

V.O.C. July 2017  
Rev. W. denHollander

### July 30, 2017: God in His Plan of Salvation

Dear Listeners,

You hear people say it, or sigh in resignation sometimes, "Oh well, it'll go the way it goes anyway. What can you do?" All things go the way they do, isn't it? This is how we often are standing in the midst of this world, or experience the course of events: *it goes the way it goes*. Who can change it? Who can control the course of his life? Who can change the world, or the misery in the world? *Whatever will be, will be!* Indeed, that how fatalistically people have reasoned, and therefore adopted an attitude of: let's eat and drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die!

Is this *how it is*, dear listeners? Is this *how it works* with God too? He created all things and then let it run its course? Does He watch things the way they happen and does He let things happen without interfering? Does God *concern* Himself with this world? Does God *concern* Himself with *your* life? Does He have something to do with your illness, your handicap, or with the operation of your son? Does He know about the death of your loved one, or did your mother just die because she was old? Does God know about suicide bombers, terrorist attacks, or assisted suicide legislation and euthanasia? It goes as it goes and God is watching from a distance? Would *such* a God be God?

Indeed, dear listener, *such a God doesn't exist*; if such were the case and everything goes according to the law of cause and effect, God would *not* be God. We know that this is not how it is, as we have seen these past few weeks in the messages of the "Voice of the Church." *We know God*, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the God who created all things and who still upholds and governs all things! He is the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth, who spoke and it came to be; who commanded and it stood firm [Ps. 33:9]. By His Almighty power He is also everywhere present and He is personally involved with everything that happens! Yes, also after the fall into sin, also in this broken world, and in the reality of sins and misery, *He is in control* and He *governs* all things as by His fatherly hand. Indeed, He is involved with *you* and me, reaching out to *you* and me with His Word of power, His Word of comfort, and His Word of promise!

After He had created all things, dear listener, God did *not* abandon the world or give all things up for fortune and chance, but He so rules and governs them that in this world *nothing* happens without His direction. Then it is remarkable that the Bible expresses this intimate involvement in the way of saying that all things come by His fatherly *hand*, and that all creatures are completely in His *hand*. The prophet Isaiah, for instance, speaks that way when he prophesies that "the LORD stretched out the heavens with His own *hand*. He made *us* with His *hands*. He led King Cyrus by His *hand*, etc. And, as we have seen previously in Isaiah's prophecy, this is the *hand* of the heavenly Father! He governs all things according to His will, and doesn't let them happen by chance! What does that mean? Well, all things that happen do so *according to His plan*, and under His direction. *Chance*, on the other hand, means that no one is involved with

it, no one who has a purpose or intention with it. *Chance* is something senseless and useless; or as people can say so flippantly, 'that's how the cookie crumbles, or that's how the dice has rolled.'

No, dear listener, it's *not* that way! There is someone who is in control; there is someone who has a plan, a purpose: it's God, the *living* God, who is *present* in everything with His almighty power! He is *present* in the common things, the grass, the leaves, the rain and the snow; He is *present* in the laws of gravity and the change of season; He is *present* in your life, in your condition, in your plans, etc. Yes, also in all the things that happen in the world, He is *present* with His will and direction, and He *governs* the peoples and rulers! In it all, He is present with His plan; He is on His way to His *goal* with this world! Does He have a plan with this world? Yes, He does, as we learn from His Word, and He gives rulers and removes leaders; He gives freedom and takes away liberties; He works faith and He preserves in faith, come what may!

The whole Bible, dear listener, is the book of God's providence, as it were, from which we learn to see His care, His protection, His plans, and His purposes, as well as the love with which He works it all out! You can see that in His gift of *Jesus Christ*, in the way of His life, His suffering and death, yes in His plan with the church in this world and with mankind! He wants to make this world *new* completely, remove all its misery, and He won't give it prey to death and decay. He wants to bring His creation, this world, and mankind to its *destination* after all! He wants to come to His glory, receive His honour, and show His greatness and glory. Indeed, He wants to accomplish all that *through Jesus Christ*, and *through His work of salvation*, via cross and resurrection: because He loves this world so much! And He wants *people* to share in this work, share in this restoration and perfection; you, too, whom He is *seeking* in His love, and whom He is *calling* to faith in Jesus Christ so as to live for God!

The Word of God is filled with evidence and examples, dear listeners, that show us that God has everything to do with this world. He is in the seasons, in the events, in the developments. His power is in the weather stories, in the news casts, and in the whimsical policies and strategies of the leaders and rulers. He is involved in the lives that enjoy *prosperity* and in the situations of *adversity*. He is in them as the Almighty God and also as the faithful Father, who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, for we owe it to Him, the Saviour, to *His* atoning sacrifice, that He pursues His *plans* with this world and that He opens His heart to *you* and me! Then you'll see developments that you can't understand, twists and turns that you can't comprehend, and situations that you cannot handle; yet, you may *believe* that He is in control and that *you* are in His sight while He is *addressing* you, *calling* you, and *showing* you the only way of salvation! Yes, for the plan and *purpose* with this world is for your and my salvation, and all things in the world and in your life work together to *that end*!

God, the Creator, dear listeners, the eternal Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, wants us to *trust* Him. 'Paradise Restored' hasn't come yet. In fact, there is more in this world that might give the impression of *regression* than of *progression* toward that point. Yet, the work of Jesus Christ is *proof* that the world is on its way to the *new* heaven and the *new* earth! With a view to the *future*, also, we may *trust* that God the Father will give all

things with Him on our way to this destination! No, dear listener, God is *not* dead at all, *nor* absent, and *not* in retreat either! Let's not be confused by those theologians who allege that God can't help the misery in the life of His people, or by scientists who pose that everything is just a matter of cause and effect, or by the masses which don't *need* God and claim that they're better off without Him.

Don't go by what meets the *eye*, dear listeners, but rather, be guided, encouraged, and comforted by the Word of God! He is the living God, who holds the whole world in His hand and who has a Word for the world and a plan with His world! It's this *word* for the world that is coming to you through "The Voice of the Church;" yes, it is this Word that is proclaimed to you in the church to which we call you in order that a true faith may be *worked* in you, a faith also that will be *strengthened* every time you come to worship God and hear this proclamation of the gospel in all its fullness! Thank you so much for listening!