

The Supernatural God

by A.B. Simpson

The sermon explores the supremacy and supernatural nature of God, emphasizing His presence in our lives and the importance of faith in His promises.

Scripture: Genesis 1:1, Isaiah 40:31, Jeremiah 33:3, Matthew 28:18, Philippians 4:19, Hebrews 11:3, Revelation 22:13

Topics: "God's Sovereignty", "Faith in God's Provision"

Description

A.B. Simpson emphasizes the centrality of God in the Bible, beginning with 'In the beginning God' and concluding with the revelation of Jesus Christ. He highlights that God's presence is essential for understanding our purpose and fulfilling our needs, as seen in the lives of biblical figures like Abraham, Moses, and Isaiah. Simpson encourages believers to recognize God's sovereignty and all-sufficiency, asserting that true faith involves trusting in the supernatural God who can create and provide for our needs. He warns against self-sufficiency and pride, urging a humble reliance on God's power and presence in our lives. Ultimately, the sermon calls for a deeper relationship with God, leading to a transformative experience of His glory.

Transcript

The first sentence in the Bible brings us face to face not with men nor even with nature but with God -- "In the beginning God." True, there is a verb "created" that follows; but long before we reach that, there is an emphatic pause, and the infinite Deity stands before us filling immensity and embosoming within His own being the whole creation and the myriad beings that are afterwards to come forth from His almighty hand. The Book begins with God, and it would be a good thing if every book and every chapter in every life had the same safe and sublime beginning.

The Book also ends with God. We turn to the last message and we read in the Apocalypse, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, says the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." He that began as Alpha is ending as Omega, and between these two extremes lies the whole story of redemption.

If we turn to the last verse of the Apocalypse, leaving out the benediction, we find that the Book ends with Jesus Christ. It begins with God and ends with Jesus Christ and between these two divine names lies the whole story of revelation.

In beautiful similarity the apostle's great draft upon the bank of heaven, "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus," begins with "My God" and ends with "Christ Jesus," while between lies all our need and its infinite supply. What a safe and blessed place to be!

In accordance with this majestic beginning God is always projecting His personality and presence upon the scene of the story of revelation and redemption. there is a sublime egotism in the Bible and you would feel that which in others would be unbecoming is in Him absolutely right. Over and over again He asserts Himself, and every instinct of our being recognizes His preeminence, His sovereignty and His right to be supreme. It contains just what man needs to know and recognize, the presence and the glory of his God. It shows what our lives need above all other needs, to know Him, to realize His presence and to live under the shadow of the Almighty.

We sometimes meet men who impress us not so much with their own personality as with the presence of God which they carry with them. This was the characteristic of Enoch. The only thing remarkable said about him was that he walked in the divine Presence. We read of Samuel and Elijah that each was recognized as "the man of God."

This is what we want in our lives, to know God, to walk with God, to be men of God and then to minister God to other men.

Whenever God called men into a closer relation or sent them on some higher commission, the call was always accompanied with some marked revelation of Himself.

We find Him coming to Abraham at the crisis of his life as El-Shaddai and then commanding Abraham to rise to a higher place in conformity to the new revelation that He had given. "I am El-Shaddai," He says, "walk before me, and be perfect (or upright)." I am the Almighty, the Absolute, the Infinite, the All-sufficient God. Now live up to the vision you have had, the revelation I have given. Stand straight up to the standard God has given. Live as if you had a God that is all-sufficient.

You have not been living thus. You have not been walking before Me. You have been walking before Sara, before Hagar, before circumstances, before your difficulties and limitations and infirmities. Now lift your vision above all these, look at Me alone and see in Me the God who is enough, and stand upright in uncompromising faith. And so henceforth Abraham "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform."

The secret of Abraham's faith was his realization of the supernatural God. And so in describing him in the fourth chapter of Romans the apostle says that he measured up to God, "before him whom he believed, even God, who quickens the dead, and calls the things which be not as though they were."

When God came to Moses to send him forth on his stupendous undertaking, the only thing He sought to impress upon his mind was the supernatural Presence that was to go with him. His one answer to all the fears and doubts of Moses was, "I Am that I Am." He just drew a great check upon Himself and signed it, leaving a blank line for Moses to fill up and complete with anything he pleased. He seemed to say, "I am courage in your difficulties; I am power in your weakness; I am victory over Pharaoh; I am sovereignty over the Red Sea; I am bread for the wilderness and water from the rock; I am the guide for the desert and the conqueror for the Midianites and the Canaanites; I am mercy and forgiveness for the gainsaying people that you lead." And oh, that Moses had also added one thing more, "I am grace and strength to

keep even you from missing the Promised Land."

And when Moses still parleyed and procrastinated God answered with that one final word, "Certainly I will be with you." Later in the story of the wilderness we find Moses falling back on this great promise and crying, "If Your presence go not with me, carry us not up hence," and the answer came, "My presence shall go with you." It was God and God alone that made Moses what he was and Israel what it became.

This was all the equipment of Joshua for his victorious succession to Moses. "Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be dismayed: for the Lord your God is with you wheresoever you go" was the divine assurance. "I will be with you: I will not fail you, nor forsake you." When a little later Joshua was in danger of looming up too large in his own leadership, God met him and laid him in the dust and took command Himself of Israel's victorious armies of faith. Going forth to reconnoiter the ramparts of Jericho he met a man with a drawn sword, and, true to his soldierly instinct, he challenged him and cried, "Are You for us, or for our adversaries?" The answer that came laid him prostrate on his face. "No; but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. . . . Loose your shoe from off your foot." I am Leader and you have but to do my bidding and let me triumph through you.

It was the vision of God that called Isaiah to his ministry and strengthened him to bear the rejection of his countrymen and to stand alone with God in the midst of a gainsaying people.

There is nothing finer in the Scriptures than His majestic promise to Jeremiah. "This says the Lord, the maker thereof, the Lord that formed it, to establish it; the Lord is his name; call unto me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you knew not"

This is a very glorious and inspiring promise but the most glorious part of it is the preface and the name by which God introduces Himself to the prophet: "This says the Lord (Jehovah), the maker thereof" -- not the Creator of the universe but the Creator of the thing which Jeremiah is about to ask for. It is something which does not now exist and for which the very materials do not yet appear. It is something which, naturally speaking, is impossible. It is something which God has to cut, not out of whole cloth, but out of no cloth. It is something which must be created in order to become a reality and of which He says, "I am the maker thereof; I will create it at the call of your faith; I will form it and then I will establish it."

This is the faith of which the apostle speaks in the epistle to the Hebrews: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." That is to say, it is a faith that believes in the unseen and in the creation of things that are not yet real. It is a faith that can take Him for a gentleness you do not have in your temper, for courage when you are like a trembling reed shaken of the wind, for a steadfast will when you are as irresolute as the drifting sand, for righteousness and holiness when every instinct of your nature and every tendency of your training leads you in the downward road, for health and strength when your body is a wreck and the very elements of health are gone, for souls that seem as hard as adamant, and for service where every door appears to be closed and every effort vain. This is the God with whom we are dealing, the God of the supernatural, "the maker thereof . . . Jehovah is his name." Let us recognize Him. Let us trust Him; let us use Him in His infinite all-sufficiency.

In the book of Haggai there is a beautiful collection of promises in which God tells His struggling little flock, as they are seeking to accomplish the great work of the restoration in troublous times and with feeble resources, that His presence is with them, that His Spirit remains among them and that they need not fear but that they may be strong and work with the confidence of success. In this beautiful paragraph it is

striking to notice how often the prophet repeats the lofty name, "This says the Lord of hosts." It is as though God were ever bidding His trembling children to look up in His face to reassure themselves that He was speaking, that He was there and that He was equal to even this emergency.

It is paralleled by that beautiful translation of the promise of Christ to Paul over against his infirmities. "He said unto me," or rather in the Greek, "He kept saying unto me, My grace is sufficient for you." Over and over again He would repeat to us the assurance of His presence and His all-sufficiency.

When Christ was about to give the commission to His apostles to go forth and evangelize the nations, He emphasized to them that mighty assurance of His Almightyness and Omnipresence. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth . . . and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

This is the warrant for our missionary enterprise, for our boldest faith, for our loftiest endeavor, for our most difficult undertaking. We have the supernatural Christ to lead us as we go forth against principalities and powers and the forces of earth and hell.

In conclusion, the reason God emphasizes His supremacy is because of man's ignorant and foolish pride. We live in an age of human self-sufficiency when boasting man is saying, "Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven," and God is saying in divine pity and scorn, "Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language."

But it is not in the spirit of our petty egotism that God is ever asserting Himself. It is because His sovereignty is as necessary for the universe as for His own glory. As He repeats the personal pronoun and stands before us in sublime self-consciousness we feel that what would be presumption in any man is right in the case of God, and that it is essential to the order and well being of the universe that He should be recognized as All in All.

His sovereignty and supremacy is the supply of all our need. The more we decrease and let Him increase the more will our happiness and blessing increase. Our own self-importance is the greatest hindrance to the revelation of God in our hearts and lives. In order that He may come in, self must go out. The more we die to ourselves the more room we have to receive Him in His fullness.

There is much wholesome instruction in the incident of the lad whose father was reprimanding him because of his poor progress in his studies. The little fellow was complaining that he did his best and that he was not able to remember the things he read. The father had noticed in the boy's room a good many yellow covered books, and he said, "Charlie, I want you to empty out that basket of apples, on the sideboard." Charlie emptied out the apples, and then his father said, "Go out to the carpenter shop next door and bring me in a basketful of chips and shavings." He did as he was told and when the basket came back it was half full of chips. "Now," said his father, "put in the apples." Charlie put in a few of the apples and they began to tumble off. "Put them in," said his father, "put them all in." "I can't," said Charlie, "they won't go." "Why won't they go?" asked his father. "Why," said Charlie, "because the basket is half full of chips and it won't hold all the apples now." "Ah," said his father, "that is the trouble with you. You have been trying to fill your head with wholesome knowledge when it is already crammed with foolish story books."

Carry the story a little higher and we will find the secret of our spiritual failures. We have been trying a fill with the Holy Ghost hearts that are already filled with a thousand things. We have been trying to make Christ King while all the time the old rebel self was in His way and usurping His throne.

Finally, the revelation of God in our hearts and lives is but the overlapping of that glorious revealing of God for which the age is waiting. We are looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, and He comes first in the inner vision and then in the outward revelation. He is projecting His personality upon the heart of His waiting Bride. He is making Himself intensely real to those who will let Him, and for them some day He will burst through the veil of sense and they shall cry as they behold Him, "Lo, this is our God. We have waited for Him."

In the old days of New England a company of our Pilgrim fathers were in great destitution, waiting for a ship from England with supplies which was long overdue. One good woman in the company had been praying in strong faith and telling the people that the ship would come in due time. Sure enough, one evening they looked out over Boston Bay and the ship was in full view and their hearts were filled with joy and hope. But when the morning dawned the ship had disappeared. Some of them said it was a mirage, or perhaps a refraction of the coming ship projected by indirect rays of light before the ship itself came into full view, but they felt sure that as they had seen the vision they would surely see the ship. And they did. Before the week was over she was docked in the harbor and was dealing out her stores of bread to the starving colonists.

And so God gives us first the vision of the living, personal, glorious Christ and soon our eyes will see Him and we will be with Him forever. Let us understand Him in all His glory and some day we will be like Him when we will see Him as He is.

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