

Greetings:

The study that Pastor Pat brings on Sunday mornings is a reflection of the study for that week. It represents a lot of research. Not all of what he has prepared is communicated. In an attempt to continue the learning process, he is making available his study notes to the congregation.

These notes are edited, but not “book” ready. To the critical eye, mistakes can possibly be found. Therefore, he asks that you take the material with humility, teach-ability, and charity.

Enjoy and if you should have any questions or corrections, please do not hesitate to email him at [pastorpat@waukeshabible.org](mailto:pastorpat@waukeshabible.org).

**Date:** October 20, 2019

**Sermon Title:** “Whatever The LORD Pleases, He Does”

Sermon Series: One Story

Text: Psalm 135; Matt. 7:24-27

Author: Patrick J. Griffiths ©2019



## ONE STORY | ONE SAVIOR

God may do what He wants with what is His and when He does it, it is always right.

# “Whatever The LORD Pleases, He Does”

## Psalm 135; Matt. 7:24-27

### The Wise and Foolish Builders

#### Them / Then

- If you build your house on the sand, it will collapse in the storm.
- If you build your house on the rock, it will stand in the storm.

This “parable” deals primarily with accepting Jesus or rejecting Jesus. Nonetheless, we could also apply it to our worldview. Are we seeing it through God’s vantage point or are we seeing it through humanity’s?

#### THE STORY OF THE THREE LITTLE PIGS

**The Three Little Pigs** is a fable about three pigs who build three houses of different materials. A Big Bad Wolf blows down the first two pigs' houses, made of straw and sticks respectively, but is unable to destroy the third pig's house, made of bricks.

I can assure you, the wolves are already descending on you. They are poised to destroy your sense of security and rob you of joy and hope. If you do not build your life on the certainty of God’s wisdom and kindness, your failure in the day of testing might be catastrophic.

This Psalm calls us to PRAISE YHWH. Two reasons are given. First, God is good and second, God is great. Let us consider this Psalm and why we need to build our house on the rock.

#### THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT:

- **Literary Context** (preceding and following paragraphs):

“This Psalm has no title. It is mainly made up of selections from other Scriptures. It has been called a mosaic, and compared to a [mosaic] pavement.”<sup>1</sup>

“Beginning with Psalm 113, the book of Psalms seems to follow a structure almost like an early prayer book. Psalms 135-136 are connected to one another. Halachic authorities differ about the precise definition of ‘The Great Hallel’ some include only Psalm 136, others include Psalm 135 and even Psalm 134.”<sup>2</sup>

- **Historical Context** (what is happening to the nation and to the prophet):

“This is one of the Hallelujah-psalms; that is the title of it, and that is the Amen of it, both its Alpha and its Omega.”<sup>3</sup>

“Hallel includes five major themes:

1. The Exodus from Egypt
2. The splitting of the Red Sea
3. The giving of the
4. The [resurrection] of the dead
5. The difficulties preceding the Messianic Age

In other words, Hallel deals with all of Jewish history from the birth of our nation to the establishment of the Messianic Era. In Hallel we express our joy at past miracles and our faith in future miracles.”<sup>4</sup>

“There is a connection between Psalms 134, 135, and 136. These three Psalms all begin with the instruction to **praise God**. But each Psalm uses a **different** word for ‘praise’.

Sometimes people have called Psalms 120 to 136 by the title ‘the great Hallel’. The word ‘Hallel’ means ‘praise’; these 17 Psalms together form a great song to praise God. (However, note that ‘the great Hallel’ is not the same as ‘the Hallel’. ‘The Hallel’ is a name that people give to another series of Psalms: Psalms 113 to 118. ‘The Hallel’ is especially well-known because the \*Jewish people sing it during their sacred holiday called the Passover. After ‘the Hallel’, they sing Psalm 136, the last song in ‘the great Hallel’.)

Here is a possible explanation of the connection between Psalms 135 and 136, and the Songs of Ascent:

(1) The Songs of Ascent describe how people came to the temple (God’s house) to \*worship God there. It ends with Psalm 134, when the people have reached the temple. So in **Psalm 134**, the people encourage the priests **to praise God**.

(2) In **Psalm 135**, the priests agree that this is the right thing to do (Psalm 135:1-4). So they do it; they praise God. First, they praise him because he created everything (Psalm 135:5-7). Then they praise him because he rescued his people (Psalm 135:8-14). And then they praise him because he is the only real God (Psalm 135:13-18). At the end, **the priests encourage all God’s people to praise God** too (Psalm 135:19-21). It is not only for the priests to praise God. The families of Levi, who helped the priests, should praise God. In fact, everyone in Israel should praise God. And everyone who respects God should praise him.

(3) After this, **everyone present begins to praise God**. They use the words of **Psalm 136**. The priests carry out their special duty to lead the people in their \*worship. They taught the people to serve God, and to praise him, as in Nehemiah 8:6. So perhaps the priests sang the beginning of each verse in Psalm 136. And then all the people would reply together with the words, ‘His (God’s) love never ends!’ Or perhaps different groups of priests sang this Psalm; 1 Chronicles 16:41 may refer to this.

And the priests and the people would join to praise God.”<sup>5</sup>



## **THE STRUCTURE:**

A classic example of the hymn of praise, this psalm contains the three key elements: a call to praise (verses 1-3), a cause for praise (verses 4-18), and a conclusion (verses 19-21). The reasons cited in the cause for praise are instructive in the elements of Israel's theology.

### I. The Call to PRAISE God ([Prologue] vv. 1-3)

Four times in the first three verses we are invited to praise Him and once to sing praises to Him. To praise Him is to extol Him because of His person and His work. The causes for this outburst are found in verses 4-18.

The parallel idea is found in verses 19-21. Where the Psalmist concludes with PRAISE THE LORD. It is in praising God that we are blessing God. Four times in three verses the Psalmist uses BARAK, "To bless."

### II. The Causes for PRAISING God (vv. 4-18)

Why should we praise Him? Two qualities are noted.

#### A. For the LORD is good; (v. 3)

Derek Kidner pointed out that, "Every verse in this Psalm either echoes, quotes or is quoted in some other part of Scripture."

How is He good? Two things are noted.

1. For His name is pleasant | beautiful (v. 3)
2. For He has chosen Jacob for Himself (v. 4)

#### B. For the LORD is great (vv. 5-18)

"God never becomes the victim of circumstance. He is never forced into a situation where he must do something in which he cannot rejoice. He is not mocked. He is not trapped or cornered or coerced."<sup>6</sup>

How is He great? Four things are noted.

1. He directs Creation (vv. 5-7)
  - a. He makes [ESV] | He causes [NASB]
  - b. He makes [ESV] | He makes [NASB]
  - c. He brings forth [ESV] | He brings forth [NASB]

All of creation is but a tool in His bag, a machine in His shop, a gadget in His kitchen and a piece of furniture in His house. He does what He wants with what is His to bring about His purpose, His Vision, and His mission. And when He does it, it is always right.

2. He destroys Nations (vv. 8-11)

Two events are cited.

- a. The Exodus from Egypt
- b. The Conquering of the Promised Land

Nations are not destroyed arbitrarily or at the whim of a capricious God. Isaiah the prophet tells us that Nations are a drops of water in a bucket. Their power is next to nothing when compared to God. The rise and fall of power is dispensed by the God who is too wise to make a mistake and too loving to be unkind.

All of this hoopla we have in our own country with talk of impeachment and England with Brexit and Turkey invading Syria are but drips of water and are a part of something much larger because God moves nations as we might set a table for a Christmas Dinner.

Who are you going to trust?

3. He delivers His people (vv. 13, 14)

Throughout this Psalm there is various forms of parallelism. Here, we see Synthetic Parallelism - the second line (or following lines) adds to the first.

4. He deflates false gods (vv. 15-18)

**What can become a false god?**

- Your **health** can become a false god.
- Your **savings** can become a false god.
- Your **children, grandchildren, or spouse** can become a false god.
- Your **retirement** can become a false god.
- Your **employment** can become a false god.
- Your **house** can become a false god.
- Your **sense of well-being or emotional stability** can become a false god.

Anything that you and I place our confidence in, other than or equal to or above God is a false god. And listen to how verse 18 describes the outcome of such misguided trust.

<sup>18</sup> Those who make them become like them, so do all who trust in them.

Every one of the areas noted are gifts or blessings from God. You deserve none of it. God gives you good things because HE IS GOOD and HE IS GREAT. He invites us to enjoy this shadow as something that is always pointing us to Him, none of it, however, can replace Him.

Why does God sometimes do the difficult thing that makes no sense to us in this horizontal life?

- Why does our health fail? Why can't we for one moment be pain free?
- Why do those we love die too soon or unexpectedly?
- Why do things happen that wipe out all of our savings?
- Why do we struggle in our relationships with our **children, grandchildren, or spouse?**
- Why does **retirement** seem impossible or at best a myth?
- Why do we lose our jobs?
- Why can't we find or keep our **houses?**
- Why are we so anxious and unstable?
- Why do nations rage?

We might offer reasons as to why, but most, if not all reasoning is vain and empty. Why do these things happen? I do not know and neither do you. But I do know that YHWH IS GOOD and I know that YHWH IS GREAT and that He is too wise to make a mistake and too loving to be unkind.

Notice how this Psalm ends.

### III. The Call to BLESS God ([Epilogue] vv. 19-21)

It is in the PRAISING OF GOD that He is BLESSED. We bless God by acknowledging who He is, what He has done, and our trust in Him. At the end of our days, when everything appears to have fallen apart as we encounter the winds of adversity, it is as we sit on that rock that we will find our rest, our hope, and our happiness. Friends, YHWH IS GOOD and we know that YHWH IS GREAT and that He is too wise to make a mistake and too loving to be unkind.

## **THE EMPHASIS:**

Because "God is too Wise to make a Mistake and too loving to be Unkind," we praise His name even when we do not understand Him.

## **Gospel**

[If applicable, how does this New Testament use this passage?]

## **BIG PICTURE** (Are any or all of the following concepts present? How so?)

- **Land – Garden**

God alone will deliver us by destroying our last enemy and He will bring us into His promise land where we will be with Him for our joy.

- **Seed – JESUS**



Jesus is God's Rock.

- **Blessing – Global**

It is only as we see Him as a GOOD GOD and a GREAT GOD that we will trust Him to be too wise to make a mistake and too loving to be unkind. He is our anchor, our foundation, and our hope.

## Us / Now

### VISUALS:

1. Pigs in a blanket

### APPLICATION (US/NOW):

I do not know what you are experiencing or going through. I only know that your only rest, hope, and happiness is found in God. Will you trust Him to do for you what you cannot do for yourself? Will you believe that although you do not know why, He is too wise to make a mistake and too loving to be unkind?

- Joseph (Gen. 50:15-21)
- Job (Job 1:20-22; 2:10)
- The Fiery Furnace w/ Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (Dan. 3:16-18)
- Jesus (Isa. 53:10, 11)
- The Philippian Jail Incident (Acts 16:23-25)
- Paul in Romans 8 (Rom. 8:28)

God is above blame. No one is capable of charging Him with wrong doing. If you believe God is above creation, nations, and false gods, then you can only have one conclusion.

His people must trust Him even when they do not understand Him.

“The most important thing to remember about faith is that it derives all its strength from its object, that on which it rests. **As a famous preacher once said, “It is not your hold on Christ that saves you; it is Christ. It is not your joy in Christ that saves you; it is Christ. It is not even your faith in Christ that saves you, though that be the instrument. It is Christ’s blood and merit.”** There might indeed be many instances where our trusting faith is shaky, but the Savior and his promises are rock solid. With this subject of faith, it’s most important to hear him speak with exclamation points, “I love you! I have saved you! I will never let you go!””<sup>7</sup>

**RESOURCES:** (Articles or links that you found helpful)



---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.christianity.com/bible/commentary.php?com=spur&b=19&c=135>

<sup>2</sup> <http://learn.conservativeyeshiva.org/psalms-of-pesukei-dezimra-of-shabbat-5-psalm-135-study-sheet/>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/mhc/Psa/Psa\\_135.cfm](https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/mhc/Psa/Psa_135.cfm)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/hallel/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.usefulbible.com/songs-of-ascent/psalms-songs-ascent.htm>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/psalm-135-and-the-pleasure-of-god-in-all-he-does>

<sup>7</sup> From a friend's personal email.

