fall without thee cannot rise we might prove from that experience are we afraid that we shall fall and maybe we have fallen sometimes then have we proved that there is one that is ready to help us up and that not far away if we have fallen has it seem that no help comes it may seem an age you know if we're in difficulty a few seconds will seem an age if we're in distress and alone if we're encompassed with fear a few moments will seem a long time and if you fall and you're immediately spitting in your conscience because you've been overcome in a weak moment may seem to you that

God is a long time lifting you up and yet it is not as long as you think it is and if you are lifted up then what does it speak to you about and what does it speak to me about and God was with him God is with his people as a friend he is with his people as a savior he is with them as one that is ready to help ready to help those that are ready to perish God was with him God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself is it such a feeling that we may have that our sins are separated between us and our God that is a solemn experience to feel that but then for God to reveal this

God is in Christ reconciling the world ourselves included unto himself so that that which separates is dealt with and put away he has put away thy sins he will remember them no more forever and God was with him God is with his people to subdue their sins and God is with his people to remove their sins if those sins separate between the person and God himself and God was with him to teach how many things Joseph had to learn how many things have we had to learn in the path that

God has appointed to us we should ever bear this in mind that if we are manifested as God's children the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord every step some of the steps we cannot perhaps understand we would not be able to understand the step that caused the brethren to sell Joseph to the Israelites and we should not be able to understand the reason why Joseph was put into prison or came into Potiphar's house and the things that happened there we should not be able to understand why Joseph was in prison for a long time and we should not be able to understand either why the butler forgot him yet these were all so many steps that were ordered now let us be careful that we do not get upset upset with people as

Joseph might have been upset with the butler it was an ordered step and God ordered it to not only try but also to strengthen the faith of Joseph and furthermore to prove that God was with him to forget her second child she may forget yet will not

[ 45 : 58 ] I forget thee and if the Lord spoke the substance of that truth into Joseph's soul painful as his experience was yet surely there would have been some help that enabled him to bear this strange step when the butler forgot him and the time was coming when the butler would have to remember his thoughts it would have been a bad situation if the butler had done as he said because it wasn't the time for Joseph to be promoted to the position of high honor that he came to now we might think about this if we have setbacks if we begin to say well why didn't that person keep their word consider that it might be in the purpose of

God but they will remember it and that will be in the purpose of God and all this time you're being taught and as you're being taught you're being taught by one who is near to you and God was with him teaching him I am the Lord I change not therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed if our anger should burn sometimes as we might well think the anger of Joseph privately rose against the butler then shall we not be consumed but the Lord is unchangeable may not this bring to us a consoling thought I am the Lord I change not making a very solemn comparison between our changeable selves and himself who is unchangeable his love no variation knows it's just the same his love is the same to his people when they feel a warm love to him as when they feel cold there's no variation in the love of

God the clouds come in between and the clouds fill us with this name one who knew something about it he says ye fearful saints fresh courage take the clouds ye so much dread are big with mercy and jail break in blessings on your head because God that is with you has the balancing of the clouds in his hand and he will balance your clouds and my clouds and there will be a good balance and a right balance so that we are profited by it have we not had some experience or experiences in our lives when some of the clouds have truly broken with blessings on our head and

God was with him we leave our few remarks in the hand of God he knows the purpose of the subject this evening and we know that his purposes will ripen fast unfolding every hour the bud may have a bitter taste but sweet will be the flower amen them