

God's over ruling purposes for our good (Quality: Average)

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Preacher: Mercer, Seth (1930-2017)

- [0 : 00] I'm feeling so much to me that it's merciful and gracious help. I venture now this morning in directing your thoughts to Psalm 115 and reading the third verse.
- Psalm 115, reading verse 3. But our God is in the heavens.
- He hath done whatsoever he hath breathed. Psalm 115, the third verse.
- But our God is in the heavens. He hath done whatsoever he hath breathed.
- Great mercy if we could all feelingly take up the opening words in this third verse.
- [1 : 18] And of course it is proof that it is very essential for us all to be able to say, but our God.
- But to go a step further and to be able to say, but my God.
- Oh, that the Holy Ghost would so work in our hearts that we might all be brought to be able to say, my God.
- And then we shall be able to take up the precious language in, I believe, in our book, the number is 410.
- But it comes in like this in one of the verses, perhaps more. But my Jesus has done all things well.
- [2 : 20] What a divine favour for any of us. Whatever stage we have reached in our lives thus far.
- But could you say today, can I say today, My Jesus, have done all things well. I hope you can.
- I feel I could say that sincerely before God. My Jesus, have done all things well.
- In spite of all that that will mean in our lives. In spite of all that is going on in our lives. And it is really especially this part of the subject that I desire now to be able to convey to you.
- There are a number of words in the different parts of the Bible that have been with me. Over the past day.
- [3 : 31] And another word that I want to read to you is found in the prophecy of Jonah. And in that account there regarding Jonah, his rebellion, and all that went on in his life.
- And yet the men who rode so hard to save his life and their own. And yet, what do we find for those men saying before this great God as their desire was that Jonah and themselves that Jonah and themselves should not perish.
- Now this is what these men said. For thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee.
- I would judge that these men did not fear God. And yet God brought them into contact with Jonah, his servant, who was fleeing away from God, who was running away from the command of God.
- Well, I can only hope that there's none of us here this Lord's Day morning that are running away from the command of God. Oh, beware if you are.

- [5 : 08] And the Lord knows what that may mean to any one of us. that may we ever beware of running away from God, running away from his commands to us.
- But these men, and I just read the whole verse to you, wherefore they cried unto the Lord and said, We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee.
- See how they were brought to pray. See how they were brought to pray in this hour of great mead when God sent that mighty tempest into the sea because of his rebelling prophet.
- And presently he prepared that great thing to swallow him up that he might learn oh, what lessons Jonah had to learn as he says in the belly of hell, cried I, and thou heardest my voice.
- His God dealt with him. And his God deals with us in our lives in different ways. But may we just notice their cry.
- [6 : 19] Wherefore they cried unto the Lord and said, We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee. Let us not perish for this man's life and lay not upon us innocent blood.
- For thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased them. Now this is what I want to tell all of you on this Lord's Day morning.
- Whatever you may be in your life, and I am aware with all of you here, you each have your own trials, your own difficulties, your own perplexities, your own sorrows, your own temptations.
- whether it be in your own soul, or whether it be in your family circle with your children, whether it concerns you in your business life, whether it concerns you in your daily calling, whether it concerns us here as a people, or in whatever way we might speak of it.
- But I have the feeling that there are those here who have come with a burdened heart. You have that that lays upon you in your life today.
- [7 : 54] You have that through the mercy of God that you have laid before him. You have been brought to flee. As we read in Psalm 107, He brought down their heart with labour.
- They fell down, and there was none to help. Well, are you there today? But are you crying unto the Lord in your trouble? Have you brought all this to his feet as he enabled you to unburden your heart?
- Those of you that attempt this task, those of you that are burdened because of your sins, those of you that may have children that weigh upon your hearts, those of you may be in some particular trouble or distress, deep exercise of sorrow, whatever we might name before you, and yet one thing that is made upon my heart to come with on this Lord's Day morning.
- O that you may go home with this, for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased me. The Lord has done as it has been pleasing to him in your life and in mine.
- For thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased me. And if you're favour to understand that in your life, it will bring you to bow before your God and you'll then be able to say, it is the Lord let him do what sins him do.
- [9 : 48] I have felt the Lord knows in secret this desire to be able to say to you, dear friend, you dear children and young people, all of you, right through to those that are old and grey-headed, that if you can feel this today, if you're given submission to the will of God in this today, for thou, O Lord, has done as it pleased me.
- And it may well be with some of you especially that things seem to be going completely opposite to your will and your desire and your way. Things may be going completely opposite to how you've been praying.

I think of a word that that poor man, Balaam, was brought to utter the Lord moving within that man's heart and he was brought to say this, God is not a man that he should love, neither the son of man that he should repent.

Hath he said, shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

What the Lord has said to you, if he has spoken to any of you, and I believe he has, he will fulfill it. Or hath he spoken, shall he not make it good?

[11 : 19] Some of you may be in a path which you cannot understand. You need an unfolding of the Lord's will. and yet his purposes, the purposes of his grace, and in his sovereignty, his purposes will ripen fast, unfolding every hour, every moment.

And that God may have, some of you may be there today, that God may have, oh, such a pit of taste. But I believe you'll yet prove this, yet sweet will be the blood.

Your God will unfold his will to you. That that you cannot understand to die. That that may be so completely opposite of what you've asked for, pleaded for, and in the working out of God's purposes, it's going to be in his way, and it's going to be in his time.

Let me just remind you of Joseph. His brethren hated him. They cast him into the pit. They sold him to the Ishmaelites.

And yet, dear friends, it was God's will. For thou, O Lord, hast done this. For thou, O Lord, is in the heavens. He hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.

[12 : 49] For thou, O Lord, for those of you here, you've had, as it were, a revelation of God's will made known to you. You're carrying a burden. But O beware of trying to put your hand to it.

Poor Joseph, he was only 17 at the time, and such was the effect of these visions that God gave him that he couldn't keep it to himself.

Humanly speaking, as we view it now, and no doubt he did in after days, he may well have thought and said when he was in the prison, I wish I'd kept all this to myself.

It may be like that was some of you here this morning. You may feel like that now, but never before. I wish I'd kept all this to myself.

You see, we need to be so careful in things. I, the Lord, will hasten it in his time. But let us just think of Joseph for a further moment.

[13 : 53] Because our God is in the heavens, he has done whatsoever he hath pleased. Poor Jacob, the dear father, the distress of his soul, yet he well knew that his own sins, he was reaping what he had sown.

It may be like that was some of us here to die. You may have been made so aware of this that you are now reaping what you have sown. It may go that many years that God is bringing certain things to your remembrance.

And Jacob, you know, he said this to his sons, he felt it, that they would bring down his grey hairs with sorrow to the bride.

Joseph is without doubt renting pieces. That is how he viewed the scene. And yet, in after days, oh, what a different story there is.

What a different outcome there is. Why, you see, what I want to emphasize in this moment is, God dealt with Jacob because of his sin.

[15 : 08] He will deal with you and I because of our sin. Are you aware of it? I wonder if there are those here who will understand this.

I remember preaching in Jarvis Brook Chapel a good many years ago. and I came out of the chapel that Sunday afternoon and an elderly lady met me with this.

What she really was saying to me, the way that I had to preach, and she said, yes, I know that is true because my own ways and my own doings have procured these things unto myself.

Are you there today? Do you know that is true in your case? Great mercy if we do. Because if it rightly affects our hearts, it will make us bow before our God to confess our sins, to plead for mercy, to plead for pardon.

And yet, let me not just leave you without a conclusion to that wonderful account regarding Jacob and Joseph and his brethren. Oh, they hated him the more for his dreams.

[16 : 21] Have I hated him? It's a very painful thing to be hated. And it's a very painful thing for anyone to be hated by their brethren.

And yet, sometimes it has to be. And most of all, I feel we can say today, that dear Joseph, he lived to prove this, and he could thank God for what he had to go through.

Can you thank God for what you've had to go through? Can we thank God for what we've had to go through? Have you learned something by it?

I can tell you what you will have learned if you've learned anything at all. You will have learned more about your wretched, sinful self, and you will have learned more about the mercy of God in Jesus.

That is what Joseph had to learn. he had to be prepared for that high office. And people have to be prepared for whatever place God would have them to hold.

[17 : 24] And let me tell you that all his dear people, they have a place in that sacred mystical body of which he is the head. They all have a place, they all have their part in their life, and what is it to serve their God with fear and treasure?

For Joseph had so much to learn. I would have to say, as God has upheld me now for just over 22 years in this solemn office here as the under-shepherd, oh, I've had so much to learn, and I'm aware that I've a lot more to learn yet.

I hope I've learned a few things, and I believe I have learned this, that our God is in the heavens, and he has done whatsoever he has pleased.

You see, we are so prone to me and think with our own finite minds, and no doubt Joseph did when he was in the priest. He must have thought, he must have said, Lord, why is this?

Why have I got to endure this war? because in his case, in the sense of truth, as before his God, he was innocent.

[18 : 46] To be a man in that sense was innocent. He was unwise, I feel, in telling these things out before the time, and yet God overruled it.

God had great mercy to him, and also to his father, and also to his brethren. They all benefited by it, you sir. And presently, I do like just to dwell on this for a moment, when Joseph's brethren, you see, what God said was fulfilled.

Unaware of it as they were, that they came and they bowed before him, they bowed down their heads to the earth, they did obeisance to him, just what God had said.

And friends, what God has said he's going to do for you, he's told you things he's going to do, I can also tell you this, it's going to be in his own way.

And presently you will say, my God is in the heavens, and he's done whatsoever he has pleased, and you'll thank him for this. I hope the day will come when there might be those here, and if I'm spared, you may come to me one day, and you may say, what you said, pastor, on that Lord's Day morning, in April 1992, was right.

[20 : 10] You were God's servant to me that day, I hope I shall be. What was the outcome, you said? The outcome come to Joseph and his father and his brethren and others was this, God's great mercy to preserve their lives by great deliverance.

Of course, that speaks of Christ in his deliverance to his people. As we've been singing in our third hymn, and I thought, as we were singing that third hymn this morning, I wondered how many of us really felt anything of the truth that we were singing without our savoring his sufferings, and be able to know this, that the blessed spirit might say to you and to me, all this was done to you.

I cannot leave you without that final thought about Joseph, these things have just, they've just flown into my heart this morning, unpremeditated, but listen to this, the day came in Joseph's life, in his father's life, and in his brethren's life, the day came when their brother could say this, ye meant it for evil, as God meant it for good.

It was not you that brought me hither, but God, and he could say then, my God is in the heaven, he hath done whatsoever he hath pledged, well, these thoughts then have been expressed, that our God is in the heavens, he hath done whatsoever he hath pledged, we've read that solemn searching account of King Nebuchadnezzar, and oh, let me remind you this morning that our God is in the heavens, he rules and he reigns, just as Nebuchadnezzar was compelled to give utterance to, and let me just read one verse or two again to you from our reading, where did God bring him?

You see, he wouldn't really listen to what Daniel had to say, Daniel warned him to turn away from his sin by righteousness, what did Daniel have to say to him?

[22 : 43] Wherefore, O King, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor, if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquility, it's very evident in Nebuchadnezzar, didn't this?

Well, I hope that none of you here this morning are not listening to what the Lord is saying to you. I hope that none of you will not listen. I hope you will listen.

I hope that none of you are not listening to what the Lord is saying to you, because he is speaking to you. You see, dear friends, the Lord is speaking to us really every day of their life.

The circumstances that you may be in and are in today, in your life, in your business, in your family, in your heart, whatever it is, God is speaking to us.

He speaks every day of their life. Oh, for ears to hear what the Spirit said unto the churches. Daniel warned the king of what was going to happen.

[23 : 53] Then I just read this, and at the end of the days I lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most God, and I praised and honoured him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation.

Oh, I want to emphasize that. Even this generation, our God is in the heaven. he rules and he reigns. And what did Nebuchadnezzar have to say?

And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest they?

I do also feel it's upon my heart, and I can only deliver what I feel burdened with, but have we not, dear friends, cause to thank God for the outcome of the general election that was held in our nation during the past war?

Of course, the issue with all this is with our God. I know that many prayers have gone up to God regarding this general election, and I with many others have looked upon it as being a time of crisis in our language of God.

[25 : 39] And yet, surely, we can grace the hand of God in the results, whatever we might think, whatever our political views may be.

we can trace the hand of God in it. And I have the desire this Lord's Day morning to express this to you, because among other petitions, I gave expression to this on the past Wednesday evening in prayer.

prayer, I asked the Lord that he might turn the hearts of the people in our land, I believed he could, to fulfill his own will in the results of this election.

prayer. And surely, we must acknowledge that he had. A friend was telling me on the day or so guide, how it was said on the wireless, I believe, whichever day it was, that this man was saying on the wireless that he thought that people were going into the booster boat, not really knowing what they were doing.

And yet our God knew what they would do. And so I felt, you see, that I must tell you this, this morning. I would not be fulfilling my solemn responsibility because we seek, we pray, do we not?

[27 : 02] We have prayed. And the Lord has answered prayer in his own way, regarding our land. And I can only see extended mercy in, in spite of all our sins, I'm sure there's extended mercy in.

That our God is in the heavens. He has done whatsoever he has proved. We have all, no doubt, we've heard and we've read of all that's been going on prior to that day.

And so much of it has distressed our mind and our heart. And yet, oh, friends, let us not forget that John Major is in the hand of God.

Let us not forget that whoever is in the new covenant will be in the hand of God. Let us not forget that our royal family, our queen, is in the hand of God.

Let us not forget that all men in this earth, all people, all the people of the world, which our God views, we have it in Isaiah chapter 14.

[28 : 14] This great God who sitteth upon the circle of the earth and counteth the people but as brass hoppers, and our God is in the heaven and he has done whatsoever he has proved.

Surely we must acknowledge this. I do not know how any of you feel. friends, I have a very solemn responsibility as I stand before you again today.

And then there is another thought regarding our nation, regarding, oh, as we think of Zion, as we think of our own circle of chapels, as we think of the families, the dear families here, as we think of all of you.

Isn't it true that we have cause continually to return to our God in the sacred language contained in verse 1 in this very psalm?

And it's not unto us, oh Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory. And why? For thy mercy, and for thy truth sake.

[29 : 38] The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, and in a very special way upon men that fear him. You see, I am sure that the whole world has been looking on to what has taken place in our land.

And I am sure that the enemies of truth have been watching too. it. And what have they said? What is the terrible, dreadful situation among all the enemies of truth?

And there are thousands and millions of them. What does the psalmist say in verse 2? In the same psalm? It says, wherefore should the heathen sigh?

Where is now their God? But our God is in the heavens. He hath died whatsoever he hath breathed.

One more thought, and then I leave it this morning. But in Psalm 135, I am able just to turn to the verse that I am thinking of.

[30 : 56] There we read this, Thy name, O Lord, endureth forever, and Thy memorial, O Lord, throughout all generations.

For the Lord will judge His people, and He will repent Himself concerning His service. the idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.

They have mouths, but they speak not, eyes have they, but they see not, they have ears, but they hear not, neither is there any breath in their mouths.

They that make them are like unto them, so is every one that trusted in them. Now, two more thoughts from this Psalm 135, and it's this, Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good.

Sing praises unto His name, for it is pleasant. For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto Himself, and Israel for His peculiar treasure.

[32 : 10] For I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all gods. Whatsoever the Lord pleads, that did He in heaven and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.

I'm sure that most of you know this. The day after the outcome of the general election, a great bomb went off in London, people have died and many were in, there you have again the voice of the enemies of truth.

Sad and solemn though these things are, yet the words of our text are these this morning, that our God is in the heavens.

He has done whatsoever. He has to. The final thought then, and it is this from God's word. Bless the Lord, O house of Israel.

Bless the Lord, O house of Aaron. Bless the Lord, O house of Levi. Ye that fear the Lord, bless the Lord. Blessed be the Lord out of Zion, which dwelleth at Jerusalem.

[33 : 32] Praise ye the Lord. May the Lord have his blessing. Amen. May we be held to conclude our service this morning by singing hymn number six.

God's ways are just, his counsels wise. No darkness can prevent his eyes. No thought can fly, nor think new.

Unknown to him that sits above. Hymn number six. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[35:15] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[38 : 03] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

and Lord in the midst of all that we walk in in our own life and in our own family life Lord we have unburdened our heart once more in and through thy holy word and oh we thank thee when we've been able to say to those poor men who rode hard to bring the ship to land that poor Jonah must be cast into the sea because it is rebellion against his God that they could say oh can we say for thou oh Lord hast done as it pleased thou Lord our hope is and maybe those that will go home from the morning service with this to be able to say for thou oh Lord hast done as it pleased them and Lord if we are favoured in this whatever we may have to endure in our life we believe it will be well be well for both the time and eternity it is well when Jesus calls from earth and sin arise and to be taken to glory to be forever with the Lord oh we ask thee Lord to bless everyone as he oh bless them Lord grant much prayer this afternoon for the evening service may this day be a day of blessing be with us as we return to our own heart thou knowest Lord what it may mean that help us in this and help us to glorify thy name and may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all

Amen and Amen Amen