

## The Greatness of Our God



David Wilkerson May 9, 2011

Our ministry has a devotional website that receives messages from Christians all over the world. Right now believers in various nations are writing the same thing: *Fear is taking hold.*

As prophesied in Scripture, God is shaking everything that can be shaken. It's hard to fathom all the upheaval taking place in the world at present. Consider the many fronts where nations are in turmoil:

- Japan is being hit with aftershocks from an already devastating earthquake. That country is still digging out of the rubble, even as radiation continues spewing into the atmosphere.
- Arab regimes are toppling across the Middle East with nation after nation in upheaval. Israel watches these changes with interest, wondering whether Arab governments will renew anti-Israel feelings.
- Economic fears continue in country after country. Greece has teetered on the brink of utter chaos.

In the midst of all this, fear and anxiety are spreading, and Christians are not immune. Many write that they're going through the storm of their lives. They describe financial crises, family stress, depression — and the problems don't stop coming. Some are overwhelmed beyond anything they've ever experienced.

Never in my 58 years of ministry have I known of so many people stricken with cancer. In my own family, my daughter and grandson are enduring serious trials at this very moment. Sometimes our greatest fears come through the pain of those nearest and dearest to us.

Many of God's people are crying, "Lord, enough. Your Word promises deliverance. You said you wouldn't let me endure more than I could bear without making a way of escape for me. But where is the escape? Where is your greatness now in the midst of my greatest trial?"

In troubling times like these, the enemy comes in like a flood.

Whenever we face deep trials and difficulties, the devil moves in to take advantage. Scripture describes him as a flood of fear that dashes us with wave after wave. These demonic floods even have a voice: "The floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves" (Psalm 93:3).

Have you noticed that troubles and afflictions often come in waves? Just as you battle through one problem, another follows in its wake. The apostle John speaks for many today who are being carried away in a state of stress: "The serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman [the church] that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood" (Revelation 12:15).

But God answers the voice of every demonic flood: "The Lord on high *is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea*" (Psalm 93:4, my italics). Simply put, God's Word speaks louder than any flood we may face. His greatness overrides even our biggest trial.

David took hold of this truth, praying in faith: "Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me

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up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me" (69:15). It's not unusual for even the godliest person to face troubles rising like floodwaters. Like David, we can be steeped in God's Word, faithful to pray and devoted to the Lord, yet still feel overwhelmed by pounding waves of fear.

I asked the Lord for a message to build up people's faith in this hour.

The word I received from the Lord has strengthened my own faith. I pray it will do the same for you. I can sum up this message in one sentence: BEHOLDING THE GREATNESS OF OUR GOD IS AN ANCHOR FOR OUR SOULS.

I'm convinced the church needs one thing at this very moment: an ever-increasing revelation of God's greatness. So many anxious people around the world are turning to false gods in the midst of overwhelming fears. But followers of Jesus need only to be reminded of the one true God. We have to be firmly persuaded of his power, might and greatness on our behalf.

As the recent global events began to mount, I was reminded of a book we published ten years ago called *Triumph Through Tragedy*. In that book, Christians shared testimonies of God's help during their most difficult trials. In each case they located hope in the revelation of God's greatness.

Three things became clear to me in these people's stories:

1. During every flood of affliction, God's people have two choices.

Our first choice in the face of great trials is to gird up our faith — to trust in our loving heavenly Father no matter what comes. Yet this isn't an automatic reflex — it's a choice. The truth is, when our pain is most excruciating, we have to choose to cry out to God in faith.

Everyone who contributed a story to *Triumph Through Tragedy* testified they had a choice to make. And when they chose faith, God gave them a renewed intimacy with Jesus. *Yet it happened when their painful trial was at its worst.* David testified of his worst hour, "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles" (Psalm 34:6).

Our other choice is to remain in worrisome fear. If we allow ourselves to worry about one thing today, we'll worry about two things tomorrow. In short, our fears will continue mounting as the waves of problems keep coming. If our fears aren't checked, our worried mind will continue descending into a bottomless pit.

We simply have to be convinced we are loved by our heavenly Father, no matter how fierce our trial becomes. We may hear voices of fear amid the rising waves of trouble, but David has testified clearly: "God's voice is heard above the flood!"

2. When a flood came, they all experienced an "eclipse of faith."

These people's testimonies all had something else in common: *They each wrestled through a dark night of the soul.* I've become convinced over the years this is an experience faced by every faithful servant of Christ.

They all described a period when everything seemed under a cloud of darkness with God's voice silent. They did everything they knew to try to hear from heaven, but the darkness only continued.

It is for just such times that Scripture says we are to know *and to believe the love God has for us.* When our world is turned upside down, we become most vulnerable to the enemy's lies. Satan will try to use our crises to bring us into a pit of despair. During those times we have to be able to draw on our knowledge of God's love for us.

In my eighty years on earth I have had many trials thrown at me. And this is the one truth that has anchored me through it all: *God loves me at all times, through every trial of life.*

3. Faith is a command and God responds to those who exercise it.

The testimonies we received contained this truth also. *In every instance when a believer exercised the truth of God's Word, Jesus came to that person.* And his ministering Spirit brought them comfort and renewed their

strength in their dark hour.

Of course, it isn't always easy to exercise faith when we're hurting. Often we simply don't have the strength when pain is overwhelming us. At such times Christians can let God's promises slip away.

C.H. Spurgeon, one of the greatest preachers in history, suffered from severe depression. (During his era this condition was known as "melancholy.") What was Spurgeon's remedy? He clung to the Psalms. God's enduring promises were the only true source of comfort for Spurgeon when his world seemed to be falling down around him. When the great preacher didn't have the strength to read them himself, he had someone read them to him. He knew they would bring him comfort and strength. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17).

"He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). I believe this word is meant especially for believers in the midst of a trial. The Lord is saying, "I have a reward for you in your trial. Go after it! I have set aside a blessing of strength for you at this time, and I want you to have it."

We have to saturate ourselves with God's Word — to be mindful of his promises, to trust in his faithfulness and to cling to what is true. It is the only way to cut off the demonic voice of the flood.

The more we understand and believe in the greatness of our God, the more we'll be prepared for the days ahead.

I've done a lot of homework on this subject. And I want to share with you the truths embedded in God's Word that have so blessed and encouraged me. They all have to do with his greatness.

There is no greater extoller of God's greatness than David. As he composed his psalms, David built up his own faith on the ever-increasing knowledge of God's greatness. Consider these famous passages:

"Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised.... For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death" (Psalm 48:1, 14). "Who is so great a God as our God? Thou art the God that doest wonders; thou hast declared thy strength among the people" (77:13–14).

"Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto thy works.... Thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone" (86:8, 10).

According to David, all our fears subside in the knowledge of God's greatness. It is why he extols so many dimensions of the greatness of our Lord. It's all meant to build our faith.

- **David extols the greatness of God's wonder-working power.**

"For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also" (Psalm 95:3–4).

"To him who alone doeth great wonders... To him that by wisdom made the heavens... To him that stretched out the earth above the waters... To him that made great lights... The sun to rule by day... The moon and stars to rule by night" (136:4–9).

Recently I watched a documentary on the stars and galaxies. Astronomers tell us there are not millions but *billions* of galaxies in the universe. They are innumerable, and our God created each one. Indeed, he knows every star and named them all: "He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names" (147:4).

We simply can't take in the many wonders of our God. His greatness is beyond our comprehension!

- **David extols the greatness of God's power to heal us.**

God also has created every human heart. And there is no other power that can truly heal our hearts. "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds" (Psalm 147:3).

The Lord understands our depths of pain more than any human can: "Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite" (47:5). Only the Lord who made us knows what our hearts need to see us through our greatest trials.

- **David extols God's greatness of power over any flood.**

David reminds us of God's greatness even in the midst of overwhelming floods. Our current floods may have raised their voices loudly, but God rules over all of nature. He alone is in control.

David voices the pleas of those being overwhelmed by floods in their soul: "Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God" (Psalm 69:1–3).

Yet David has also given us our answer in the midst of every great flood: "The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea" (93:4).

Right now, floodwaters are rising for many believers — in afflictions, trials and severe troubles. But God has declared this promise: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Isaiah 43:2).

- **David extols the greatness of God's mercy.**

"The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy... For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him... But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children" (Psalm 103:8, 11, 17).

"For *thy mercy is great* above the heavens...and thy glory above all the earth" (108:4–5).

"I am like a green olive tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever" (52:8).

- **David extols God's greatness in blessing those who trust him.**

"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues" (Psalm 31:19–20).

When David exclaims, "Oh, how great is God's goodness!" he's saying, "I am overcome by all the goodness God has in store." He's celebrating the incredible storehouse of mercy and kindness that God has set aside for us. David testified, "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living" (27:13).

God's goodness and rewards aren't stored up for "someday" in heaven — they are meant for his people now in their present trials.

God says he will reward our faith. And he wants us to seek him for those rewards now in the midst of our crises. Are you looking for a sign of hope for a rebellious son or daughter? Do you need to see just one break in the clouds of your financial storm? Call on the Lord in faith; he will come to you with comfort and strength. He wants to reward you with renewed hope and to supply you with all strength in your current flood. His voice rises above every floodwater!

I leave you with this: God's Word makes clear we are not to worry about world crises. We are not to worry about the economy. He wants to remove all stress about our loved ones, our families, our hurts and trials. And he has given us the reason for this great comfort and assurance: *Our God is great and greatly to be praised!*

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Hallelujah!

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