

# God Holds the Future

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[ 0 : 00 ] Today's scripture reading is taken from Genesis chapter 40. Some time after this, the cupbearer of the king of Egypt and his baker committed an offense against their lord, the king of Egypt.

And Pharaoh was angry with his two officers, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker. And he put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard in the prison where Joseph was confined. The captain of the guard appointed Joseph to be with them, and he attended them. They continued for some time in custody. And one night they both dreamed, the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison, each his own dream and each dream with its own interpretation.

When Joseph came to them in the morning, he saw that they were troubled. So he asked Pharaoh's officers who were with him in custody in his master's house.

Why are your faces downcast today? They said to him, we have had dreams and there is no one to interpret them. And Joseph said to them, do not interpretations belong to God?

[ 1 : 14 ] Please tell them to me. So the chief cupbearer told his dream to Joseph and said to him, in my dream, there was a vine before me. And on the vine, there were three branches.

As soon as it budded, its blossoms shot forth and the clusters ripened into grapes. Pharaoh's cup was in my hand and I took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup and placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand.

Then Joseph said to him, this is its interpretation. The three branches are three days. In three days, Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your office.

And you shall place Pharaoh's cup in his hand as formerly when you were his cupbearer. Only remember me when it is well with you. And please do me the kindness to mention me to Pharaoh. And so get me out of his house. Out of this house. For I was indeed stolen out of the land of the Hebrews. And here also I have done nothing that they should put me into the pit.

[ 2 : 19 ] When the chief baker saw that the interpretation for favorable, he said to Joseph, I also had a dream. There were three cake baskets on my head.

And in the uppermost basket, there were all sorts of baked food for Pharaoh. But the birds were eating out of the basket on my head. And Joseph answered and said, this is its interpretation. The three baskets are three days. In three days, Pharaoh will lift up your head from you and hang you on a tree. And the birds will eat the flesh from you.

On the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, he made a feast for all his servants and lifted up the head of the chief cupbearer and the head of the chief baker among his servants.

He restored the chief cupbearer to his position and he placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand. But he hanged the chief baker as Joseph had interpreted to them. Yet the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph but forgot him.

[ 3 : 23 ] This is the end. Thank you very much for reading today.

One of the things that we all have in common is that none of us knows with certainty what our future holds. And I don't just mean the distant future.

I mean even the immediate future. None of us even knows that we will take our next breath. But we tend not to be preoccupied with our immediate future.

Instead, we tend to be preoccupied with the days and weeks and months and years of our lives because we don't know what they hold for us.

And in some cases, this can be a source of anxiety. We can be worried about what the days and weeks and months and years hold for us.

[ 4 : 45 ] And the truth is none of us is exempt from this. None of us is immune to the tendency to worry about the future. All of us, to one degree or another, have concerns about the future.

That we don't know what it holds for us. This morning as we continue our sermon series in the book of Genesis, we come to an account of three prisoners who were concerned about their futures.

And what we see in each case is that God held the futures of these three prisoners in his hands.

Indeed, God holds the future of everyone and everything in his sovereign hands.

And I pray this morning that as we consider Genesis 40, that we will be encouraged and we will be strengthened by this simple truth.

God holds our future in his sovereign hands. And I pray this especially for those who may be anxious this morning.

[ 6 : 03 ] I pray this especially for those who may be anxious about the future for whatever reason. I pray that you will especially be encouraged and strengthened as we look to God's word this morning.

Let me just take a moment to pray for us before we do that. Heavenly Father, we thank you for the way you work and in particular the way you work in our lives.

Lord, in your providence, you have brought us all here this morning. We are gathered not just because we made a decision to be here, but we are gathered because the sovereign Lord so ordained that we would be here.

Lord, there are those of us who are particularly concerned about the future.

But Lord, to one degree or another, we're all concerned about where the future holds. Rather, that's in terms of days or weeks or months or years.

[ 7 : 13 ] Right now, Lord, we look to the one who holds the futures of everyone and everything in his sovereign hands. Would you speak to us where we are?

Would you speak to us in ways that we need to hear you this morning? Would you speak to us for our good and for your glory? We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen. Amen. deth! In Genesis 40, we encounter three prisoners, none of whom knew what their future held.

The first one is Joseph, and we considered Joseph last Sunday, and we saw how he was put in prison because of a false accusation by Potiphar's wife.

The other two prisoners we're encountering for the first time this morning, and they are Pharaoh's cupbearer and his baker. They were placed in prison by Pharaoh himself, and we're told the reason that they were in prison in verse 1 is that they committed an offense.

[ 8 : 25 ] It seems like a single offense. Somehow they were involved together in an offense. And in that time, one of the most privileged jobs you could have in a king's kingdom was to serve him food, rather to give him drink or to give him food, because one of the ways they got rid of you was they poisoned you.

And so to be a cupbearer, to be a baker, you had to be a trusted person. And somehow, these two men were not told what the offense was, but there was some offense, and they were put in the prison.

It's worth observing how verse 1 tells us what happened. Look again at verse 1. It says, Sometime after this, the cupbearer of the king of Egypt and his baker committed an offense against their lord, the king of Egypt.

The irony of the situation is that they were in prison because they committed a sin against their lord. Joseph was in prison because he refused to sin against his lord.

And sometimes that's the way life turns out. Sometimes for the people of God, there's an opposite reflection, as it were, on the situation.

[ 9 : 57 ] So we have this seemingly unjust situation. Joseph is in prison because he didn't want to sin against the lord. He didn't sin against the lord. And these two are in prison because they sinned against their lord, the king of Egypt.

As far as these three prisoners were concerned, their futures were in Pharaoh's hands. But the truth of this passage is that their futures were in God's hands.

And what we see in this passage is sometimes God reveals the future, and sometimes he conceals it.

Sometimes God reveals our future to us, some aspect of it, and other times he conceals it. And another irony about what we see in Genesis chapter 40 is that the one who was parading around as

having in his control the futures of these men, even his future was in God's control.

And we'll see that in the next chapter. God even held Pharaoh's future in his hands. And so the question this morning is, how do we live in the present and guard ourselves against anxiety about the future, which we do not know?

[ 11 : 28 ] How do we live in the present, have a future that we don't know, and not worry about that future? This morning and our remaining time, I want us to consider three simple truths from this passage that will help us to guard against anxiety about our future.

And the first truth that we need to live with an awareness of is that God always holds the future. He always holds the future. And this is a truth that we can easily forget especially when it doesn't seem that God even is in control of the present. When it seems like chaos is all around us, it's hard to believe God for the future.

It's hard to believe that God controls the future when it appears that he doesn't even control the present. You could easily believe that our lives are the mercy of people, or worse than that, our lives are the mercy of chance and happenstance.

And here in this passage, Joseph and Pharaoh's cupbearer and baker were naturally perplexed about what their future held. This is not like being in Foxville Prison, where you're going to go through some due process, and a verdict is going to be passed, and you know this is the era of where the king was the law.

[ 13 : 04 ] He was the judge, the jury, and everything else, and his word was your fate, whatever that word was. And so naturally, these men were perplexed about what the future held for them.

Would they come out of prison alive, or would they be executed by Pharaoh? And if they got out of prison, when would they get out?

And what would life be when they get out? Having done a good bit of prison ministry, I can tell you that one of the preoccupations of prisoners is their future.

They're preoccupied about it. Even those with long sentences, hoping and praying to get some clemency, some reprieve, some early release, they're preoccupied with it.

And as I was studying this, one of the things that dawned on me, you know how the most praying takes place, I think, on this island? Foxville Prison. Even on the lips of unbelievers.

[ 14 : 14 ] I remember a number of years ago, I was doing ministry with another brother, and we were in maximum security, and there was a guy who evidently was a Christian, and he asked me a question.

He said, you know, Pastor, I want to ask you, does God hear sinners? Does God listen to sinners? And I just said no. And when I said no, I don't exaggerate this morning, there was like a revolt among the inmates who were gathered in that chapel.

And they began to shout me down and say, I didn't know what I was talking about. And they literally had to bring in other guards. And I knew the reason why they protested. Because they knew they were sinners.

And they knew they were praying. And I was telling them, God was not listening to their prayers of get me out, get me out, give me early release, and all the other things.

And so I have no doubt that praying was going on in this prison. We don't doubt that Joseph was praying. And I'm pretty sure that those two, the baker and the cupbearer, whoever they believed in, they were praying to that God.

[ 15 : 28 ] But you know what? Prisoners are not the only ones who are concerned about their future. They're concerned. They're concerned for different reasons. But we are concerned as well, all of us, are concerned about our future in one way or another.

Maybe you're concerned about your future this morning in terms of what it holds for you in terms of health. What it holds for you in terms of your finances or your career. Maybe it's in the area of relationships.

Perhaps you're concerned wondering, will my marriage last? Or, is marriage in my future? Maybe you're a student this morning and exams are coming up and you are focused on that and concerned about that.

And what are the implications of how you do on those exams might have for your future education? There are a myriad of ways this morning that our minds are concerned and preoccupied with the future.

But this morning, whatever concerns we have, the truth is, God holds the future generally and God holds our future specifically in His sovereign hands.

[16:47] and He knows the future because He controls the future. He sovereignly controls the future.

If you think about this, no one can know the future with any certainty unless they also control everything about the future. because if there's one small thing that you don't control about the future, that small thing can change everything else that you may be depending on.

And so, God holds the future. He knows the future. He's able to tell us the future with certainty because He sovereignly controls the future.

He controls everything and He controls everyone without exception. There's nothing stray in God's universe. Nothing. And therefore, He knows the future with absolute certainty.

Again, if God is not in control of the smallest aspect of life, He cannot know with certainty what it holds and indeed, He cannot be sure that He can bring it to pass if there's something outside of His sovereign control.

[18:12] Matthew 10, 29 is a very precious scripture for us to take to heart as we think about God's sovereign control. This is what Jesus says, Are not two sparrows sold for a penny?

And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. In Jesus' day, the sparrow was customarily thought of as the smallest of all the creatures.

And a penny was among the smallest of the Roman coins in terms of value, a single penny. And you could use the smallest value coin and you can pay for two of the smallest known creatures at that time.

And notice what Jesus says. Jesus says, Not one of these sparrows will fall to the ground apart from your Father. In other words, He has the say, He controls whether one of those insignificant sparrows falls to the ground.

And what's the point? The point is to move from the lesser to the greater that if God is in control of that small little detail of His universe, death needs control, in control of the bigger issues.

[19:29] issues. And in that passage, what Jesus was doing was Jesus was teaching His disciples how important they were to God and how He would take care of them and they needed not to be in fear about anything or anyone.

Brothers and sisters, God is in sovereign control of everyone and everything in His universe. And this is especially true about His precious people whom He has redeemed.

by His blood. So since God is in control of everything and everyone, the futures of Joseph and Pharaoh's cupbearer and baker were in God's hands.

They weren't in Pharaoh's hands. They were in God's hands. And here in Genesis 40, what God does is He demonstrates that He holds the future in His hands by these dreams that He gives to the cupbearer and to the baker.

We saw back in Genesis 37 that God gave Joseph two dreams that concerned his future. And now He gives both the baker and the cupbearer dreams and He does so in the same night.

[20:46] This is no happenstance. This is by divine design. He gives them not random dreams, but He gives them two very specific dreams. He gives them the same dreams on the same night and both dreams pertain to their future.

And these were vivid dreams. I'm sure you've had some dreams. We've all dreamed and we dream all kinds of things. Sometimes we may dream something and we may get up and not even mention it to our spouse.

But then there's some dreams that we have and just the weight of them, the significance of them weighs on us in such a way that we just have to share it even if we don't know what the dream was about.

This was no passing dream. This was a vivid dream. This was not the kinds of dreams that happen, Ecclesiastes tells us, they happen because we're just too busy.

Just the busyness of the day and the things that preoccupy our day and those are more natural, psychological kinds of dreams but these are divinely given dreams. Look again at the account of the first dream starting in verse 6.

[22:00] When Joseph came to them in the morning, he saw that they were troubled. So he asked Pharaoh's officers who were with him in custody in his master's house, why are your faces downcast today?

They said to him, we have had dreams and there's no one to interpret them. The cupbearer and the baker were downcast because in prison they did not have access to the magicians and to all of the wise men in Egypt.

We'll see in the next chapter when we come to it that Pharaoh called for them and he had his dreams but they didn't have access to these wise men and to these magicians.

Notice Joseph's response to them in verse 8. And Joseph said to them, do not interpretations belong to God. They belong to God.

They don't belong to magicians or wise men. They belong to God. Please tell them to me. By Joseph saying that the interpretations belong to God, Joseph was also pointing to the fact that the dreams belong to God.

[ 23 : 16 ] God is not one who basically just sits around and dreams happen at random and then he gives interpretations for those dreams. No. These were dreams that were divinely given by God and God also had the interpretation of these dreams.

Now what we see with the dreams of the cup bearer and the baker is that God gave them these dreams to reveal their futures to them.

And this brings me to the second truth. Not only does God always hold the future but God sometimes reveals the future.

And this is my second point. God sometimes reveals the future. In response to Joseph inviting the cup bearer and the baker to tell him their dreams, the cup bearer immediately tells him his dream. He tells Joseph the significant dream that he had and as he shares the dream we're able to see the divine significance of it.

[ 24 : 31 ] He tells him that he had this dream of three branches and then he says three things happened. The branches budded, they blossomed and the grapes ripened.

And then he says he did three things with the grapes. He took the grapes, he pressed the grapes in Pharaoh's cups and he placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand.

And that was the extent of the dream. That's all he was able to tell Joseph because that's all that God revealed to him in the dream. Now I suspect if the dream went on and he was able to say and then Pharaoh took the cup to his mouth and drank it, I think he could have figured out his own dream.

He could have figured well boy that means I'm going to be restored to my position. Or if in the dream he saw Pharaoh throw the drink out and he said well that doesn't sound like a good ending to my dream.

But he was left in suspense. He didn't know what the implication of the dream was. He was troubled by it. And so Joseph interprets the cupbearer's dream starting in verse 12.

[ 25 : 48 ] Joseph said to him this is its interpretation. The three branches of three days in three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your office and you shall place Pharaoh's cup in his hand as formerly when you were his cupbearer.

Only one given a divine interpretation by the Lord could interpret that dream in that way because he went beyond the cup being in Pharaoh his hand and was able to say what the implication was.

God revealed that to Joseph. And notice how Joseph interpreted the dream. He didn't you know some people go through they have to find a meaning for every single thing.

He doesn't do that. He broadly interprets the dream. He identifies the three branches with three days and he says in three days this is going to happen.

and Joseph was certain. Joseph was so certain that this was going to happen notice what he does in verses 14 and 15. He pleads with the cupbearer.

[ 27 : 00 ] He says to him only remember me when it is well with you and please do me the kindness to mention me to Pharaoh and so get me out of this house for indeed I was stolen out of the land of the Hebrews and here also I have done nothing that they should put me into the pit.

Joseph was certain that the dream was from the Lord the interpretation was from the Lord and that this cupbearer would be restored and he wanted the cupbearer to plead to Pharaoh for him to make his case before Pharaoh.

Hopefully he'll get an audience before Pharaoh. We're told in verse 16 that the baker saw that the cupbearer got a favorable interpretation so he then proceeded he was reluctant before but he then proceeded to tell his dream to Joseph.

I think this gives us some insight into the baker's character. First the baker was not interested in an interpretation of his dream period.

but he wanted a favorable interpretation. And second he clearly missed what Joseph said. Joseph said interpretations are from the Lord. Joseph was not there as some kind of a magician to make happen whatever he wanted to happen.

[ 28 : 27 ] The interpretation was from the Lord but somehow the baker who was reluctant is now enticed to share his dream because the cupbearer got a favorable interpretation.

some commentators say that this reluctance on the part of the baker is an indication that the baker was guilty. I don't know. The script is silent on it.

But the baker's dream was simpler. He had a dream that he had three cake baskets on his head with all sorts of big goods for Pharaoh but Pharaoh wasn't eating it the birds were eating it.

You know it's an unusual dream because you don't see a person walking around with three baskets on their head. It's not a natural kind of dream. And so Joseph interprets his dream as well.

He says starting in verse 18 this is its interpretation. The three baskets are three days. In three days Pharaoh will lift up your head from you.

[ 29 : 39 ] He uses the same words that he announces the cupbearer's faith to him. And these words lift up your head they're words that meant in that day you'll be promoted. it's to be elevated.

But Joseph says to him he's going to lift up your head but he's going to lift it off from you and he's going to hang you on a tree and the birds will eat the flesh from you.

Again an interpretation that only the Lord could give because we don't see the extent of those details that Joseph could have naturally pulled out of that dream.

Again when we look at these dreams we see the symbolism of trees in them. Both men's future were going to be determined on the same day three days from the time that they shared them with him.

I think it's worth mentioning that Moses does not record for us any of the responses of these two men. Doesn't tell us what the cupbearer said. Doesn't tell us what the baker said. And I imagine the cupbearer was glad and I imagine that the baker was sad.

[ 30 : 54 ] But Moses doesn't tell us those details. Doesn't tell us what their reactions were. And the reason is their reactions are not important. Their reactions are not important to the truths that Moses was teaching to the children of Israel who were his original audience.

And they're not relevant to us this morning. They're not relevant to us who are hearing this account thousands of years later.

The truth that Moses was communicating to them was that God always holds the future and that he sometimes reveals the future. The responses to the future, the reactions to the future being revealed to them just not important.

And we don't need to speculate on what they actually said. that scripture is silent and so we would do well to be silent. What is revealed is that God always holds the future and he sometimes reveals it.

But I believe these two truths really set the stage for the third truth, which I think is the most important truth. I think it's the one that's most relevant to us this morning.

[ 32 : 14 ] I pray it's a given that all of us accept that God always holds the future in his hands. And I think it should be obvious to us that sometimes God reveals it.

But I think it should be obvious to us as well and perhaps even more obvious that it seems that more often than not, God does not reveal it.

More often than not, what God does is he conceals the future, especially as it pertains to his people. And this brings me to my third and final point, the third truth that we see in this passage is that God sometimes conceals the future.

And this can be very difficult to live with. There was a difficult truth for Joseph to live with and yet that was his lot. look again at verse 20, the concluding section of this chapter.

In verse 20 it says, on the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, he made a feast for all his servants and lifted up the head of the chief cupbearer and the head of the chief baker among his servants.

[ 33 : 38 ] He restored the chief cupbearer to his position and he placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand. But he hanged the chief baker as Joseph had interpreted to them.

Exactly what he interpreted is exactly who came to pass. And it ends in verse 23. Yet, the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph but forgot him.

Imagine being Joseph in charge of these two high profile prisoners, served them, God gave them dreams, he interpreted those dreams, those dreams came to pass exactly the way he interpreted them to come to pass.

But then God gives him no dream. God gives him no indication about what the future held for him. He served them, but he finds himself sitting in prison all alone after they've been released.

And he has no revelation from God about his lot. And we can see Joseph's desperation. Again, I have no doubt that Joseph prayed.

[ 34 : 54 ] But we can see his desperation pleading with this cupbearer. Please, when you get out of this place, mention my name to Pharaoh. Because I was kidnapped.

I was brought to Egypt wrongly. And I've been put in this place wrongly. We know from Genesis 37 and Genesis 41 that Joseph was in the house of Potiphar as a slave and in the prison for 13 years. But we don't know the breakdown between when he was in the house and when he was in the prison. We don't know. But here's what I think we can deduce from what we do know.

I don't think it took a long time before Potiphar's wife set her eyes on Joseph. I don't think that Joseph was just milling around, handsome, well built for years, and then all of a sudden her eyes opened and said, wow, this guy looks good.

Now, I think she saw him pretty early on. I think God was blessing him pretty early on. And I think it's fair to assume that the better part of Joseph's time was spent in that prison.

[ 36 : 10 ] And Joseph had a long time to think. One of the things that I've heard judges say to people going to prison, say, you have a long time to think about what you did.

And that's what prison affords. And so Joseph was able to just reflect on his life and think about his life. And we see this, we'll see this in chapter 41 when he begins to talk about his life a bit.

God gives him two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, and he names these sons, attaching them to, the first one to his afflictions, saying, God has caused me to forget my afflictions.

And then he named the second one, Ephraim, says, God has made me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction. How do you think Joseph managed, as he sat in prison with this future concealed by God?

God, who you know, can reveal it to you. But he doesn't. He revealed it, you served others, but he has not revealed it to you.

[ 37 : 27 ] What's worse is not only did God not reveal it to him, but the cupbearer whom he served with a favorable interpretation had forgotten him as well.

This picture of Joseph in prison, his future concealed by God, people who you think should remember have forgotten you, sometimes that's the picture of God's people.

That's the picture where God's people find themselves. And not because God is not powerful, and not because God is not sovereign and can do whatever he wants, or can't do whatever he wants. Not because he isn't sovereign, not because he isn't powerful. It's all because of God's design, God's design for his people.

But how many times have we been there to counsel and guide others in their personal life, in their business life, in their career, and they follow the advice, and it goes well with them, and we find ourselves desiring to be helped in a similar way, and it escapes us.

[ 38 : 44 ] And we have no prospect, no idea about what the future holds for us in that way. Again, sometimes we find ourselves in the same situation that Joseph found himself in.

But here's what we can know. we can know that based on who God is, he's perfectly good, he is perfectly wise, he is sovereign, he is all-powerful, and while we are waiting, God is not twiddling his thumbs, God is actively working in us.

and that's what he was doing with Joseph. Joseph was a spoiled, arrogant brat. That's what he was.

He was a favored child, he was indifferent to his brothers, he flaunted his favoritism, and he touted his brothers about it.

God and as he sat in that prison for those 13 long years, or whatever part of the 13 years he was in the prison, God was preparing him for the future that he had for him.

[ 40 : 08 ] His being in part of his house, not a ways. God was teaching him administration. His being in the prison, not a ways. God was again teaching him how to serve others, and how to solve

problems.

God gave him those dreams, showed him how to interpret those dreams, and he would do the same thing for Pharaoh in a short while. I remember some time ago, a single lady said to me, she said, I help a godly lady, godly lady, said I help a lot of my friends plan their weddings, I help them with all kinds of things, I stand in their weddings, but it seems like marriage is not for me.

And sometimes we can find ourselves in that situation where we serve others in the very ways we want to be served, and it doesn't appear that God is serving us.

And I don't want to speculate this morning about what anyone's future holds, but what I will say to you is this, our time of waiting when God does not reveal to us what the future is, and he intentionally conceals it from us, God is working in us, he's never idle, he was working in Joseph, he was shaping Joseph into a man who could forgive his brothers, a man who could put grudges behind him, God was doing all of that for the future that we had for him, and so even when God does not reveal our future to us, know that he is working in us to prepare us for whatever future he has for us, and he does that because he's a faithful God, and he does that because it is more important what God does in us than what he does for us, and I'll say it to us again, the highest good that God can do in us is to conform us more and more to the image of Jesus

Christ, not some big dream that we may have, some proposition that we might want fulfilled, no, it is conforming us more and more to the image of Jesus Christ, and brothers and sisters, we are shaped more into the image of Jesus Christ in these dark, difficult, waiting seasons of life, and that's where Joseph found himself.

[ 42 : 43 ] I pray that God will help all of us, especially those of us who would resonate with Joseph, would resonate with where he found himself.

I pray that we would be aware, you know what, although he's not revealed my future, he is working in me for that future, whatever that future is.

Joseph's future unfolded before him, not by some dream or some revelation, but it unfolded just through the doors that God opened, through the circumstances God uses.

God will use the same cupbearer who forgot and cause him to remember and begin the process where Joseph was elevated out of the pit and into the palace.

one of the challenges of reading the Old Testament in particular and reading stories like this is we can kind of get lost in the story.

[ 43 : 53 ] We can get lost in the characters. We can just be thinking about a particular character. Maybe we think about the cupbearer and how ungrateful he was.

Or we think about the baker and how sad it was that he was hung in that way. We think about Joseph and how he was left with all the uncertainty of being in the prison.

But when we read scripture, one of the things we have to guard ourselves against, especially when we read Old Testament narratives like this one, we have to guard ourselves against getting lost in the story, that we miss the ultimate story.

And the ultimate story is always about Jesus Christ. I heard this teacher, joke about the teacher in Sunday school who asked the question, what is this passage about?

And this one boy said, Jesus. And every time she would ask the question, he would say, Jesus. And that's the truth. It's always about Jesus. That's the first principle of interpretation.

[ 45 : 05 ] So one of the things that we want to do when we read these kinds of passages is we want to look to see, where is this pointing me to Jesus? Sometimes it's direct. Sometimes it's a very clear direct pointing to Jesus.

Maybe it's a prophecy about Jesus. Sometimes it reveals the human condition, how lost we are, and how sorrowful and pitiful we are in our sin.

And it points to our need for Jesus. And sometimes we get to see shadows of Jesus. Sometimes we get to see things that happen that remind us about Jesus.

And I want to just close and just direct our attention just to three shadows that should remind us in some way about the Lord Jesus.

The cupbearer forgot Joseph despite the amazing service that Joseph did for him. Brothers and sisters, the Lord Jesus never forgets us.

[ 46 : 09 ] And we never do anything for him. He never forgets us even though we have never done anything and we will never do anything to merit that he should remember us.

the baker was hung on a tree for his offense against the king. The apostle Paul tells us in Galatians 3, 13 to 14, that the one who hangs on a tree is cursed.

And he tells us that Jesus was hung on the tree for us. He says, Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law. By becoming a curse for us because it is written, cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.

We shouldn't get lost in this baker's outcome, that he was hung on a tree. It should point us to the one, the innocent one, who was hung on a tree for our sins, so that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles, and that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

And while Joseph was innocent of the crime that he was accused of, Joseph was no perfectly innocent man.

[ 47 : 40 ] The Lord Jesus is the only perfectly innocent one who has ever walked the face of the earth, and he suffered as a guilty person, but not in a vacuum.

The Apostle Peter tells us he committed no sin, neither was there deceit in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile, in return. When he suffered, he didn't threaten, but he continued trusting himself to the Lord who judges righteously.

He says, he himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to his righteousness, and by his wounds we are healed.

I pray that any lingering over this passage today, brothers and sisters, will not be over the cup bearer, or the baker, or on Joseph, but may we linger on Christ.

May our minds and hearts be focused on the sovereign Lord Jesus Christ, who is better than the three of these characters in this story.

[ 48 : 52 ] he is the one who came into this world to give his life as a ransom for many, and that is what he did. For people like you and me, who deserve what he received, and we instead get to receive mercy and grace from God.

At the other side of this sermon, I said that my prayer was that we would be encouraged by it, and we would be strengthened by it, to know that God holds our future in his hands.

But the truth is, this should only encourage those who belong to Christ. This should only encourage those who know the Savior in the pardon of their sins. This should only encourage those who can say it is well with my soul.

It should not encourage anyone who is separate from Jesus Christ this morning. If you have not trusted Jesus, whether you're present, whether you're watching online, if you have not trusted Jesus in the pardon of your sins, you should draw no comfort from this truth that we have covered this morning.

In a way, you're eavesdropping on good news for God's people. Because what the Bible says is for those who do not know Jesus Christ, that the wrath of God awaits them.

[ 50 : 15 ] the Bible says that the wrath of God will be poured out on the ungodly, and it is a just wrath. It is a righteous wrath.

It is a deserved wrath that we all deserve. But we who have come to know Jesus have been removed from the wrath of God.

We are no longer objects of wrath. We are now objects of His mercy. And if you're here this morning or you're watching online, you don't know Jesus Christ as your Lord and personal Savior, I said you take no comfort in these words that He knows the future and He is going to do good to those who belong to Him in that future whatever it turns out to be.

Instead, the news that you need to hear this morning is come to Jesus. Come to Jesus. Come to Jesus with all your feelings, all your sin, and you will find a Savior who is merciful, a Savior who is quick to pardon all of your sin, the greatest sin.

Matters not what it is. He will greatly pardon you. And so I say to you this morning, if you don't know Jesus Christ, come to Him.

[ 51 : 38 ] He invites all those who are weak and weary and laden with sin to come to Him. And He says, and I will give you rest. And friends, there is no greater burden to carry in this life, no greater burden, than the burden of sin and the burden of guilt before a holy God.

And so I plead with you this morning, come to Jesus, turn from your sin and trust in the Savior, who is good all the time, even when our futures are concealed.

And we don't know what they hold for us. But what we know is they are in the hands of a good, wise, and sovereign God, and we can trust Him.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you for your word this morning. Thank you, Lord, that we can trust you with our future, because even though it's concealed to us, you are good and you only do good. And even though the future is concealed to us, you're working in us in the present. And your highest goal is to conform us to the image of your Son. Father, I pray that you would truly let this be a comfort and encouragement for all your people.

[ 53 : 19 ] May we take our eyes off of the wonderings about the future. May we fix them on the Savior who holds it. who do not believe, who do save them, who do who do it for your glory, we pray, in Jesus' name.

Thank you.