

Sovereignty of God

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen's sermon emphasizes the total sovereignty of God and how He orchestrates events in our lives for His divine purpose, as illustrated through the story of Joseph.

Scripture: Genesis 50:20, Psalm 37:23, Proverbs 16:9, Romans 8:28, James 4:7

Topics: "Gods Sovereignty", "Trust In God"

Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes the total sovereignty of God over all people and circumstances, showcasing how God orchestrates events in miraculous ways to fulfill His purposes, even in the face of evil intentions. Through the story of Joseph, it is revealed how God turned the tables on Satan's attacks, using every situation and individual - whether good or evil - to ultimately bring about His divine plan for our lives. Poonen highlights the importance of trusting in God's sovereignty, even when faced with jealousy, false accusations, broken promises, or unjust circumstances, as God can work all things together for our good if we yield to His will.

Transcript

The total sovereignty of God over all people and circumstances, is a matter concerning which many believers remain in doubt. They may give lip-acknowledgement to it, but they don't believe it "works" in the situations of daily life. Yet the Scriptures are full of examples of how God worked sovereignly on behalf of His people - and often in the most unlikely ways.

Many of us are familiar with the obviously miraculous ways in which God worked on behalf of His people - such as the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt etc. But we have often missed seeing the greater miracles by which God turned the tables on Satan when Satan attacked God's people.

The case of Joseph is a classic. God had a plan for that eleventh son of Jacob to make him the second ruler in Egypt by the time he was thirty.

Joseph was a God-fearing lad and therefore he was hated by Satan. And so Satan instigated his elder brothers to get rid of him. But God ensured that they didn't take Joseph's life. They managed, however, to sell him off to some Ishmaelite traders. But where do you think those traders took Joseph? To Egypt, of course! That was the fulfilment of Step One in God's plan!

In Egypt, Joseph was bought by Potiphar. This too was arranged by God. Potiphar's wife was an evil woman. Taking a fancy to Joseph, she tried to entice him again and again. Finally when she found that she could not succeed, she accused Joseph falsely and had him cast in jail. But who do you think Joseph met in the jail? Pharaoh's cupbearer! God had arranged for Pharaoh's cupbearer also to be jailed at the same time so that Joseph could meet him. That was Step Two in God's plan.

God's third step was to allow Pharaoh's cupbearer to forget about Joseph for two years.

"Yet the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot him. It happened at the end of two full years that Pharaoh had a dream.... Then the chief cupbearer spoke to Pharaoh...(Gen.40:23; 41:1,9).

That was the time, according to God's time-table, for Joseph to be released from prison.

Psalms 105:19, 20 says, "Until the time that His word came to pass, the word of the Lord tested him. Then the king sent and released him and set him free."

Joseph was now 30 years old. God's time had come. And so God gave Pharaoh a dream. And God reminded the cupbearer also of Joseph as the interpreter of his dream. Thus Joseph came before Pharaoh and became the second ruler in Egypt. God's timing of events in Joseph's life couldn't have been more perfect!

We would never have thought of arranging things the way God did. If we had the power to plan Joseph's life, we would probably have prevented people from doing him any harm. But the way God did it was better.

It's a far greater miracle when the evil that people do to us is turned to fulfil God's purposes for us! God takes great delight in turning the tables on Satan, so that all things work together for the good of His elect.

Let's apply these events to our circumstances.

What should our attitude be to evil men, to brothers who are jealous of us, to women who accuse us falsely, to friends who promise to help us but forget, or to being thrown into jail unjustly?

Do we believe that God is sovereign enough to use all these people and everything they do - whether done deliberately or accidentally - to work together for the fulfilment of His purpose for our lives? If He did that for Joseph, won't He do it for us too? He certainly can and He will.

But I'll tell you who could have messed up God's plan for Joseph's life. Only one person - and that was Joseph himself. If he had yielded to Potiphar's wife's enticements, he would certainly have been set aside by God.

There is only one person in the universe who can spoil and frustrate God's plan for your life - and that is you yourself. No one else can do it. Not your friends and not your enemies. Not angels and not Satan. Only you. Once we see this, it will liberate us from a great many of our fears and from wrong attitudes towards those who harm us.

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