

Why hast thou made me thus? (Quality: Good)

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Preacher: Mercer, Seth (1930-2017)

- [0 : 00] Those of you that were with us this morning will remember that the subject then was the subject which was bound up in the life of Elijah and Elisha.
- And as the Lord would separate them to take Elijah to heaven, Elisha cries out, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof.
- Now this evening I feel exceedingly burdened regarding the Lord's will in connection with that which is to be spoken.
- And really I have two words upon my spirit and I just venture to name them to you.
- The first you will find in the book of Job, the second chapter, the tenth chapter and the second part of the second verse.
- [1 : 17] The book of Job chapter 10, the second part of the second verse. Show me wherefore thou contendest with me.
- Show me wherefore thou contendest with me. I also feel that I must read another word that is found in the epistle of Paul to the Romans, chapter 9, where we read this in verses 20 and 21.
- Romans chapter 9, verses 20 and 21. 1.
- The closing words in the 20th verse really have been following me during the past few days.
- Why hast thou made me thus? Now the Lord alone knowing the hearts of all that are here this evening.
- [3 : 05] But I feel persuaded of this. That there are those here who are feelingly found in that that we have read in the tenth chapter of the book of Job.
- And you have been saying in your heart before God in secret. You may have been speaking like this to loved ones or to someone.
- But this sums up the exercise of your soul. Show me wherefore thou contendest with me.
- And if this is indeed the case and I can only draw about a venture. I may never hear anything from anyone regarding this that I must seek to bring before you this evening.
- But I can leave that with my Lord. He knowing my heart. Knowing our hearts. And knowing where each one of us are as before him.
- [4 : 13] But surely if any of you are found in this. Show me. Lord show me. Wherefore thou contendest with me.
- There may be those here then who really feel that the Lord's hand has gone out against you. You're wondering where the scene will end.
- You're wondering what the Lord is doing with you. And I think of another word in the prophecy of Jeremiah where it says this.
- Man's goings are of the Lord. How then can a man understand his own way? And you may be there tonight. And in your life you may be saying.

Lord I just cannot understand what is going on in my life. You can feelingly join in with Daniel.

[5 : 14] When we read in the 12th chapter. And he dear man had almost come to the end of his life. And there were things in it he couldn't understand.

And what does he say in one verse? This may not be just as it's recorded. But the essence of it is this. He comes and he says.

Lord I cannot understand. I cannot understand. Oh my Lord. What shall the end of these things be?

Now you may be there tonight. You may be in the furnace of affliction. You may be in as it is recorded in this book of Job.

You may be in Job's ditch. And I hope to be able at least a little. To be able to show you from the word of God.

[6 : 13] Why the Lord did deal with his servant thus. Because I am so thankful. That there was a divine purpose in it.

And so I venture to say. It is with you. There is a divine purpose in all this. In your life. And the thing that is hid. He bringeth forth to light.

But I must seek to unite God's word in our meditation. Because in the ninth chapter of Romans.

We have read. And of course we cannot go into the context. Which really speaks regarding the doctrine of election.

God's sovereignty. In his electing love to sinners. But who is there. That truly fears God. Who is found in the narrow way.

[7 : 12] That leads to life eternal. Who does not come. From time to time. Into such a place as this. Why hast thou made me thus.

Why hast thou made me thus. How often we come here. And we say. Lord why is this. We hope presently. To close our service.

With that hymn of John Newton's. And oh it is in itself. An exposition of this subject. But the dear man comes to this in that hymn.

And if only it will just come to me again. As it did a moment ago. Lord why is this. Now do you understand what he was saying.

Lord why is this. I trembling cried. I will. I will. Wilt thou pursue thy womb to death. But what was the answer that the Lord gave to him.

[8 : 12] It is in this way the Lord replied. I answer prayer for grace. And faith. These inward trials. These outward trials.

I employ. From self and pride to set thee free. To break thy schemes of earthly joy. That thou mayest seek thy all.

In me. I feel. In one sense. There is no need for me. To add another word to this. And yet I need help. To deliver. The burden.

That is upon my soul. And so. The apostle then. In writing as he does. To the church at Rome.

He says. Why. Hast thou made me thus. But we do have an answer. In verse 21. Hath not the potter power.

[9 : 10] Over the clay. Of the same lump. To make one vessel unto honour. And another. Unto dishonour. Now.

What I so feel we need tonight. If only the Lord will grant it is this. Truth. Truth. Truth that is found in the prophecy of Jeremiah chapter 18.

And in that chapter we have this subject. That speaks to us. Regarding the potter. And the clay.

And this is what the Lord said to his servant on this occasion. The word which came to Jeremiah. From the Lord. Now this is just what we need this evening.

This is why we gather together for worship. We gather with the hope that we may receive words from God. That he might be pleased to speak to our soul.

[10 : 13] Through his word. And then the Lord said to his servant. Arise. And go down to the potter's house.

And there I will cause thee to hear my words. As though the Lord would say to you this very evening.

Go up to my house. And I will meet thee there. I will speak to thee there. And my house. Shall be called. The house of prayer.

For all people. And this is the means of grace. That God has given to us. I wonder if there are those here tonight.

That even since the service this morning. You've been on your knees. You may have felt perhaps a little like this.

[11 : 28] That you just cannot go on. Lord I cannot go on. We cannot go on. Unless Lord they are to speak to our souls. You may have come to a point today.

And you may have gone yet again upon your knees. Before you came to chapel this evening. And did the Lord favour you with a little sacred nearness to him?

Did you feel access at the throne of grace? Were you enabled to pour out your heart before him? Now you've come into the house of God with all this.

And so I just convey this thought to you. And we read this. That Jeremiah obeyed the Lord's voice. Then I went down to the potter's house.

And behold he wrought a work on the wheels. Now if we may then be enabled to link these two truths together. First of all to arise and go down to the potter's house.

[12 : 34] See I look upon the house of God here in one sense as the potter's house. And I just draw your attention to another truth as found in the prophecy of Ezekiel.

And there the prophet Ezekiel was favoured with a vision. Many visions. But he was favoured with one special vision on one occasion.

And that was this. A wheel within a wheel. A wheel within a wheel. And we would look at it like this.

God's sovereignty. In all his dealings with his people. And in one of our hymns.

I think number four. It says this. His providence unfolds the book. And makes his counsel shine. Each opening leaf.

[13 : 40] And every stroke fulfills some deep design. Now in the life of Job. There was this. There was the wheel. The divine providence.

And within the wheel. Another wheel. And the whole moving together according to the will of God.

Now just a little of why you are found where you are today in your life. Dear friend.

It is because. Your God is leading you. Guiding you. Keeping you. Blessing you. And it is all to this end.

That in his own time and way. He will prepare you. And fit you. And bring you at last to glory. Show me wherefore thou contendest with me.

[14 : 38] You see sometimes it was here with Job. He couldn't understand why. All the things that had happened. He had been given grace indeed to say the Lord gave.

And the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. He had been given grace to say. What shall we receive good? At the hand of the Lord.

And shall we not receive evil? Well. But then you see the Lord leads him into these deeper waters. Now there are in all this what we might speak of as answers.

And I hope the Lord will so help me now to bring this before you. That you may feel tonight to have an answer to your case.

Oh I hope you will go home with an answer from the Lord. Concerning your case. Your life. Your path. And that you may be favoured to go home.

[15 : 44] I trust. As it may be in a completely different frame of mind. And that you may go home. With the word of God.

I think of an occasion. And it happened over 20 years ago now. And this may find someone here tonight.

A dear man. Had come to the end in his feelings. The end of everything. And in his case he had come to the end in his feelings.

Regarding the house of God where he worshipped. Everything seemed to be against him. Now he left his home on that.

I believe it would have been a Monday evening. That doesn't really matter. But he left his home that evening. To come up to the house of God. Feeling that he just couldn't go on.

[16 : 43] He come absolutely to the end. And that evening the preacher had to venture with the last verse.

In the prophecy of Daniel. And it was this. But go thou thy way. Till the end be. And thou shalt rest.

And stand in thy lot. At the end of the day. Now the Lord revealed to that dear man that evening. That he couldn't run away.

That's how he felt. And sometimes people are brought into such spots and places. They feel like running away. And yet they are brought also to this.

Where shall I run? Where can I go? And friends wherever we may go in our life. We shall always take our poor sinful selves with us.

[17 : 41] And if you know anything of your poor fallen heart. You must agree that yourself. Myself. Is your biggest enemy. But what I was just going to say was this.

The dear man left his home. Feeling he'd come to the end. He couldn't go on. But you see. God's word was spoken to him that evening. God had appointed his way.

As God had appointed Job's way. And as God has appointed your way. And the Lord spoke to him. You see. He couldn't run away.

He couldn't go. Here or there. But go thou thy way. Till the end be. And thou shalt rest. And stand in thy lot. At the end of the days.

Now he went home like this. Feeling more closely knit. As it were to the house of God. Than he'd ever done before. Or he went home.

[18 : 40] A completely different person. And I can only hope. That it will be like that tonight. If there's someone here. That feels to be right at the end.

Of everything. And you say with Jacob. In his day. All these things are against me. You may be friendless.

You may feel to be completely alone. And yet if the Lord grants you a glimpse. Of his sufferings. And that that he walked in. You will then see.

That you are being led a little. Into the sufferings of Christ. That I may know him. And the power of his resurrection. And the fellowship of his sufferings.

And the Lord Jesus trod the winepress alone. And to the people there was none with him. Oh what a path.

[19 : 38] Your saviour walked in. His way which was much rougher and darker than mine. Did Christ my Lord suffer and shall I reply?

Show me wherefore thou contendest with me. Now first of all then.

I believe it is right to say. It is right to say. That Job. Had been. An exceedingly favoured man.

He had been. He had been exceedingly favoured. God had blessed him in providence.

We are told. And I am aware that I have spoken from this book. Quite recently. But we are told. That he was the greatest. Of all the men of the east.

[20 : 35] Think of it. Think of the honour. That God had placed upon him. He was the greatest. Of all the men of the east. And his possessions were very great.

All that he possessed. And if you read on in this book. You will see. How favoured he was. Just so that you might.

Go home. And read this. You read chapter 29 of this book. When you have the opportunity. And you will see there.

How favoured a man Job would be. And in the. And in one of the verses. We read.

The last verse. Of that 29th chapter. He says this. I. And sat chief. And dwelt. As a king.

[21 : 33] In the army. As one. That comforteth. The mourners. Oh how favoured Job had been. He had sat trees.

Exceedingly favoured. Exceedingly honoured. And yet. His God knew. That he couldn't live there. His God knew.

That he couldn't live there. And I am sure of this. That in God's dealings. With his people. It is still.

In the same. Way. In this. That. Our God. Knows this. That. Too much. Prosperity. And favour.

And blessing. Is not good. For any one of us. Now the Lord knows this. And I am thankful.

[22 : 32] And I am sure. There are those here tonight. That are thankful for this. Another word. As penned. By the spirit. Through the wisest man.

That ever lived. Solomon. And this is what he had to say. Who can make that straight. Which God hath made crooked. In the day of prosperity.

Be joyful. In the day of adversity. Consider. God also. Has set the one over against the other.

To the end that man. Shall find nothing after him. And dear friends. If I understand this. And I trust.

I do a little. I know this. That God. In his dealings. With his people. His servants. With pastors. With deacons. With church members.

- [23 : 27] With congregations. God. In his dealings. With his people. He works to this end. That he alone. Shall have the honour. And the glory.
- That's due to his holiness. And some of us. Here tonight. Understand this. God must have. All the honour.
- And the glory. For all. That he is pleased to do. And this is just. What he was. Pleased to do. With his servant. John. Show me.
- Wherefore. Thou contendest with me. So then. Job had been. Very favoured. God. And God.
- Had permitted. The devil. To go forth. From his very presence. To touch. Well nigh. Everything. That Job. Possessed. His possessions.
- [24 : 24] His family. And all. That that meant. And then. Again. The devil. Goes forth. From the presence. Of God. And is permitted.
- To touch. Job. With. Saw boils. From the sole. Of the foot. To the crown. Of the head. And what I would just.
- Desire. To convey. At this moment. Is this. In the first place. Job. Job. Was highly favoured. He had. Enjoyed. Days.
- Of wonderful. Prosperity. And wonderful. Blessing. The dear. Friends. God. Knew. That this. Just. Could not. Continue. Show me.
- Wherefore. Thou. Contendest. With me. Now. What then. Have we. By way of answer. To this. And in our reading.
- [25 : 23] We have read. Of Job. In a very. Low place. Low. I feel. In every sense. Of the word. And among other things.
- He speaks there. I believe it is. In the seventh chapter. That we read this. But. He speaks there. Concerning.
- His. Very. Nights. And his days. And he says. So. Am I made. To possess. Months. Of vanity. And. Wearisome.
- Nights. Are appointed. To me. Well. The Lord knows. Whether. May be those. Here tonight. Whom God. Has appointed.
- Some. Wearisome. Nights. Nights. And in this. You may have been saying. Show me. Wherefore.
- [26 : 19] Thou contendest. With me. Under. The dear man. He says this. When I lie down. I say. When shall I arise. And the night be gone.
- And I am full of tossings. To and fro. Until. Unto the dawning. Of the day. You see. Sometimes. The Lord brings. His dear people. Into this.
- And he lays. Affliction. Upon them. He brings them. Into the net. He lays. Affliction. Upon their loins. They know. What it is. Perhaps. To have. Wearisome.
- Nights. They know. What it is. To be tormented. Of the devil. And then again. In speaking. Of this.
- He says. Oh remember. That my life. Is wind. Mine eye. Shall. No more. See God. Now. Are any of you. There tonight.
- [27 : 16] Do you wonder. If you'll ever. See better days. Do you wonder. If the Lord. Will ever. Deliver you. From this. You may.
- In your feelings. Have come to the end. As I said. Earlier on. You may have felt. Even today. Lord. I cannot. Go on. I've come to the end.

And you see. The dear man. Was in such distress. That he says. Mine eye. Shall. No more. See God. This is just. How he felt.

Would. Things. Things would never. Be any different. Things would never. Be any better. And he felt. In his very soul. That he would just. Live and die. In such distress.

As this. And then. Presently. He says. This also. Therefore. I will not. Refrain my mouth. I will speak.

[28 : 14] In the anguish. Of my spirit. I will complain. In the bitterness. Of my soul. Am I a sea. Or a whale. That thou. Settest.

To watch over me. When I say. My bed. Shall comfort me. My couch. Shall ease. My complaint. Then thou. Scarest me. With dreams.

And terrifiest me. Through visions. So that my soul. Chooseth strangling. And death. Rather than life. It may well be.

There are those. And I'm sure it is. There are those. Here tonight. You cannot understand this. You will only understand it. If the Lord brings you into it.

But would we have thought. If you think of Job's days. Of prosperity. And let me convey this at once. The Lord restored them to him.

[29 : 11] The Lord brought him out. Into a wealthy place. The Lord favoured him again. The Lord gave him twice. As much as he had before. But oh friends. He had lessons to learn.

In the fire. He had lessons to learn. In the water. The deep waters. That cross life's pathway. But would we have thought.

That the dear man. Would ever come. Into such a low place. As this. So that my soul. Chooseth strangling. And death. Rather than life.

I am aware. That this is. What we might speak of. As the deeper waters. That cross life's pathway.

That the Lord knowing. And I believe there are those. Here tonight. And you may be there today. You may feel. In your very soul. That you cannot bear this.

[30 : 09] Any longer. And you may be where. Inijah was. And others. Job was here. Jonah came into this. And each one.

In different ways. Moses came to this. But each of those. Dear men. They knew what it was. To wish. That the Lord would. Take away their life. What did Elijah say?

Take away my life. I am not better. I am not better than my father. He felt. That he couldn't go on.

Job here. Feels the same. He says. So that my soul. Chooseth strangling and death. Rather than. Than my life. I loathe it.

I would not live all the way. Let me alone. For my days. Of vanity. So then. What a low place.

[31 : 08] He was in. He felt. That everything. Was against him. And again. I feel. I must just. Turn to the. Nineteenth chapter.

Of this same book. For a moment. And there. We read. Of this. He says. He hath fenced up. My way. That I cannot pass.

And he has set darkness. In my path. He has stripped me. Of my glory. And taken the crown. From my head. He hath destroyed me.

On every side. And I am gone. And mine hope. Hath he removed. Like a tree. He hath put my brethren. Far from me.

What a path. He walked in. Think of the Lord's. Dealings with him. While he was in the fire. In the furnace. He. And may we notice. How it is worded.

[32 : 03] He hath put my brethren. Far from me. And mine acquaintance. Are verily estranged from me. My kinsfolk have failed. And my familiar friends.

Have forgotten me. They that dwell in mine house. And my maids. Count me for a stranger. I am an alien in their sight.

I called my servant. And he gave me no answer. I entreated him. With my mouth. My breath. Is strange. To my wife.

Well. How close these things came. In the dear man's life. Show me wherefore. Thou contendest with me. What I desire to come to you.

Now is this. If the Lord should favour any of you. To have arisen. And come up to the potter's house. This evening. And if the Lord should show to you.

[33 : 05] This. At this very moment. That. You are in his hands. That the heavenly potter. Has you.

In his hands. And so he wrought a work. On the wheels. Divine providence. Intermingled with the divine purposes of God.

And the whole thing. Working together for good. To them that love God. To them who are the called. According to his purpose. Jesus. What then is the answer.

To such truths as this. Well the answer. Or one of them is. That Job must go into the fire. Friends.

I just think for a moment. As it has come into my thoughts. Regarding the Lord Jesus. And this may be a word for someone.

[34 : 03] After Jesus was baptized. He came up out of the water. And lo the heavens were opened unto him.

And the spirit of God descending. In the form of a dove. Lighted on him. And the voice from heaven. Saying this is my beloved son.

In whom I am well pleased. But where do we find. The Lord. Of the following chapter. He was led into the wilderness.

To be tempted of the devil. Well think of it. I would not discourage anyone here tonight. In this. But oh how often.

In the Lord's dealings. With his dear people. He brings them. To himself. He blesses them in their souls. He fills their hearts with love.

[35 : 03] They know what it is then. To follow him. And to put on Christ. By an open profession. But oh how soon. Not in every case. But.

I believe everyone will know. Something of this. But some more than others. They are led by the spirit. Into the wilderness. To be tempted of the devil. And let me remind you.

That God permitted the devil. To come into Job's life. And he may have permitted the devil. To come into your life. Perhaps your nest has been stirred up.

Perhaps you felt. Again. There is another word. That perhaps the Lord may use here. But let me just remind you. Of the words of the Lord Jesus.

To his beloved Peter. He says. Simon. Simon. Satan hath desired to have you. To have thee. That he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee.

[36 : 06] That thy faith fail not. And when thou art converted. Strengthen thy brethren. And that means this Peter. When I restore you. Strengthen thy brethren.

That there may be those here. And of course. It's the same truth really. Do you feel to be in Satan's sieve? If we think of a sieve.

And some of you may not understand this. But in the. Of course. It would be different today. But in the threshing machines. That were used in the past.

The corn would be put in. The top end. Still on the sheaves. And then it would go. Through what was spoken of.

As a drum. And the corn would be threshed out. And then it would go down. Further into the machine. And there would be these great sieves.

[37 : 05] And they would go to and fro. And the purpose was this. The chaff. Was separated in this way. From the grain. Now dear friends. Job was in Satan's sieve.

Peter had to go into Satan's sieve. But oh what is the answer? The answer. I feel. Is so beautifully contained.

In hymn 993. Then trust me. And fear not. Thy life is secure.

Let me remind you. That in all this. God is saying. As he said to his servant Job. But save his life. Your life is hid with Christ.

In God. And when he who is your life. Shall appear. Then shall ye also appear. With him in glory. But this that you're in. You're in Satan's sieve.

[38 : 04] And yet. This is the object and end. Then trust me. And fear not. Thy life is secure. My wisdom is perfect.

Supreme is my power. In love. I correct thee. Thy soul to refine. To make thee at length.

In my likeness. To shine. Now. This was the Lord's object. In all that he did with Job. And in all that he does.

With his dear people. It's a refining process. Dear friends. It's to separate the dross. From the pure metal. It's to rid you.

Of all the rubbish. And all the dross. And all the tin. That is in your poor heart. By nature. Can you begin then. To understand.

[39 : 00] Why the Lord is dealing with you. As he is. Show me wherefore. Thou contendest with me. And I must come a little closer. As I.

Near the end of the. Service this evening. Two particular truths. That Job learned.

He learned many truths. He learned much. But two. Two. Two. Special truths. That Job. Learned in the furnace. The first one was this.

And I wonder how many of us. Have been brought. To feelingly say this. Before our God in secret. Then Job. Answered the Lord.

And said. Behold. I am. I am. I am. Vile. I wonder how many of us. Have had to say that. Before our God.

[39 : 57] As he has revealed to us. Something of the dumb. And the dross. That is found in our poor sinful heart. And you said. Feeling me said.

Behold. I am vile. You must acknowledge it. And if there was the need for it. You would acknowledge it. To those near and dear to you. You would acknowledge it.

To others. But you have acknowledged it. Before God. And this is one of the lessons. That Job had to learn. And friends. He could not have learned it.

In prosperity. He could not have learned it. If God had not brought him. Into the ditch. And into the fire. To burn up the dross.

And God knew that it was needed. Another thing. That Job learned so feelingly. In the fire. Was this. And this.

[40 : 53] Just before the Lord. Brought him out. Into a wealthy place. It is in the last chapter. Of this book. And I just read it to you.

And this. Just before the Lord. Delivered him. And that there may be. Someone here tonight. I hope. In that sense. There is. Whom the Lord will deliver. This is what Job.

Answered the Lord. And said. I know. That thou canst do everything. And that no thought. Can be withholden. From thee. Who is he.

That hideth counsel. Without knowledge. Therefore. Have I uttered. That I understood not. Things too wonderful for me.

Which I knew not. Here I beseech thee. And I will speak. I will demand of thee. And declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee.

[41 : 51] By the hearing of the ear. But now. And what a now this is. But now. Mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore.

I abhor myself. And repent. In dust. And ashes. Now. In those two truths.

I've mentioned. There are answers. To this word. That I have ventured with. This evening. Wherefore. Show me wherefore.

Thou contendest with me. So dear friend. It is not to destroy you. It is not that the Lord has forsaken you.

But he has put you in the fire. Whatever it is. To burn up the drast. To bring you away from everything. And to bring you alone to himself.

[42 : 49] And to favour you yet again. To sit at his dear feet. And to hear his voice. Yes. Well I hope. Enough has been said. To show you this.

That God brought Job. Out of the fire. But it was not until the Lord's appointed time. And I leave you with this.

The vision. Is for an appointed time. In the end. It shall speak. And not lie.

Though it tarry. Wait for it. Amen. Amen. May we help to conclude with hymn 295.

I asked the Lord. That I might grow. In faith. And love. And every grace. Might more of his salvation know.

[44 : 05] And to seek. More earnestly. His face. Hymn 295. Hymn 295. Hymn 295. Hymn 295. Hymn 295.

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