

How Big is Your God?

This message is a very challenging one, in one way, and yet it contains a message of great hope, joy and peace.

We certainly live in interesting albeit uncertain times, and we all, without exception, face challenges of one form or another.

What would your response be if God had said to you, "Tell the local believers that if you want to be safe build a massive snowmobile and get your families into it." You would most likely cast it off as a bad dream! We live in a very dry and hot climate where it never snows, so why build a snowmobile!

Well something like this has actually happened in the past:

Noah – Build an ark in a time when there was no rain or much water, certainly not anywhere sufficient in which to float a massive ark, and the sea was hundreds of kilometres away.

Gen 6:9 ... *"Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; **Noah walked with God.**"*

Abram – pack up and follow Me and I'll make you great.

Heb 11:8 ... *"By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going."*

Gal 3:6 ... *"**Abraham believed God.**"*

Daniel's contemporaries, the Three Young Men – Compromise or get thrown into the furnace.

Dan 3:17-18, 27-28 ... *"If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up." ... "the fire had no effect on the bodies of these men nor was the hair of their head singed, nor were their trousers damaged, nor had the smell of fire even come upon them. Nebuchadnezzar responded and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who **put their trust in Him**, violating the king's command, and yielded up their bodies so as not to serve or worship any god except their own God."*

Daniel – If you don't compromise you'll get thrown into the Lion's den.

Dan 6:23 ... *"So Daniel was taken up out of the den and no injury whatever was found on him, **because he had trusted in his God.**"*

Dan 11:32 ... *"the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits."*

Now we may not necessarily have been issued challenges such as these, although the pressure to compromise is constantly facing us, but we have been assured, in God's word, that we will face uncertain times and catastrophic events.

Just listen to some of what Jesus said in this regard:

John 16:33 ... *"In the world you have tribulation."*

Matt 24:6-13 ... *"You will be hearing of wars and rumours of wars (Russia on the borders of Ukraine; China looming large over Taiwan; Middle East wars, and more). See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes. But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs. Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many. Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved."*

Luke 21:8-19 ... *"And He said, 'See to it that you are not misled; for many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not go after them. When you hear of wars and disturbances, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end does not follow immediately.'" Then He continued by saying to them, "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be great earthquakes, and in various places plagues and famines; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven. But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for My name's sake. It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony. So make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves; for I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute. But you will be betrayed even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death, and you will be hated by all because of My name. Yet not a hair of your head will perish. By your endurance you will gain your lives."*

But we need to read all of what Jesus said in John 16:33, and if we do we will find there is hope in the place of despair.

John 16:33 ... *"These things I have spoken to you, so that **in Me you may have peace**. In the world you have tribulation, but **take courage; I have overcome the world.**"*

Listen to Paul, one who faced a lot of hardship in his life:

2 Cor 12:10 ... *"Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong."*

How on earth could Paul say that? Well he gives his answer:

2 Tim 1:12 ... *"For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; **for I know whom I have believed** and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day."*

Remember Daniel said ... *"the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits."*

In John 17:3 Jesus said ... *"This is eternal life, **that they may know You**, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."* This is the everlasting indestructible life we can live and enjoy, no matter what, if we intimately know God – The Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Back to the Ark:

The Hebrew word תבה *tevah* translated to the English word Ark is **only** used in two places in the Bible, one to refer to the Ark Noah built, and the other to refer to the Basket (Ark) into which baby Moses was put for safekeeping. One is about the rescue, against all odds, of a righteous family, and the other is about the rescue, against all odds, of a baby, who would grow to lead a nation to freedom. Both places speak of **Divine providence in the saving event**. This Hebrew word *tevah*, Ark, is very specific. It specifies a vessel or ship with no rudder, or oars, or sail, or anchor, or tethering device. The "journey" is under the control of God the Master Helmsman.

So whatever God has called you to, or whatever circumstances or situation that confronts you, it all boils down to this:

How big is your God? And, do you intimately know and trust Him?

If your God is the God of the Bible, the only true God, and if you intimately know Him you can know with absolute assurance that:

- *"nothing will be impossible with God"* (Lu 1:37 – spoken to Mary concerning her forthcoming conception of Jesus, providing the Divine with a human body. She responds, "Let it be done to me according to your word.")
- *"But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer **through Him** who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."* (Rom 8:37-39)

How big is your God?

Worry does not enable us to escape evil; it makes us unfit to cope with it when it comes.

Priscilla Jane Owens 1882 wrote the hymn "Will your anchor hold?" Listen to the words of verse 1:

Will your anchor hold in the storms of life,
When the clouds unfold their wings of strife?
When the strong tides lift and the cables strain,
Will your anchor drift or firm remain?
We have an anchor that keeps the soul
Steadfast and sure while the billows roll,
Fastened to the rock which cannot move,
Grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love.

How big is your God? How faithful? How powerful? How dependable? How steadfast?

Your life, your attitude, your thoughts, and your actions will all give the answer.

In closing I would like to read the first few verses of my favourite Psalm:

Psalm 34:1-3 ... *"I will bless the Lord at all times: His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul will make its boast in the Lord; the humble will hear it and rejoice. O **magnify the Lord** with me, and let us exalt His name together."*

Magnify the Lord. See Him as He really is. He is Big! See Him Big! Trust Him fully!

Spend time in His word and ask that you may receive a Spirit of wisdom and revelation that you may know Him (Eph 1:17-23). That you may see Him big and trust Him fully!

I leave you with this one question you alone can answer:

How big is your God?

Amen!