THE ORCHARD

The God Who Is With Us In Our Grief

Genesis 49:28 - 50:26, Psalm 127:3-5
Pastor Tom Yoon
November 22, 2026

Introduction:

- Over the last two months, we've seen how God is with us in every aspect of our lives.
  - He's with us in our failures and temptations.
  - He's with us in our transitions and conflicts.

- And we saw how God's grace is working in our lives even when we don't always see it.

- This morning, as we come to our final sermon in the life of Joseph.
  - We'll see how God gives us hope in the face of death.

- The book of Genesis begins with life, but it ends with Joseph in a coffin.
  - But from our passage today, we'll see how we don't have to fear death, because of the promise of heaven, and the power of God's redemption.

Point 1:

- First, we see in our passage, the pain of death.

- Genesis chapter 50 is a passage that speaks about death.
  - It begins with Jacob's death.
  - And it ends with Joseph's death.
  - Listen to chapter 49 verse 33:
  - **"When Jacob finished commanding his sons, he drew up his feet into the bed and breathed his last and was gathered to his people.** Genesis 49:33
  - And then listen to chapter 50 verse 26:
  - **"So Joseph died, being 110 years old. They embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt."** Genesis 50:26

- In fact, the whole book of Genesis is framed by death.

- In Genesis chapter 2, God commanded Adam and Eve:
  - **"You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."** Genesis 2:16-17
  - Sadly, Adam and Eve disobeyed God's command.
  - As a result, they began to die.
  - Their hair got gray.
  - Their faces became wrinkly.

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  - Their backs started to ache.
  - Can you imagine Eve looking at Adam and seeing him age for the first time?
  - "Honey, we're dying."

- And in Genesis 5, we're told how the first people on earth began to die.
  - Adam died.
  - And then Seth died.
  - And then Enosh died.
  - And Kenan died.
  - And it goes on and on.

- God said that disobedience would result in death.
  - And that's exactly what we see.
  - Even Joseph, who lived a very righteous life couldn't live a perfect life.
  - He also died.
  - Why?
  - Because the wages of sin is death.

- I'm hoping to play basketball later today.
  - But for some reason, I can't move like I used to.
  - I use to drive into the lane without fear.
  - I use to leap into the air without thinking.
  - But now, when I see an open lane, I think to myself.
  - "Naw, I'm good."
  - My body is stiffer.
  - My body is slower.
  - Why?
  - Because sin leads to death.

- Furthermore, not only does the Bible show how sin leads to death, it also shows how painful death is.

- Listen to chapter 50 verse 1.
  - **"Then Joseph fell on his father's face and wept over him and kissed him."** Genesis 50:1
  - Joseph knew that it was almost time for Jacob to pass away.
  - Jacob had a hard time walking on his own.
  - His eyes were barely able to see.
  - And yet, even though Joseph expected his dad to pass way, when Jacob died, Joseph wept.

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- When someone we love passes away, it brings pain.
  - It's painful because we lose a part of ourselves.
  - It's painful because we'll never see that person again, at least on earth.
  - It's painful because life won't be the same.

- That's why it's so important to grieve.
  - Joseph grieved over his father's death.
  - He wept.
  - "Pastor John Keble called tears the best gift of God to suffering man." (Wiersbe, Genesis, 177)
  - When you feel pain.
  - It's okay to cry.
  - When you lose someone you love, the Christian response isn't to pretend everything is okay.
  - It's to grieve and mourn.

- There are people who feel awkward when others around them cry.
  - They don't know what to say.
  - "Do you ever feel like that?"
  - But you don't have to say much.
  - Just being there means a lot.
  - When Jacob died, the Egyptians mourned for him for 70 days.
  - They even went all the way to Canaan.
  - And so, let's mourn with those who mourn.
  - And weep with those who weep.

- Here we see the pain of death.

Point 2:

- But second, we see in our passage, the promise of heaven.

- In Genesis 49 verse 29, Jacob gave specific instructions to his children to bury him in the land of Canaan.
  - He says to them:
  - **"Bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field at Machpelah, to the east of Mamre, in the land of Canaan…"** Genesis 49:29-30

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- Why in the world would Jacob give this command?
  - Wouldn't it make more sense for Jacob to be buried in Egypt?
  - Think about it.
  - It would've been a long journey to bury Jacob in Canaan.
  - And if Jacob's body was in Egypt, his children and grandchildren could easily visit his grave.

- But Jacob wanted to be buried in Canaan, because he truly believed God would return his descendants to the land.
  - Commanding his sons to bury him in Canaan was an act of faith.
  - Jacob was holding on to God's promises.

- That's why even Joseph tells his brothers to carry his bones to the land of Canaan as well.
  - More than all of his accomplishments, he was looking forward to what way ahead.

- Now, you may wonder why it was so important for God's people to receive the promised land.
  - Couldn't they just live in Egypt?
  - After all, Pharoah allowed them to live in Goshen, which was prime Egyptian real estate.

- But the reason God's people were longing for the promised land was because, they were longing for an eternal city.
  - They were longing for heaven.
  - In other words, they believed the promised land was pointing to something greater.
  - "Pastor, how do you know that?"
  - "Where does it say that in the Bible?"
  - It says it clearly in Hebrews 11 verses 8 to 10.
  - **"By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he went to live in the land of promise…For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God."** Hebrews 11:8-10
  - And then verse 16 states:
  - **"But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city."** Hebrews 11:16

- The promised land was important to them, because it pointed to an eternal home.
  - An eternal home where they would be with God.

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- Have you ever watched one of those TV shows where they show you a beautiful multi-million mansion?
    - They'll often have beautiful designs, large swimming pools, awesome views, enormous rooms.
    - But as beautiful as those homes are.
    - Jesus Christ is preparing for you and me, a home who's designer and builder is God.
    - And our heavenly home will make, the best homes on earth, look like shacks.
    - Not because of how large or great the rooms look.
    - But because we'll be living in the presence of God.

- Furthermore, if Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were looking forward to a heavenly city, that means they believed they would live in that heavenly city.
    - In other words, they believed in the resurrection of the dead.
    - That's why the Bible says in Hebrews 11 verse 19 that Abraham **"considered that God was able even to raise Isaac from the dead…"** Hebrews 11:19
    - Even Job declares in Job chapter 19:25-27:
    - **"For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself…"** Job 19:25-27

- They didn't fully understand how Canaan, and heaven, and resurrection, and eternal life was fully connected.
    - But they knew that God's promises went beyond the grave.

- And this promise is also for us.
    - In fact, because of Jesus Christ, we have a fuller picture of what God was promising.

- Listen to Revelation chapter 21:
    - **"And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."** Revelation 21:2-4

- Death is painful.
    - But we can have joy, because through Jesus Christ, sin and death have been defeated.

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- And so, you don't have to fear death.
    - Because one day Jesus will bring you home.
    - And there will be no more death, or mourning, or crying, or pain.

- Here we see the promise of heaven.

Point 3:

- Third, we see in our passage, the power of redemption.

- After Jacob died, Joseph's brothers said to each other:
    - **"It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him."** Genesis 50:15
    - And so, the brothers sent a message to Joseph claiming that their father had instructed Joseph to forgive them.
    - They were so afraid, they didn't go themselves, but sent a messenger instead.

- In Genesis chapter 45, we're told how Joseph wept with his brothers.
    - He forgave his brothers.
    - He even asked them to come live with him.
    - And they lived in Egypt for 17 years.
    - And Joseph gave them land.
    - And he provided food.
    - He showed them how much he cared for them.

- But their sins kept haunting them.
    - They tried to kill their brother.
    - They sold him into slavery.
    - They made him suffer in prison.
    - Perhaps they kept hearing his voice from the pit, crying out to them.
    - And they became afraid that Joseph would change his mind.

- Joseph's brothers remind us of Christian who constantly worry about God's judgment or if he's forgiven them.

- There are Christians who have confessed their sin.
    - They've experienced God's love and forgiveness.
    - They confessed their faith in Christ.

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- But then, something hard happens in their lives, and they begin to wonder if God is punishing them.
    - When hardships come, some people are tempted to ask:
    - "Is God punishing me for the evil I've done?"
    - "Is God paying me back?"
    - They begin to doubt if God has truly forgiven them.

- Some people even doubt their salvation.
    - They wonder if they'll go to heaven.
    - They truly in believe in Christ.
    - They're redeemed from sin.
    - But they worry that God will judge them.

- This is referred to as the problem of assurance.

- And as you hear about the promise of heaven, it may not seem like good news because of your doubts.
    - "Pastor Tom, I want to go to heaven too."
    - "I want to be with Jesus."
    - "I've truly confessed by faith in Christ."
    - "But I'm not sure if I'm saved."

- That's exactly how Joseph's brother's felt.

- They were forgiven.
    - They were loved by Joseph.

- But their past sins were still haunting them.
    - And they were afraid that Joseph might now get his revenge.

- But look at how Joseph responds to them and reassures them.

Subpoint 1:

- First, he reassured them of his love.
    - Verse 17 says that **"Joseph wept when they spoke to him."** Genesis 50:17

- Why did Joseph weep?

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- Bible scholar D.A. Carson states how in this moment, Joseph saw "how little he was loved and trusted" by his brothers (LINK)
    - And so, he wept because his brothers doubted his love.

- But I think there's a second reason that he wept.
    - He wept because he felt sorrow for his brothers as well.
    - They were truly afraid.
    - And he felt for their distress.

- And through his pain, and through his compassion, he reassured them of his love with his tears.

- In a similar way, when we doubt, God also reassures us of his love by reminding us of his Son.
    - **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son**..." John 3:16
    - **"But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."** Romans 5:8
    - We can know that God loves us, because God sent his Son to die for us.
    - God did not spare his own Son.

- After loving you and sending his Son for you will God all of a sudden just change his mind?
    - Of course not!
    - As you look at the past, don't look at your sins, look at the cross.
    - And you will be reassured of God's love for you.

Subpoint 2:

- Second, he reassured them of God's authority.

- In verse 19 he says:
    - **"Do not fear, for am I in the place of God?"** (Genesis 50:19)

- Joseph was telling his brothers that it wasn't his place to take revenge.
    - Proverbs 20 verse 22 states:
    - **"Do not say, 'I will repay evil'; wait for the LORD, and he will deliver you."**
    - He reassured his brothers that the authority to judge belonged only to God.
    - He wasn't out to get revenge.

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- And we can be assured of our salvation, because the only one who can judge says that we've been justified by faith.
    - Listen to the Apostle Paul:
    - **"If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies."** Romans 8:31-33
    - Do you see what Paul is saying?
    - It doesn't matter what other people say.
    - It doesn't matter what your feelings tell you.
    - It doesn't matter what Satan says.
    - What matters is what God says.
    - And he's said that no one can bring any charge against you.

- If Christ has set you free, that means you're free indeed.

- Be assured by God's authority.

<u>Subpoint 3:</u>

- Third, he reassured them of God's goodness.

- Joseph's life was filled with evil.
    - He was hated, rejected, betrayed, and forgotten.
    - I'm sure all of us could think of someone who has hurt us.

- Well, Joseph was deeply hurt by what others did to him.
    - At the same time, his mind was also focused on something greater.
    - He was focused on what God was doing.
    - He says to his brothers:
    - **"As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today."** (Genesis 50:20)

- Despite his brothers, God was able to save many people from dying of starvation.
    - On top of that, God made Joseph second to Pharoah, brought his family to Egypt, gave them the best land, provided work for them to do, increased their possessions, transformed his brothers, and led them to reconciliation.
    - Do you see all the good that God brought from this horrible situation?

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- In the same way, we can be reassured of God's love and our salvation, even when we endure hard times, because in all things God is working for our good.
    - This doesn't mean we won't suffer.
    - This doesn't mean we diminish evil.
    - This doesn't mean we'll see the good in every situation.
    - But we can have confidence, that in all things God is working good in our lives.

- At the same time, the Bible is also clear that we don't have to wait for heaven to see the goodness of the Lord.
    - There is good fruit we can see in our lifetime.

- The Psalmist writes in Psalm 27 verse 13:
    - **"I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living! Wait for the Lord**..." Psalm 27:13-14

- Or listen to what Jesus says in John 15 verse 15:
    - **"Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit..."** John 15:15

- And of course, I can't forget Galatians 6 verse 9:
    - **"And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up."** Galatians 6:9

- You can have peace during hard times, because there is good we'll see in our lifetime, just like Joseph.
    - We will need to abide in Christ.
    - We will need to trust in the Lord.
    - We may need to wait.
    - We may need to keep doing good, even when we're tired.
    - But in due season, we will reap if we don't give up.

Subpoint 4:

- And finally, Joseph reassured his brothers with his promise.

- Listen to what he says in verse 21:
    - **"So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones."** Genesis 50:21
    - Joseph spoke kindly to his brothers.
    - And he promised to provide for them.

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- And just as Joseph promised his brothers to provide for them.
    - Jesus has promised to provide for us as well.
    - Just think about all that Jesus has promised to us.
    - He's promised to forgive us of our sins.
    - He's promised to give us eternal life.
    - He's promised to provide for our daily needs.
    - He's promised to give us wisdom when we ask.
    - He's promised to sustain us through trials.
    - He's promised never to leave us or forsake us.
    - He's promised that nothing can separate us from his love.

- When you think about your past.
    - When you think about your sins.
    - You may wonder if God truly loves you.
    - You may wonder if you'll be with Christ after you die.

- But if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, you are saved.
    - You don't have to doubt.
    - Rather, you can rest in Christ's love, and authority, and goodness, and promise.

- Death is painful.
    - But we don't have to fear dying, because of the promise of heaven, and the power of God's redemption.

Conclusion:

- As we close, let me leave you with some applications.

Application 1:

- First, Christian brother and sister, keep living for Christ.

- Joseph promised Pharoah he would return to Egypt.
    - And after burying his father in Canaan, he returned to Egypt.
    - There was still work for him to do in Egypt.
    - Joseph even died in Egypt.

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- There will come a time for us to leave our Egypt and be with the Lord in the promised land.
    - There will come a day for rest.

- But until that time.
    - God has called to live for him in this world.
    - And so, let's keep faithfully living for Christ.
    - Do the work God has appointed for you.
    - The work that's nearest to you.
    - Honor Christ with your heart.

- Faithful brothers and sisters, keep doing the good that you're doing.

Application 2:

- Second, share Christ with others.

- What's remarkable about Jacob's funeral is how all the elders and leaders of Egypt went to Canaan with Joseph.
    - The Bible says it was a large company.

- God promised that Abraham's descendants would bless the nations.
    - And we see a partial fulfillment of that right here.
    - Jacob and Joseph made such a huge impact on the Egyptians, the Egyptians mourned for 70 days and even travelled all the way to Canaan.

- And if God used Jacob and Joseph to bless the Egyptians, he'll also be able to use you to bless those around you.
    - Even when you face difficult times.

- So Christian brother and sister.
    - Let's not give up praying, and inviting, and sharing the gospel.
    - Let's keep sharing Christ.

Application 3:

- Third, put your hope in Christ.

- Joseph told his brothers that they didn't have to fear, because he would provide for them.

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- I'm not sure what fears you may have today.
  - But you don't have to live in fear.
  - You don't have to fear losing your salvation.
  - You don't have to wonder if God still loves you.
  - You can trust God to provide for your future.
  - If God has provided his Son for you, how much more will he give you all things?

- And so, Christian brother and sister.
  - Keep living for Christ.
  - Keep sharing Christ.
  - Keep putting your hope in Christ.

- The last verse of Genesis ends with a coffin.
  - But that's not how our story ends.
  - Because we have a Savior who rose from the dead.
  - Genesis ends with a coffin, but the gospel ends with an empty tomb.
  - And because Jesus rose, we will live with him for**ever.**