

Let Go & Let God

by Jim Cymbala

Jim Cymbala's sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering our burdens to God to experience His miraculous intervention in our lives.

Duration: 22:46

Scripture: Matthew 22:37, Romans 2:9, 1 Peter 5:7

Topics: "Obeying God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares the story of Moses being placed in a basket and sent down the Nile River by his mother to save him from Pharaoh's decree to kill all Hebrew baby boys. The speaker emphasizes the moment when Moses' mother let go of the basket and trusted God to protect her child. He encourages the audience to apply this lesson to their own lives, urging them to give their problems and burdens to God and trust Him to work on their behalf. The speaker concludes by leading the audience in a prayer to release their worries and anxieties to God.

Transcript

2,000 years ago when Jesus lived, after he died on the cross for our sins and rose from the dead and then ascended up to heaven, the Roman Empire began to have trouble with the Jewish people who were under the heel of the Roman boot, Pontius Pilate being the governor. And after a whole bunch of trouble and whatnot, in 70 AD, the Roman army, one of the legions surrounded Jerusalem, starved it to death, and then came in, broke down the walls and dismantled the temple. And because there was a rumor that there were precious stones hidden, they actually undid every stone, exactly as Jesus said.

When they said, look how beautiful this temple is, he said, a day is coming when every stone will be pulled down. And they literally pulled down every stone. Before Jesus was born, there was a time in the intertestament period called the time of the Maccabees.

And between the writing of Malachi and the appearance of John the Baptist, there was a major revolt in Judea under a family of leaders who are basically called the Maccabees, and there was a lot of bloodshed. Antisemitism is something that we all are aware of. We know that when Jesus was born, Jewish children were killed because Herod had been tricked by the Magi and wanted to get rid of any possible threat to his throne.

Antisemitism has brought about a lot of bloodshed. A thousand years after Christ, there was the first crusade. There were several crusades, but the first and second, third crusades were the biggest, most organized.

And what the crusades was the Roman Catholic Church and leadership in it stirred up the people in Europe to go down to Jerusalem, which had now been overrun by Muslims, and to throw the infidel, to throw the Muslim out of Jerusalem, which was to them a sacred city and so on and so forth. So on their way down to Jerusalem, on their way to Palestine, some of the crusade armies made a stop in Germany and would forage for food, and while they were on their way down, they would kill every Jew in the village, including children, and called them Christ killers while they were doing it. That is a term called a pogrom, P-O-G-R-O-M, which stands for concerted action against the Jewish minority in any place, any village, any city.

And this would happen repeatedly. People would be just roused out of the bed and killed. Why? Because they were Jewish, and the crusaders had, in many cases, a shield or a vestment on the front with a cross on it.

So they were killing them in the name of the cross. And you wonder why people have distorted views of Christianity. In the late 1800s, all over Europe, there was strong anti-Semitism.

I've left out what happened in the Middle Ages and the Spanish Inquisition, where they would forcibly baptize Jews and forcibly sprinkle infants and force them into the Roman Catholic Church by force. Some gave into it. Others would secretly practice their Judaism and resent the conversions.

In Russia, there was tremendous persecution of the Jewish people under the Tsar before communism toppled the Tsar and it became a communist country. But the most famous anti-Semitism or acting out of anti-Semitism is probably what happened in Germany. And even before Hitler came to power, when he was in prison, he wrote in his book *Mein Kampf* that the Jews were vermin and had to be destroyed.

And that's what he would do if ever he got power. And people read it and didn't believe it. And when he got power, he did exactly what he said he would do.

He tried to destroy every Jew. And he was so demon-possessed, fervent about it, that even when they were losing the war toward the end of World War Two, when even when it was known that we're not going to win and we're losing in Russia and the battle of Stalingrad was turned around and the Russians defeated the Germans in that ghastly winter, he wouldn't divert money and troops away from the concentration camps to fight the war. And his generals came and said, we need more troops, we need more money.

He said, no, the trains to Dachau, the trains to Auschwitz and all these other places, Treblinka, they have to keep running. We have to keep destroying these people. It's really when you study history, there's a phenomenal book called *The History of the Jews* by Paul Johnson.

It's anti-Semitism. It's a monster. And it hasn't gone away to this day.

There's anti-Semitism right in this city. You know, they'll write on a synagogue, terrible slurs and persecute people because they're Jewish. Now, the first attempt at the extermination of the Jewish people is found in the Bible.

And that's what I want to read to you and just get one thought from it. Let's look at it. Exodus 2. Now, a man of the tribe of Levi married a Levite woman and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son.

And when she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him for three months. But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. And then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile.

His sister, the baby sister, stood at a distance to see what would happen to him. Then Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile to bathe and her attendants were walking along the river bank. And she saw the basket among the reeds and sent her female slave to get it.

She opened it and saw the baby and he was crying. That's the only place in the Bible where a baby is said to cry. But we've seen a lot of babies cry, haven't we? I don't know what those writers were looking at, but it's the only mention of a baby crying in the Bible.

He was crying and she felt sorry for him. This is one of those Hebrew babies, she said. And then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter.

She approached Pharaoh's daughter, who's holding the baby now. Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you? Yes, go, she answered. So the girl went and got the baby's mother.

How about that? Nobody gets better. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, take this baby and nurse him for me and I'll pay you, not knowing it was her baby. So the woman took the baby and nursed him.

And when the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. And she named him Moses, saying, I drew him out of the water. Now we were talking about Joseph on Sunday.

And you know that when Joseph saved the people of his family by having Jacob, his father, come down elderly as he was to settle in Egypt because of the famine, they were set up in the northern part of Egypt in a land called Goshen. And there 70 or 75 of these descendants of Abraham and Isaac and now Jacob lived there for a while. But the Bible says in Exodus one, that time went by and the Jews went from a position, Hebrews went from a position of being favorites because of famous Joseph who had saved Egypt.

After the seven years of planning, he was the only one who knew what to do for the seven years of famine. But as time goes by, you know, it's always, what have you done for me lately? And people forgot Joseph. And the Jews were multiplying so quickly that the leaders looked at them and said, they're a threat.

They're a threat. They work. They're industrious.

They're smart. They're a threat. So let's make them slaves.

No one cared about Joseph at that time. We're talking now, we don't know exactly a hundred years had gone by 150 years had gone by. They were in Egypt for 400 years.

So the Bible tells us that they became slaves, but even when they were slaves, they were just somehow blessed by God. So some of the more wicked Pharaohs would work them harder and harder. And then one, especially wicked Pharaoh got the idea of listen, went to the women who were in charge of the birthing process there and midwives and said, when a Hebrew female gives birth, if it's a girl, let the girl baby live is a boy.

You call us. We'll take care of it. We're going to kill him.

But the midwives wouldn't go along with that and made an excuse for it. And then the Pharaoh really got mad. And he said, every Hebrew child that's born, kill them.

Male, female, whatever. We got to depopulate this group. And this is the first attempt that we know of in history of the extermination of the Jewish people.

But God remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And God's ways are not our ways. And a lot of things happen in life that you don't understand, but God is still on the throne and God's got a plan, but he doesn't get to it the way we would get to it.

He takes some really circuitous routes to get to where we want to go. But that tests our faith. Well, the Bible says that this man from the tribe of Levi married a Levi woman and they had a baby.

And now imagine living during the Holocaust, living back then when the squeal of the baby, any knowledge of the baby means the baby will be killed. Who knows that this wicked Pharaoh didn't pay rewards for any Egyptian who could discover and root out some Hebrew child that was born. So the mother and the father taking care of the baby, but you know, babies cry.

When they cry, they make noise. When they make noise, people hear. When people hear, they start asking questions back in Egypt.

So the Bible tells us this child, of course, is going to be Moses, the future deliverer of the people of God. It is an amazing that once again, Jesus born of a virgin, Abraham's wife can't have children, but that's the one God says, I'm going to bless your children. We can't have children.

Don't worry. I'm going to bless your children. God lets the most extreme circumstances develop again, just at the moment when he's going to do something wonderful.

He could have had Moses born anywhere safe and sound at a different time. No, he waits till the persecution is intense. And then he says, now have the baby Moses and watch what I do.

Come on, let's put our hands together. Our God is so awesome. So different than us.

That's why when we say with our natural logic, you know, this doesn't look good right now. That's the very moment where God does what he's going to do. When it doesn't look good.

God says, watch now, see what I'm going to do. Praise God. What an awesome God.

How many are happy? We have a God of the impossible. God of the extreme. I've seen that over again in my life.

Emergencies seem to be the setting for God's greatest works. Well, anyway, after a while, they realized we can't keep this child because child's going to cry and the baby's going to die. So they get some straw and they get some stuff and they make a little arc, like a little vessel, probably no bigger than the top of this pulpit, you know, and they make it and they put the baby into it.

And the mother goes to the Nile river, which is full of all kinds of predators, snakes, and goes and puts the basket, leaves it and goes home. And the daughter stays around Miriam. And Miriam is watching.

And you know the story. Just right after she lets the basket in to the Nile river and she goes and leaves, some thought comes to the Pharaoh's daughter. I need to take a bath.

Let me go out to the Nile. And when she goes, she hears or she sees the little raft and she sends the servant to get it. And then she comes and the baby's crying and she has mercy.

And then, you know, the rest of the story. He's raised in Pharaoh's court. And only later does he work out his identity and his purpose for his life and then not without mistakes.

But what's interesting and the only thing I want to leave you with tonight, because I believe in it more than I ever have in the history of my life. And today God just confirmed it to me in a couple of ways, is the whole story changes in a split second that I don't know if you noticed. The story changes and the story revolves around one moment in time.

And that is the moment that the mother leaned over, put the baby in the water, in the little vessel. And the moment she took her hand off of it and stepped away, all of the powers of heaven began to work on behalf of that baby. As long as she had the baby, nothing could happen.

Think of that. As long as she had the baby, you would think it's better to have the baby than to let the baby go. No.

In this case, as long as she had the baby, there was nothing but danger and threat and anxiety because of the situation. Everything changed when she must have after praying, because the people we know had been crying out to God for deliverance. She went and she put the baby little basket into the water.

And the moment, even while she was holding it, going to the Nile, God could not do anything or he chose not to do anything. This picture is here for a reason. The moment she let that basket go and walked away in the natural mind, you and I would say no hope now.

Not only are they looking for babies to kill, she just put the baby in the Nile River, a newborn baby in the Nile River with snakes and crocodiles or whatever's over there. And now there's no hope. No.

The moment she let the basket go, angels started to move. The Holy Spirit began to work in Pharaoh's daughter. In other words, God made a situation up to not just save Moses.

It's more than save him. I'm going to put a mix to Pharaoh in Pharaoh's court so he can be raised with all the education of Egypt. The baby will not only be saved, the baby will be well fed and go to school, but it can't happen until the emergency is resolved by letting the baby go.

As long as you hold them, oh, I can't let go. I can't let go. God, I love this child.

I can't let go. As long as you're holding the child, mom, dad, baby's in real jeopardy. Let the baby go.

Who put that idea in her head? Only God could put in the mother's mind, the father's mind, to put your baby in a basket and put them in a river. That's crazy. No, with God, nothing's crazy.

But it all changes when she let it go. And that's what God wants to have happen here tonight. I want you to just think of one at the most, two situations.

Maybe it's a child. Maybe it's a spiritual battle. Maybe it's a besetting sin.

Maybe it's cigarettes, drugs. Maybe it's an attraction to somebody of the opposite sex that you know is going to get you in a lot of trouble and it's not of God. I'm talking real now.

I want you to focus on something that only God can change because tonight what I want us to do is bring it and let it go to God. I want there to be an act because a lot of times here's the way I've prayed. Have you ever prayed this way? We pray, we pray, we give it to God in prayer.

But then as we're leaving, we take it back on our shoulders and we live with it and we worry and we're fretting. And then we pray and say, God, I give it to you. But before I leave, could I have it back again? I want to go home now.

Come on. How many have ever done that? Just lift up your hand. So we pray, but we never give it to God.

We never give it to God. There's such a thing as praying through. For someone here, it might just take 10 seconds, but I got people here in the front row.

They'll wait 45 minutes with you. I got prayer band people who stay here as long as you want to stay. You got to give it to God because when we give it to God, casting the Bible says what? Casting all of our what? Cares upon him, but you got to leave it there.

We got to leave it there. We've all battled with that. I've battled with that.

Just attacked in your mind by what's going to happen. What am I going to do? Uh, how are we going to get, let's say this money, how will the church pay the bills or whatever? No, to give it to God and say, God, I released this. And when you release it tonight, I tell you on the authority of God's word, angels will go into action tonight.

Things are going to start to happen, whether they happen overnight, this week, next month, whenever, but God's begin to work. And even though we will mention it again to God in prayer, because there's nothing wrong with bringing it to him again in our prayers, we're not going to do it in a stress filled way. We're going to remind God, God, you know what I gave you.

And I know, Oh God, I'm going to praise you right now because I know you're working on my behalf. Can we put our hands together? Come on, let's do it loud. Hallelujah.

Somebody say hallelujah. So this is why some people know how to pray. They give it to God and then God begins to work.

Other people can't let go of the basket. Maybe it's a child that you have to put in the basket tonight. Because I could tell, as I prayed with a few mothers and their children tonight, they're so overwhelmed by the behavioral problems of their children.

We got to give it to God and let it go. Give it to God and let it go. You got a son.

I don't care if he's an adult. I don't care how many times you've told him about Jesus. We're going to bring it to God and give it to God.

If you've never done that and say, God, right now I release my son into your keeping. I don't care if he's in jail. You can be free in jail and you can be in jail while you're free.

When anyone trusts God and lets the basket go, God says, what? You're totally giving this to me and you're relying on me. Okay. Then watch what I'm going to do.

As long as you and I are fussing with it and fidgeting with the thing, God sometimes has to back away, doesn't he? And says, when you're tired and when you have given up, let's talk again later. Okay. And I will take that thing and work with you.

Let's close our eyes. We put our baby in the basket and tonight we release the basket. We release the problem.

We release the heartache. We release the pressure. We release the anxiety.

We release the financial difficulty. We release the son or the daughter. We release the marriage.

We release it in Jesus name. Now, Father God, send angels on mission. Begin to work now as only you can work.

Begin to arrange that Pharaoh's daughter needs to take a bath. She's going to find that basket. And Moses, who's condemned to die, will be raised in the palace of Pharaoh.

Who is a God like unto you? One thing we know tonight, nothing is too hard for our God.

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