

The sovereign love and mercy of King Jesus

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[0 : 00] In the Lord's help we will speak again on the 24th chapter in the book of Numbers, the 73rd. Chapter 24 in the book of Numbers, verse 17.

I shall see him, but not now. I shall behold him, but not nigh. And there shall come a star out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel.

And he shall smite the corners of Moab and destroy all the children of Sheth. There is something very attractive about the prophetic word of God that we have seen come to pass.

That which we have not seen come to pass, and there are still prophecies which have not come to pass. That which has come to pass showed us so clearly the greater word and work of God performed according to the count of his own will.

None is able, ever has been able to say his hand, or say unto him what doest thou. That in this gospel day we are highly favoured to see the fulfilment of these ancient words come from whose lips they may.

[1 : 35] Whether they be, as in the most they are, true prophets, or whether as in this case, a false one. We need to examine this point that truth is truth.

From whosoever lips it comes, truth is truth. And it is therefore revealed as God's mysterious purpose that his truths shall not always proceed from a clear and pure fountain, but that the Lord will put a word in the mouth of strange characters.

And I mentioned, I think, last Sabbath, Nebuchadnezzar the day. The remarkable way that he was demented, and shorn of his reason for a period, and brought to a state where he was not equaled by any known person in his dreadful condition.

yet he was restored, and he was restored so fully as to know through what he passed.

Which is a remarkable thing. That his mind was so instructed that when he was cleared of this terrible trouble, he utters those remarkable words, that the Lord doeth as he will among the armies of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay at hand or say unto him, what doest thou?

[3 : 28] Then he adds this, and those that walk in pride, he is able to abide. He learned this by painful experience.

And yet the Lord so cleared his mind as to cause him to utter a truth that would fit into any gospel sermon. And it is as true to die as it ever has been.

Yet through this torturous pathway, to humble this proud man, and so truly proud he was that he needed to be humble, that he speaks against himself, as Balaam does here.

Whether Nebuchadnezzar was a vessel of mercy is an open question. that we know that Balaam was not.

And that this man who was so brought from so far to curse his wealth was not permitted to do so.

[4 : 45] So that in this utterance that we have here before us in which we spoke this morning, we see his own personal feelings. I shall see him but not now.

I shall behold him but not now. This is equal to as I say in the tenth verse in the twenty-third of numbers let me die the death of the righteous and let my last end be like it.

A fourth hope. A fourth hope. a prospect of no fulfillment whatever that underneath in his heart there was this dreadful willingness to curse God's people and ready to take the wages of unrighteousness had not God in the peace.

Now that it is a lamentable word I shall see him but not now I shall behold him but not now. that awful day of judgment when there will be separation between the chaff and the wheat day which we read in the last chapter in the Bible when the spirit and the bride shall say come and there shall be a welcome given to the holy saviour all his majesty and glory the spirit you see and the bride say together the poor bride put sight of herself that with the power and help of the holy spirit the bride of Christ elect according to God's eternal core knowledge will say that the help of the blessed spirit come and when we have that in-rule teaching in our hearts

I believe we shall fully agree of ourselves a religion adjusted carried on by ourselves would never enable us to say in that great day come added to this there is the character so blessed let him that is a thirst say come as the hymn writer said weary of earth myself and sin dear Jesus set me free and to thy glory take me in for there I long to be and to heavenly spirit in an earthly sphere granted many of the Lord's dear people but they must not expect that they can say every day of their lives as they journey through this wilderness far from else on the other hand it is a promised blessing that the spirit and the bride shall say come and let him that is a thirst come this therefore is not found in the heart of the prophet

[8 : 19] I foresee him but not nothing that distance will be an unbridgeable distance an abyss over which there will be no bridge or bunion foot set in his progress that vain hope hired a ferryman to take him across the river of death but he never reached the other side there are solemn things to find at last that whatever we had in the way of profession here upon earth knowledge or religion at last proves to be an empty shell and it's got to come it's got to be one way or the other what is the child to the weep saith the Lord and what is it why in its growing days the child is everything to the weep as regards protection and care to it the husks the very thing that the weep that is inside the husk is the precious grain that at last is gathered into the garden so that when it comes to the time of separation outward so and an outward and exterior we shall have to be separated from it

I shall have to be separated from mine in that great day it will not do for me to say in that day Lord in thy name have I cast out sandals and done many wonderful things that won't be of any value at all it won't do for you to say that I stood a member of that church for 50 years or I was a regular attender anywhere or a reader of the scripture if you have the gospel grain in your heart whatever else you may offer by way of excuse it will never stand the test unless it has got in it the wheat and you know that many of these seeming grains haven't anything in them are very poor in this therefore

God has given us an example but to come to the place where we left off this morning we were speaking of the star out of Jacob and the wonderful way the star is set and how it is picked in the eternal purposes of God and we left off speaking of him as being set at the right hand of the majesty on high now this at once brings us to the other side of this true prophetic utterance a scepter a vast difference between the two a scepter shall rise out of Israel but what is this scepter what does it signify if it doesn't signify a kingly office and a reign you haven't got a scepter in your hand you're not likely to have one kings are born not they

Christ the Lord the king of his dear people is the king of kings he has a scepter he wields it we have lived to see in the history of the church of God the wonderful way he has and how his enemies have been conquered lambs have been brought wolves have been made to lie down with them natures have been chained hearts that were once rebellious have been humbled as I said this morning concerning the words of Simeon this child is for the fall rising again of many in Israel and for a sign that shall be spoken again so as he had said to be the ruler the governor the controller of his people and not a slave not with a throng with not to drive them but to draw them with the cause of love and the band of a man as the scripture says those wonderful bands of his humanity had evidenced in his life that here upon earth he trod this wilderness and walked in and out among the people exactly as they did and this is attractive it has a drawing influence there is something very telling about it that his rule is one of love affection a willingness to be under this yoke this scepter a willingness to forego for the sake of this scepter how many prayers there are in the word of

God which give an indication of those who seek teach me to do thy will says psalm 145 for thou art my God teach me to do thy will well this is five minutes worth some proud haughty rebellious a person may be under the Lord's teaching for many years and some of us have here we have been brought to this and very often God's will is totally opposite from ours and when there is a tender and humble spirit a willingness for his will to be done well you will know how real it is and when you can pray

[15 : 07] Lord teach me to do that that is vastly different spirit from what nature has endowed you with it how it betokens the consciousness of the scepter the sovereign rhyme to say yes or no to you to give or to take oh yeah it is higher and holy thoughts that are his as we said this morning from Isaiah 55 my thoughts are not your thoughts and oh how humbling this is how abasing this is neither are my ways your ways and yet one has to learn this by painful experience nonetheless it is the scepter that rules and God will be done from the heart his people will follow him at the first call they will be called as

Paul says in his epistle to the Romans called called to be saints as high as the word is yet they are not called to be anything other than saints the declaration of the truth must not be altered or adulterated by any strange feelings in our hearts that we shall never attain to the status of a saint we're either a saint or we're not and that to a saint cleanness will not be in our own nature but through the righteousness of grace and it can't be anything less than no hard way no imperfect world nothing that is in the nature of imperfection can possibly honour Christ Jesus but his people shall be willing in the day of his power to follow him he not only calls once or twice but many times in life the blind man you see in one case and only one partially healed at first we may ask but why did not the

Lord Jesus open his eyes fully you may be like that blind man have their eyes just partially open so that you can see men as trees walking you can see the truth very dimly indistinctly Christ came into the world to save sinners the worst of men and out of every nation every kindred and tongue there is no limitation as as to knowing and seeking this for yourself you may grope by the wall as one that cannot see why I say did not the Lord Jesus open his eyes fully at first time why of course to teach us his sovereignty and oh how significant it is that there are so many whose eyes have been opened to the truth very gradually and it's puzzled them they grope after the truth they said well how can this be they heard the truth that there such a thing as being hungry and thirsty after righteousness they have pondered this and wondered what these strange desires are in their own heart they cannot explain it they find they ebb and flow and yet the

Lord put his hand to this blind man a second time and then he saw clearly the blicker of the Lord's work in the hearts of his people and in this way they are brought to the kingly rule the scepter so that Christ the king is now the king of glory as you read in the psalm open the gates the king of glory may come in the question is asked who is this king of glory and the answer is given the Lord of hosts he is the king of glory if you take this psalm and compare it to the 24th of blue or the early part of

Acts the first chapter of Acts there you will see the ascended savior hear him speaking upon earth as his disciples asked him wilt thou now restore the kingdom of God upon earth and he was parted from them and gathered up into him he we are not told in that chapter what happened at the reception but we are told hundreds of years before what happened and the picture drawn before our eyes is two leaves gates gates very beautiful in that description of the massive gates so to speak and if only a figure of eternal bliss open up to the Lord Jesus as the king of glory who is this king of glory and it was no other than the

[21 : 36] Lord Jesus Christ ascended after his resurrection 40 year days ministry in the wilderness and with his disciples and his final re-entry into heaven glorify thou me was his prayer in the 17th of John with the glory which I had with thee before the world was a glory that he had known what to ask was essentially but going back again to that place which he had occupied before as the home place of his glory which he laid aside now this star therefore is set the right hand of God the Father in eternal glory and not set there but out of purpose and this is the purpose of his being there to wield his scepter in other words other sheep

I have which are not of this fold them also I must bring to all this blessed work of salvation who can tell where it is going to be who can tell there will be the next poor guilty sinner to be cut down this child is set for the fall who can tell where grace is going to begin a fair work what child, what growing man what older person, who can tell no one, but with this we are perfectly certain that the Lord Jesus is accomplishing this great work and wielding his holy heavenly sector and power and this effectual call which Paul speaks of is the outcome of eternal predestination eternal foreknowledge whom he did foreknow then he also did predestinate whom he did predestinate them he also called and called them as I have just said to be saved and nothing left demur not in your heart if for your own demuric and unworthiness look not to yourself as this to be a veritable impossibility we've got all things upon them and no one less than a saint dressed in the merit of the Lord Jesus Christ will ever enter the portals of eternal bliss is set to range upon her over their parents yes night is place time

I'm quoting from the hymn 64 all appointed were by death yes this remarkable gospel of the grace of God is not a gospel of chance perhaps or maybe or if you are willing to be saved well then you can be it is far far different under a sector and it is the glory of the gospel to proclaim this cross of Christ Christ this scepter of Christ this reigning power of Christ that brings us sinners under the control and influence of the scepter of divine grace now this beautiful scepter reminds us of the one the heathen king had in the book of Esther it is nothing comparable with it of course we only look at it as something to fix our minds on but you know that the great law in that heathen monarchy was that no one was to go in under the king unless they were bidden and if they weren't bidden and they ventured in if the king did choose to hold out the golden scepter to them that was an indication they were welcome and this poor woman Esther on whose heart hung the whole responsibility of venturing in after the king she said

I will go in under the king and if I perish I perish and he held out to her we are told the golden scepter and this has been taken by the church of God as a very sweet example of the golden scepter of Christ held out to unworthy sinners perishing sinners sinners who've got a real case a real case one that makes them absolutely tense grit their teeth clenched their fists show every sign of utter determination to come before this mighty saviour Jesus Christ just as I am and bear their breast before him and venture to the mighty monarch on the throne there could not be a more suitable parallel in the scripture though of course it has no spiritual significance where it is in the book of Esther but nonetheless we are fully licensed to see these things in the light of history as we are a good many others so that we have the scepter of free and sovereign grace and sovereign grace now this is golden we creatures we have got no other currency that we can talk about but gold the Lord uses it it's ancient it's still what it ever was and we creatures are permitted to use such words as this as the golden scepter of God's free and sovereign grace oh why did Jesus show to me the glories of his life why was I ever made to hear his voice to believe in such a scepter as this and to be willing to come to him venture to him and hear what he would say oh this glorious scepter grows if I may put it thus more golden as we grow older it's got such a beauty about it that gold doesn't really describe it that the free and sovereign grace of God's everlasting love and mercy is the rejoicing here upon earth he will give grace this grace therefore is a venturing grace upon a free and sovereign grace of God calm not outwardly but inwardly this is where we need light to see this is where

Balaam though he spoke the truth knew not what he was saying though he was under the influence of this gracious power of God not of grace and he was just doing what he was bidden and yet this scepter was reigning over him but I say not of grace so that our lives will prove whether or not we are under this royal set and this is the exacting truth and if we are then we shall indeed be willing servants of Jesus Christ this glorious gospel is therefore one which leads us to submission we are not our own we are more to the pride it has a call which says come ye out from among them and be ye separate and touch not the unclean thing and I will receive it is the command the loving command of his people that they are not to be mixed with an ungodly world and see how close they can live to it without doing their souls eternal harm this scepter of the reigning monarch

[32 : 04] Christ Jesus is at the mercy seat or if you like the throne of grace these two remarkably interchangeable terms are so beautiful as to need no explanation but this is where Christ is and in both he rules he rules in mercy that grace of a plea of guilty sinners you'll never obtain mercy apart from begging for it after I mean God has dealt with it you'll have to cry to him for mercy and depend upon him to give it to you his scepter is a scepter not only of free grace but of mercy and sovereign mercy he says so I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy but the glory of mercy is undiminishing its luster is beautiful oh the sacred nature the rising again

I spoke of this morning let a little of this love and mercy flow into your heart you'll rise again you'll come out of the dust of self-abasement or wherever you were to lift your soul up out of your lowest day you will come forward to touch this great golden scepter he has risen therefore in these two respects but not only this but of his sovereign love this gilds the whole if we could turn and use this expression you can't very well gild something that's golden can but this is the crowning glory of this battle that it's an amazing love oh only known as it is felt how man uses it doesn't it how lightly talks about it what to misuse is made of God's words and promises but after all is said and done it is a sector of love he rules by love now

Paul gives us a really deep insight into this rule he says that we have fathers of our own who have corrected us and we gave them reverence though shall we not much rather be in subjection to the father of spirits and live live under and after that submission to correction what son is he whom the father chasteneth not what evidence has a son that his father loves him unless his father corrects him what proof can he bring forth by this mighty work of correction as I spoke last Sunday with regard to discipline God's decision of us if he doesn't correct us where shall we get to and if he corrects us he corrected us in justice he would cut us off when thou with rebukes dost correct man for illiquity says the psalmist thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth and some of us have known that and it's true you may yet have to go through it some of you some of you perhaps have been through it when your beauty that is your natural beauty your pride and all those things that are tended and they're consumed away like a moth you've got not much left the moth is very effective you know in its work isn't it all the damage of the silent moth and oh the work of the

Lord in the hearts of his people in correction but the mercy of it is that he does it whom the Lord loveth he chastened and correct every son whom he receiveth and if he be without this evidence therefore then are you based born and not so this is the testimony of a man who had to go under chastening and correct and knew what it was therefore look not upon those seen as this heavenly ruler brings into your life as being against you may and not only may but will undoubtedly prove for your good it is sovereign chastening as I said at the prayer meeting on Wednesday no temptation taken you but such as is common to man

God is faithful who will with the temptation make a way to escape that he may be able to bear it this is a solemn matter we should either turn against God if he left us alone and to these dispensations and go back and walk no more with him or on the other hand if he sanctifies our affliction we should cleave the closer to it be the more willing to pay the price of a servant there is a word that Paul had also yield yourselves servants to obey this gospel word gospel experience gospel grace comes from the golden sector of

[38 : 53] Jacob and Christ yield yourselves servants to obey is it easy are some of you fighting an inward battle is this the subject of the battle the point shall I say is this the battleground obedience yield yield take the standing cord in the field why is it that it's not beaten down by the strong wind because it yields looks like the waves of the sea as it yields for the wind but if it did not yield it would be broken so with this beautiful gospel spirit yield yield yourselves servants unto righteousness righteousness yield yourselves servants unto righteous guess this this is the point of the whole matter and here it is that the

Lord enables his people to wield the golden set and to bow before it and to come beneath his sacred influences but not only this there is a yielding at the end of the journey a yielding at the end of the journey as life's journey grows shorter the yielding and willingness to look back over the way the Lord has brought you and see whether you have learned anything because he has said that one of the great purposes of his dealings is that his people shall remember all the way that he has led and in looking back he has set certain marks that they may test themselves by and these marks are to humble you and to prove you now is this this is what we've got to measure ourselves by this is the yard step the measuring rod of the gospel and wherein is this true humility come then if it hasn't come in bowing to the scepter of Christ to his gospel to his plan and way of salvation to the atonement which is his to bring your all your nothingness to him and bow before him as a guilty unworthy sinner how is it that this scepter shall indeed reign in your life if it isn't here do with me a seem if they could the hymn says as they draw near their journey's end how precious is their heavenly prayer is their heavenly prayer and therefore saw this great scepter the only as he saw this star that God put these words into his mouth that he should declare we need to see the fulfillment of it though I expressed it very deeply the vast issues of the gospel are unawful all the same and the day as they ever have it

God hasn't changed his way or method of dealing he will lift up those who have bowed down he will gain the victory he will bring his people to humbly acknowledge his sovereign dealings with them and he will furthermore wear the crown of grace this glorious scene in Zechariah the top stone shall be brought forth with shouting to grace grace unto him and the psalmist he says the 73rd psalm that he will give grace and glory the two are bound together they can never be separated as much as it is often beyond the power of any earthly mind who believe it they cling to this that when flesh and heart fail

God is the strength of my heart and my portion for it oh Bala oh Bala I shall see him but not now oh how solemn that great revelation that he felt in his own forehead and yet God used it to declare the glorious truth of the setting of the sun or the star of Judah in the heavens and of the reign of Christ in the heart and the ultimate reign as we read in the 22nd of remaliah in heaven amen the homogeneous ■ e e ev me Sure