

Questions We All Ask at One Time or Another

God commanded his people to leave Horeb and enter the Promised Land.

The Israelites were understandably afraid of the battle that lay ahead, but instead of bringing their fear before the Lord, they chose to murmur in their tents.

The result of their self-counsel?
Their conclusion is shocking:

“Because the Lord hated us, he has brought us out of the land of Egypt, to give us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us.” Deuteronomy 1:27, ESV

This Old Testament narrative couldn't make it any clearer:

We are always preaching to ourselves.

- Our understanding of God will inescapably shape our perspective on our circumstances.

But maybe their conclusion shouldn't be so shocking. I'm persuaded that we, like the children of Israel in Deuteronomy 1, are always asking five questions.

The way we answer them will push us toward hope or panic:

1. Is God Good?

You can rest assured that the goodness of God will confuse you. What looks good from God's perfect eternity-to-destiny perspective doesn't always seem good to us at street level.

Rom. 8:28 “We know that all things work together for the good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.”

1 Co 2:9-10 “As it is written, things no eye has seen and no ear has heard, that have not entered the heart of mankind – these things God has prepared for those who love Him. But God revealed these things to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things – even the depths of God.”

James 1:12 “Happy, blessed is the one who endures testing, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord promises to those who love Him.”

Heb. 12:6- “The Lord's training of your life is the evidence of His faithful love. When He draws you to Himself, it proves you are His delightful child.”

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2. Will God Do What He Promised?

Few questions in life are more important than this one. Since we are small and weak, since we never really know what is going to happen next, and since God calls us to do difficult, sacrificial things, we need to know that his promises are reliable.

1Kings 8:56 “Blessed be the Lord who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised. Not a single word has failed of all His good promise, which He promised by the hand of Moses His servant.”

Isa. 55:11 “So shall My Word be that goes forth out of My mouth: it shall not return to ME void [without cause, in vain], but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”

Phil. 1:6 “Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will perform/complete it until the *day* [the time space between dawn and dark] of Jesus Christ.”

3. Is God In Control?

In some ways, all the other questions rest on this one. God’s promises are only as trustworthy as to the extent of His control. What good is His goodness if He lacks the authority to exercise it?

Job 12:7-13 “Ask the animals and they will teach you, or the birds of the sky and they will tell you, or speak to the earth and it will teach you, or the fish of the sea and they will inform you. Which of these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In His hand is the life of every creature, and the breath of all the human race. Does not the ear test the words as the palate tastes food? Is not wisdom with the aged and understanding bring long life? With Him are wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are His.”

Matt 6:25-33 “I say to you, take no **thought** [be anxious about] for your life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, what you shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than clothes?

Look at the birds of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap; nor gather into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much better than they?

Which of you be taking **thought** can add one cubit to his stature?

Why do you take thought for clothes?

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Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: I say to you, not even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

Wherefore, if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much clothe you, O you of little faith?

Therefore take no **thought**, saying, what shall we eat? Or what shall we drink? Or how will we be clothed?

For after all these things do the heathen seek; for your Heavenly Father knows that you have need of these things.

But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things will be added to you.”

Matt 5:18

“For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one tiny letter or one stroke of a letter will pass away from the law until all takes place.”

4. Does God Have The Needed Power?

You will be motivated to do what you don't have the natural ability to do when you know that God's awesome power is with you. Confidence in God's power produces courage in the face of weakness and enables you to admit your limits while living with courage and hope.

1Chron 29:11 “Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power, and the glory and the victory and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Yours; Yours is the Kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as head above all.”

Matt 28:18 “Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth.”

Matt 10:1 “When He had called to Him His twelve disciples, HE gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.”

5. Does God Care About Me?

Perhaps this is the question we're most conscious of, but the Bible never debates God's care; it assumes and declares it. God's care is foundational. It lets me know that all that He is, He is for me.

Rom 5: 6-8 “Scarcely for a righteous person would one dare to die: yet it may be that for a good man some would die.

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But God commended/proved/showed His love toward us, in that, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Rom 8:31-39 “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?

It is God that justifies us.

Who is he that condemns us? It is Christ that died, yes, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also is making intercession for us.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

Tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

As it is written, for Your sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

No in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loves us.

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Luke 12:32 “Fear not little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the Kingdom.”

What are you preaching to yourself?

What are you saying to yourself about the goodness, promises, authority, power, and care of God?

As you ask these questions, remember that He is so rich in grace that He will never turn a deaf ear to your cries.