THE ORCHARD

The God Who Is With Us

Genesis 46:1-47:12

In Our Transitions

Pastor Tom Yoon

November 8, 2026

Introduction:

- Life doesn't always go the way we planned.
    - I'm sure all of us here can share a moment, probably many moments, when life didn't go the way we planned.

- And sometimes, it can be exciting.
    - When an unexpected opportunity opens up.
    - Or when you meet someone you feel could become your future spouse.

- I was very excited for my first date with April.
    - She walked out with a bandage on her nose for our first date.
    - She said her dog bit her nose.
    - I have to say, she had a lot of confidence to wear a bandage on our first date.
    - That was definitely something I didn't expect.

- At other times, it can be difficult to face unexpected circumstances.
    - When we face an unexpected sickness, or get laid off, when a close friend moves away, or when we face an unexpected bill.
    - And it may cause us to worry, or to be sad, or even afraid.

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- But through this passage, we'll see how we can find strength in God during difficult and unexpected moments in life, and how God can even use us to bless others.

- And so, what can we do when we face a difficult situation?

Point 1:

- First, we see from our passage how we need to seek the Lord.

- Because the famine was severe in Canaan, Joseph told his family to come down and live in Egypt.
    - And so, we're told in chapter 46 verse 1 that Jacob packed all he had and started to head down to Egypt.

- At face value, I know this move seems to make sense.

- They needed food.
    - And logistically, it would've been a nightmare for Joseph's brothers to keep going back and forth for food.

- On top of that, Joseph was the Prime Minister of Egypt.
    - With his power, Joseph could care for his family.

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- But think about how difficult it was for Jacob to move.

- Jacob was so old that in verse 5 it says Jacob's sons had to carry him.
    - He had to be carried in the wagons.
    - Even today with moving companies, and moving trucks, it takes a lot of work to move.
    - Can you imagine how hard it was for Jacob in his old age, and his 11 sons, and their wives, and all the children to move?

- Furthermore, this was a hard move because moving to Egypt would mean leaving the land God promised to his family.
    - When Isaac, Jacob's father, faced a famine.
    - God specifically told him not to go to Egypt but to remain in Canaan.
    - Listen to Genesis 26:
    - **Now there was a famine in the land, besides the former famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Gerar to Abimelech king of the Philistines. And the Lord appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; dwell in the land of which I shall tell you."** Genesis 26:1-2
    - And so, how could Jacob just leave?

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    - Was Jacob disobeying God's word by leaving the land God promised to him?

- And we also know that Jacob was afraid.
    - That's why God says to him:
    - **"Do not be afraid."** Genesis 46:3

- This move was a major transition in Jacob's life.
    - And Jacob was probably wondering:
    - "What's going to happen to my family?"
    - "Will my family ever receive the land God promised?"

- That's why Jacob sought the Lord in Beersheba.
    - It says in verse 1:
    - **"So Israel took his journey with all that he had and came to Beersheba and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. And God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, "Jacob, Jacob."** Genesis 46:1-2

- I don't know about you, but every time I leave a hotel, I triple check to make sure I don't leave any of my stuff in the hotel room.
    - I look through every dresser and closet.
    - I look in the fridge.
    - I look under the bed.

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    - I make sure before I leave.

- I imagine that's how Jacob felt before he left his home.
    - Beersheba was the last major city in the south before crossing out of Canaan.
    - And so, before taking his whole family out of the land God promised to them.
    - He seeks the Lord.

- There will be moments in our lives when we need to transition into a new job, or a new home, or a new church, or a new stage of life.
    - And whether you feel excited or afraid, before making any major decisions in life, it's always good to seek the Lord.
    - It's good to seek the Lord in prayer and to read his word.
    - It's good to seek the Lord by speaking with godly believers.
    - It's good to ask yourself:
    - "Is this honoring to God?"

- And here's the promise that God gives to us.
    - When we draw near to him, he will draw near to us.
    - In Psalm 34, the Psalmist writes:
    - **"I sought the Lord, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears."** Psalm 34:4

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- I know I shared this story before, but let me share it again, because it's such a great reminder.
    - When Sharon Naccarato, our previous children's director told me she was moving to Huntly, my heart dropped.
    - Not only was she a great children's director, but Sharon and her husband are also good friends.
    - I didn't want to see them go.
    - And honestly, I was a little afraid.
    - How long would it take to hire a new children's director?
    - And so, for the next few weeks, I tried to think of every person who could take this role.
    - I tried everything in my power to make it work.
    - But it didn't work out.
    - Finally, I got on my knees and asked the Lord for help.
    - I said, "Lord, please send someone quickly."
    - After I said, "amen."
    - Margaret Heittiger's name popped into my head.
    - After a few phone calls, and like two or three weeks later, she was hired.
    - And she's been doing a wonderful job.

- Are you afraid right now?
    - Are you worried about your finances?
    - Worried about your family?

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- Seek the Lord.
  - And he will deliver you from your fears.
  - And give you the strength you need.

- Listen to what God says to Jacob in verse 3.
  - **"Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt…"** 46:3
  - And God says in verse 4:
  - **"I myself will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you up again…"** Genesis 46:4
  - God reassures Jacob, that going to Egypt is part of the plan.
  - And he tells him that he will bring Jacob back.
  - Can you imagine how powerful these were to Jacob?
  - Jacob sought the Lord, and God delivered him.

- And after Jacob hears from God.
  - We don't ever see him questioning his decision to go.

- What should we do when we feel afraid?
  - We need to seek the Lord.

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Point 2:

- Second, we see from this passage how we also need to trust the Lord.

- Take a look at verse 3 again.
  - It says:
  - **"Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I will make you into a great nation."** Genesis 46:3
  - God promises to make Jacob into a great nation.

- But what's interesting about God's promise, is the location this growth is going to take place.
  - God doesn't say Jacob's family is going to grow in the land of Canaan.
  - Jacob's family is going to grow in the land of Egypt.
  - Wouldn't it make more sense for Jacob's family to grow in the land he promised to them?
  - Why did God make Jacob and his family leave the land and go to Egypt?

- One reason is because God wanted Jacob and his family and the generations to follow, to trust in him, and to put their hope in him.

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- Listen to Psalm 147 verses 10 and 11.
    - **"His delight is not in the strength of the horse, nor his pleasure in the legs of a man, but the LORD takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his steadfast love."** Psalm 147:10-11

- And it's the same with us.
    - What God desires most from us isn't necessarily what we do.
    - But more so our trust.

- When I counsel couples, I'll sometimes talk about the 5 love languages.
    - Gary Chapman talks about 5 ways people show love and receive love.
    - He talks about words of affirmation, acts of service, giving gifts, quality time, and physical touch.
    - But when people ask me what my love language is.
    - I'll say none of those, because my love language is efficiency.
    - I feel warm fuzzies in my heart, when things are done well, and things are done fast.

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- And for many of us, we may want God to be as efficient as he can, to help us reach our destination in life, or to change our circumstances, or to quickly bring comfort.
    - But more than any of these.
    - God longs for us to trust in him.

- It might be that some of you feel God is asking you to go backward, instead of moving forward.
    - It may be God is asking you to wait.
    - It may be God is taking you in a different direction than you expected.

- But it's not because he doesn't love you.
    - It may be, because he wants you to trust in him.

- And here's the thing about trusting God.
    - When you trust in the Lord, what you'll see is how he brings growth in the most unexpected places.
    - In fact, when you're only concerned with reaching your goal, you may end up missing what God is trying to teach you.

- That's what we see in Jacob's life as well.

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- In the beginning of Jacob's life, he deceived his father and stole from his brother.
    - Jacob was focused on getting the blessing.
    - And it caused a lot of pain for his family.

- But here we see Jacob trusting the Lord.
    - God says to Jacob:
    - **"Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I will make you into a great nation."** Genesis 46:3
    - Even though Jacob has to leave the land, he trusts the Lord.
    - And God made him into a great nation.

- When you trust the Lord, you will bear much fruit, even in the most unexpected places in life.

- Listen to Jeremiah 17, verses 7 and 8:
    - **"Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is in the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit."** Jeremiah 17:7-8

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- And let's also remember that the fruit God gives isn't only what he does through us.
    - But also, what he does in us.
    - He's forming us to be more like Jesus Christ.

- That's why, in whatever situation you find yourself.
    - Instead of just thinking about reaching your goal.
    - Part of trusting the Lord is also thinking about how God is growing your character.

- And so, instead of trying to rush to the end.
    - Consider what God wants you to learn.
    - God's main purpose for you right now may be for you to grow in character.
    - Perhaps to learn to be patient, or to learn to persevere, or to repent of sin.

- Paul writes in Romans 8, 28 and 29.
    - **"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those whose are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son…"** Romans 8:28-29

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- God was working in Jacob's family, not only to fulfil his promise to make him into a great nation.

- But God was also working in Jacob and his family.
  - Teaching them to love one another.
  - To forgive each other.
  - To turn away from sin.
  - And to trust in him.

Point 3:

- Third, we see from our passage how we need to obey the Lord.

- What's clear from this passage is that Jacob fully obeyed God.

- Before moving, Jacob could have thought to himself:
  - "You know, let me first meet Joseph and get a feel for what life in Egypt would be like."

- Jacob could've delayed the process.
  - But instead, he packed his stuff and quickly obeyed the Lord.

- Furthermore, Jacob could've also thought:

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  - "You know, God promised the land of Canaan to my descendants, so I'll just leave half of my family behind."
  - "Instead of having everyone move, I'll just have a few people move."
  - "I need a contingency plan if Egypt doesn't work out."

- But in chapter 46 verse 7 it says that Jacob brought all his offspring into Egypt.
  - And in chapter 47 verse 1, the Bible makes it clear that Jacob brought everything he owned with him.
  - He fully obeyed God's command.

- And because Jacob fully obeyed, what you see is how he was given the privilege of blessing Pharoah.
  - Twice we read in chapter 47, how Jacob blessed Pharoah.
  - This is important because God promised Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, that their offspring would bless the nations.
  - And here, Jacob is blessing probably the most powerful man in the world at the time.

- And how is it that Jacob was able to bless Pharoah?
  - It's because God used his obedience.
  - Listen to Genesis 22 verse 18.
  - This is God speaking to Abraham.

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  - God says:
  - **“And in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.”** Genesis 22:18
  - Jacob fully obeyed the Lord, and God used his obedience to bless those around him.

- And it’s the same with us.
  - If we want to be a blessing to others.
  - If we want to be useful to Christ.
  - We need to learn to fully obey the Lord.
  - Because it’s when we die to ourselves, and fully commit to Christ, that we can be a blessing to others.
  - That’s why Jesus says in John 12 verse 24:
  - **“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.”** John 12:24

- Furthermore, not only was Jacob able to bless Pharoah.
  - But we also see how God provided Jacob and his family with everything they needed.

- Not only was Jacob’s family was given the best land.

- They were also given jobs.

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  - They didn't serve Pharoah as slaves.
  - Rather, Pharoah tells Joseph, that he wanted Joseph's family members to watch over his livestock.
  - Listen to verse 6:
  - **"Let them settle in the land of Goshen, and if you know any able men among them, put them in charge of my livestock."** Genesis 47:6

- And so, in verse 12, we're told that Joseph provided his family with all the food they needed.
  - Were they being paid for caring for Pharoah's livestock?
  - I'm not sure.
  - But what we can clearly see is how God provided for his people.

- But there's also an important contrast here.

- It says in verse 13, that the famine was so severe in Egypt and in Canaan, the people had to spend all their money, and then their livestock, and eventually their land.
  - In fact, it says that eventually, the people even had to sell themselves as slaves to Pharoah.

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- In contrast, at the end of chapter 47, it says that Jacob and his family were fruitful and multiplied greatly and grew in their possessions.

- The Egyptians lost their money, lost their livestock, lost their land, and lost their freedom.
    - While Jacob and his family, grew in their possessions, gained more livestock, lived on the best land, and even worked for Pharoah.

- I want to be clear, the Bible isn't teaching that faithful Christians are going be better off financially than others.

- Rather, this passage is showing how believers can obey the Lord and faithfully serve him, even when the future is unclear, because God provides for his people.

- Listen to what Jesus says in Matthew 6:
    - **"Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."** Matthew 6:31-33

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- And so, let's consider, is there any area in your life you're not fully obeying the Lord?
    - Instead of trusting in the Lord, do you find yourself constantly worrying and even making decisions out of fear?
    - Instead of serving the Lord where God is calling you to serve, are you making excuses?
    - Instead of seeking God's kingdom, is there something else you're seeking above the Lord?
    - Is there unrepentant sin, you need to confess?

- It may be you're in a difficult situation.
    - But let's resolve to fully obey the Lord.

Conclusion:

- It may be you're here today and you might be thinking.
    - "Pastor Tom, I don't think there's any hope for me, because I haven't fully obeyed the Lord."

- If that is you, that's exactly where Jacob was as well.
    - He didn't always seek the Lord, or trust the Lord, or fully obey.

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  - The reason he was able to go to Egypt was because of Joseph.
  - It was because Joseph fully obeyed and spoke on behalf of his family, and interceded that they were blessed.

- And the good news for us is that Jesus Christ went before us and perfectly obeyed where we failed.
  - He was nailed to a cross.
  - And through Jesus Christ, we can be reconciled to God.
  - We can be forgiven.
  - And we can enter the promised land and find strength to persevere.
  - And one day, he will bring us up to be with him.

- And just as God promised to be with Jacob, Jesus Christ is also with us, through everything we face.
  - What we think is unexpected is never a surprise for him.
  - And so, whatever you're facing today.
  - Seek the Lord.
  - Trust the Lord.
  - And obey the Lord.
  - Because Jesus Christ is with you, not matter where you go.

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