

That Didn't Stop God

An empty universe did not stop God!

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1).

Can you image “empty space”; “nothingness” “no stars, galaxies, space void of material”. The ancients believed that “ether” was an imaginary substance as filling all space beyond the sphere of the moon. Then somewhere in the spirit universe, a Voice said, “Let there be light!” God had spoken.

God did not let “nothingness” stop Him. He spoke and His power over nothing became the worlds, the light, the plants, the animals and the human race. “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse” (Ro. 1:20). Nothing could stop God from accomplishing His purpose through His Christ; neither should anything stop the believer from doing the same. “No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it” (1 Cor. 10:13).

A full motel did not stop God!

When Joseph and Mary arrived in Bethlehem, the motel was filled. Luke 2:7. Under such circumstances, I have climbed back into the car and left the city to search for another available motel room. Unbeknown to Joseph and Mary prophecy was on the line. “But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth is from long ago, from the days of eternity” Micah 5:2. Mary could have pleaded, “Joseph, let us quickly go to another village,” but something kept tugging on the mind of Joseph and asked, “Mary would you consider the barn just for tonight?” Agreement was reached and the prophecy was fulfilled. A full motel did not cause the word of God to fail!

Herod's slaughter did not stop God!

Sometime later, Herod the king realized that he had been betrayed by the magi from the east and his blood pressure rose. “Then when Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he became very enraged, and sent and slew all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its environs, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the magi” Matthew 2:16. The threats and the attacks of the devil cannot stop God or the believer. The devil is compared to a roaring lion seeking to devour his prey, but God has put the lion-slayer inside every believer, the Holy Spirit.

Some years ago, Pastor Benito Pacleb, a Filipino preacher related to me about a situation that he found himself in while ministering in the mountains of Negros. The NPA (communist insurgents) knew that Benito was in the village, so they began a house to house search. All night long, the believers passed Benito from house to house, avoiding the soldiers, and when light came they secretly escorted him to safety. The lion can roar, but the roar cannot stop God or the believer!

Religious opposition did not stop God!

In Matthew 22 three main religious groups that opposed Jesus are listed, the Herodians (16), the Sadducees (23) and the Pharisees (34).

Who were the Herodians? Herod the Great, with his Hellenizing activities, influenced the young Jews of the nation. A distinct party arose, partly religious, partly political, partly cultural, which became known as the Herodian party, composed of those who were Jews in external religious forms, but devotees of easy-going, world-conforming Hellenism in matters of dress and general view of life. Members of this party were a bitter offense to the nation as a whole, but made common cause with mutual enemies, the Pharisees and Sadducees in their opposition to Christ.

Who were the Sadducees? During the Maccabean period, the two great parties of Judaism, the Pharisees and Sadducees, arose. The Sadducees, probably "Zadokites," descendants or partisans of Solomon's priest Zadok (1 Ki. 2:35), were principally aristocratic, worldly-minded priests, obeying the literal commands of the law, but stretching them, denying future resurrection and retribution, and skeptical of the supernatural. They naturally welcomed Hellenic culture and were willing to gain worldly advantage through adroit diplomacy or military strategy, etc. They were despised by the Pharisees who regarded them as being devoid of real piety.

Who were the Pharisees? The name "Pharisee" apparently means "separated." The chief characteristic of the Pharisee was his punctilious observance of the law, both oral and written. They devoted themselves to interpreting and teaching the law, that the nation might indeed be holy before God. Their watchwords were repentance, prayer, and charitable giving. They looked for the Messiah and the resurrection of the faithful at His advent. They had an admirable beginning in the fires of Maccabean suffering, but gradually degenerated by Jesus' day into proud and empty religionists, devoid of faith or spiritual life.

The Herodians sought to twist and trap Jesus in his words and asked him about government taxes. The Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection, spun a story about women who had 7 husbands. The Pharisees attempted to trick Jesus in the interpretation of the scriptures. Religious persecution did not stop God! Neither should opposition within the church stop any believer for fulfilling his destiny.

Judas did not stop God!

Betrayal! The act of betrayal is common in the world and not so uncommon on the local church level. However, in the same way that betrayal did not stop the purpose of God in His Christ, betrayal should not stop you in your Christian life. There are those who will sell you out for a little money or a small favor. There are those who will eat "the Passover" with you, but have betrayal in their heart. Not that they do not like you, but their personal desire for their own agenda is greater than their affection for you. The betrayal of Judas did not stop God! Neither should betrayal stop you!

Death did not stop God!

Through faith in God's word, "as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale," Jesus submitted himself to the will of God, died on the cross and was buried. Friday passed into history, Saturday came and closed, but then Sunday came, the earth shook, the rock rolled away, and Jesus Christ arose! Since Jesus died for all, then the conclusion is that all died. That included you, you and you! All died, therefore our death was taken into the grave and locked up for eternity. When Jesus came forth, He brought forth His life for us. Praise God, Death did not stop God and death will not stop the believer!

Paul, the persecutor of the Church, did not stop God!

When the Pharisees endorsed Saul to imprison and kill the new believers of Jesus, God was not alarmed and did not go back to the drawing board. No! He shone out of heaven, blinded Saul, struck him to the ground and sent a man to give him the words of life. The persecutor became an apostle, an ambassador of Jesus Christ and spread the good news throughout the Roman Empire. Persecutors cannot stop God! And they cannot stop you!

Can God be stopped in fulfilling his word and bringing His purpose into fullness? A thousand no's! Can you be stopped if you believe in Jesus and walk out His word? No! And again I shout, "No!" The only way you can be stopped is to make a deliberate choice to turn your back on Jesus.

“[35] Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? [37] But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. [38] For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, [39] nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord“ (Romans 8:37-39).

Resurrection has brought unto us justification, sanctification and glorification. Salvation is vitally connected to the resurrection of Jesus, and death nor can any such thing stop us from our heavenly destiny.

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