

A God Problem

Exodus 2:1-3:14

Online Sermon:

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Life is a journey that must be traveled, regardless of the condition of the roads. While a fortunate few may seem to glide through life with ease, most people encounter formidable challenges—whether they be incurable diseases, insurmountable



foes, or overwhelming financial difficulties—that can leave them feeling hopeless. In the face of such trials, it is natural to question how anyone, like the Apostle Paul, could claim to be hard-pressed on every side yet not crushed, perplexed yet not driven to despair, persecuted yet not abandoned, and struck down yet not destroyed. This sermon will explore how, in the face of "God

problems"—situations without human solutions—the key to experiencing safety, security, and peace that transcends all understanding lies in faith in the risen Savior. Before delving

¹ R. Alan Cole, *Exodus: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 2, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1973), 123.

into this conclusion, let's examine a few examples of "God problems" that the Israelites encountered in the Old Testament.

Children of Israel by the Red Sea

After enduring over 400 years of slavery in Egypt, the children of Israel were finally liberated from their bondage,



fulfilling the prophecy given to Abraham in Genesis 15:13. They had witnessed the mighty hand of God unleash ten devastating plagues upon Pharaoh and his people (Exodus 7-12) and departed with the wealth of Egypt bestowed upon them by a nation eager to see them go (Exodus 12:36). However, their joyous celebration was short-lived as God led them not through the heavily guarded Philistine territory,¹ but instead along the desert road

toward the Red Sea (Exodus 13:17-18). Encamped near Pi Hahiroth between Migdol and the sea (Exodus 14:3), they were filled with terror upon seeing Pharaoh approaching with 600 of his best chariots and his entire army (Exodus 14:10). Trapped

between the sea and the desert with no apparent escape, they cried out to Moses, 'Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die?' (Exodus 14:11). In this moment of despair, they faced an impossible situation that only divine intervention could resolve. They had a God-sized problem with no human solution!

The Promised Land

This was not the only time Israel would face insurmountable odds. Imagine the excitement among the people when they heard that the Lord had commanded Moses to send



one representative from each tribe to explore the “land flowing with milk and honey” promised at the burning bush in Exodus 3:8 (Numbers 13:1-16).

Moses instructed the spies to answer critical questions: Were the people in the land strong or weak? Was the land good or bad? Were the towns unwallled or fortified? Was the soil fertile or

poor, and were there trees or not (Numbers 13:17-20)? After 40 days of thorough investigation, they returned with a mix of good and bad news. They affirmed that the land was indeed filled with milk and honey, bringing back a branch bearing a cluster of grapes so large it took two men to carry it (Numbers 13:23-24). But the bad news was daunting: the people there were powerful, the cities were fortified and very large, and they even saw the descendants of Anak, who were strong and tall (Deuteronomy 9:2, Numbers 13:28).² Ten of the spies concluded, “We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them” (Numbers 13:33). Faced with a grim choice—continuing to die in the wilderness, attacking the Canaanites and dying by the sword, or returning to Egypt as slaves—they confronted an impossible situation that only divine intervention could resolve. Once again, they had a God-sized problem with no human solution.

Babylonian Captivity

How does one respond to the prophet Jeremiah’s cry: “This is what the Lord says: Look! I am preparing a disaster for you and devising a plan against you. So, turn from your evil ways, each one of you, and reform your ways and actions” (Jeremiah 18:11)? One would think that after hearing such a

² Eugene H. Merrill, “Numbers,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 231.

warning from the same God who brought the Ten Plagues upon Egypt to "bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt" (Exodus 12:12), Israel would have repented in dust and ashes, as Job did (Job 42:6). Yet, instead of heeding the call to repentance, they chose to "continue with their own plans" and "follow the stubbornness of their evil hearts" (Jeremiah 18:12), thereby



inviting God's righteous wrath upon themselves. In 586 BCE, Jerusalem was destroyed, and most of

the population was deported to Babylon.³ Removed from the land God had promised them, they now lived as exiles, unable to rise against their captors. For seventy years (Jeremiah 25:11-12), they endured the loss of their Temple, the center of their worship and cultural identity, while facing immense pressure to assimilate into a foreign culture with its idols. The task of remaining faithful to the God who had disciplined them seemed impossible, and with no hope of immediate deliverance, they found themselves once again confronting a God-sized problem with no human solution.

³ Jean-Claude Margueron, "[Babylon \(Place\)](#)," ed. David Noel Freedman, trans. Paul Sager, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 563.

Modern Day God Problems

Much like the children of Israel, many of us encounter problems in life that require God's intervention. When a roof leaks, causing thousands of dollars in damage and requiring a \$10,000 replacement while one's credit cards are maxed out and the bank account is empty, it becomes a God problem that



transcends human solutions. When waves of sadness and hopelessness crash down, eroding all happiness and peace despite

exhaustive medical treatments, it becomes a God problem. When the overwhelming urge to numb pain through destructive behaviors leads to further guilt, shame, and isolation, it represents a God. Similarly, when a family member is diagnosed with a terminal illness, it is a God problem for it lacks a human solution. If anxiety about potential future events overwhelms one's sense of hope and steals their peace, it becomes a deep-seated concern that feels beyond reach. And when one is entangled in the sins of pride, lust, coveting, and jealousy,

despite earnest efforts to overcome them, it remains a challenge that seems to require divine intervention. It is a God problem!

Faith in a Sovereign God

Isn't it presumptuous to believe that every problem we encounter in this world, which is subject to frustration and decay (Romans 8:20-21), has a purely human solution? Aren't many aspects of our lives and futures beyond our control and understanding? If the answer to our greatest challenges were



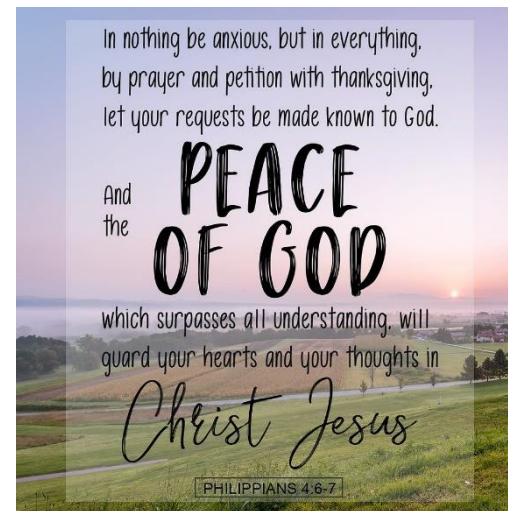
merely a matter of acquiring the right knowledge, what would be the need for a Savior? The truth is, our solutions often come from placing our faith in Him who is sovereign over all things, both seen

and unseen (Colossians 1:16). Unlike the Gnostics of Paul's time, who believed that knowledge alone could lead to salvation, we, as God's children bought at the price of Jesus' own life (1 John 3:2; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20), understand that faith in a risen Savior is the key to overcoming life's most daunting problems. The author of Hebrews states that faith is "confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see," and

"without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him" (11:1, 6). Faith means humbly acknowledging that the One who laid the earth's foundations and set its dimensions (Job 38:2-8) remains sovereign and in control of both our present and our future.

Conclusion

In the face of overwhelming challenges, let us heed Moses' words: "The Lord will fight for you; you need only be still" (Exodus 14:14) and witness our troubles dissipate like



enemies swallowed by the sea. Let us not allow our past, present, or future to overwhelm us with worry, desperation, or hopelessness. Instead, "in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present our requests to God," trusting that the "peace of God, which transcends all

understanding, will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7). Even when we are pressed on every side, perplexed, persecuted, or struck down, let us not be crushed or

despairing (2 Corinthians 4:8-9), for those who stand on the Rock of their salvation remain unshaken. And when we find ourselves in difficult circumstances, feeling God's discipline, may we resist the temptations of this world and instead, from the depths of repentance, cry out, "Abba, Father, forgive me," to be restored to His loving embrace. If you are facing problems beyond human resolution, entrust them to the sovereign God of Israel and rejoice, for He works all things for the good of those who love Him (Romans 8:28).