

OASIS: December 11 -17, 2025: What About Hard Places?

"Speak to us yourself and we will listen," they said to Moses. "But do not let God speak to us, or we will die." Exodus 20:19 (BSB).



One irony about human beings is that **despite the amount of knowledge and information at their disposal they often fail to make the right decisions. Worse still, they find it difficult to make correct applications of the things that happen to them and around them. And then they are very good at catastrophizing things!** God had come down to His people, displaying His Awesomeness, Majesty and Power. Rather than being glad to have such a God, **the people reacted with fear, literally asking this God to leave them alone!**¹ We may quickly criticize these people as being unserious and unappreciative. But are we much better? Do we not like them dig-in our feet so to say, into evil practices, the more God disciplines or even punishes us, just like these people of old?² Is it not in this modern age of much information and material well-being that some of us are developing behaviours and actions that speak very loudly, that there is no Almighty God, and if there is any He has nothing to do with their lives because of a claim to being free? But the meek, gentle, resilient, very effective, and indefectible leader, Moses calmed them down and told them that it is for their good that they have been given this experience.³ The Almighty God created human beings for relationship. In particular, He made this people – the Jews for a special mission. They are to show the whole world who the true God is and how to worship and live with and for Him in an acceptable manner.⁴ But take a look at the scene which took place on such an auspicious occasion, *"When the people heard the thunder and the loud blast of ram's horn, and when they saw the flashes of lightning and the smoke billowing from the mountain, they stood at a distance, trembling with fear. And they said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen. But don't let God speak directly to us, or we will die!"* Moses assured them, *"Don't be afraid,"* Moses answered them, *"for God has come in this way to test you, and so that your fear of Him will keep you from sinning!"*⁵

What a wonderful opportunity that was blown up in the air. What a tragedy! No wonder, the people only knew about the works of God and not the person of God, a quality known to Moses alone. A failure that dogged them all their lives, as they could not relate satisfactorily with God, neither could they worship Him in a manner pleasing to Him; worse still be that example that God had intended for them to be. **Sin, is the Big divider between human beings and a Holy God. He came to His people to show them and teach them how not to live in sin, yet the people rejected him. The people of Bible Time did the same thing to Jesus Christ, and modern human beings are doing the same thing.**⁶ The various ways we act irrationally abound. God lamented, that the more He blessed His people, the more they went away from and disobeyed Him. **The more He punished them more they sinned, going after other gods - idols, which were no gods in the first place. This pattern is replicated in modern societies; the more blessings, material well-being, information and technology improvement; and the more things get harder, the more evil practices prevail. A clear contradiction of rationality, which is a key attribute of God which He put in human beings!** The Jews asked God to leave them alone, and they went after other gods – idols, even desiring to return to the land of slavery in Egypt. Human beings today do the same. They are interested in pleasure and the spectacular, and they go to great lengths to search for these, only wetting their appetites but never getting real satisfaction. They reject the Almighty God; not willing to know Him, who is spectacular Personified, through whom human beings can live and experience true pleasures and the spectacular as a way of life.⁷

What about Hard Places? Hard Places are the Processing Plants of life! The beautiful and precious jewels that human beings run after, must pass through the hottest heat; honey must be got and be pressed out of the Beehives', where you run the risk of being stung; roses have thorns, and those who pick them suffer from being pierced by the thorns; etc., etc., etc. Life is a combo, and at best, is a bed of roses; a mix of good and bad, the pleasurable and the unpleasant, the ugly and the beautiful. You cannot have one without the other. But more importantly, the Hard places or things and situations of life, are the schools where God wants to teach us the lessons of successful life.⁸ To reject or react negatively to them, as we are inclined to do, is Self-Harm, it is to live a life of failure, a life without true purpose, and an unsuccessful life.⁹ Have you taken the time to consider the Hard Places in your life? Have you taken seriously the Hard Places that I have been discussing with you in the last several weeks, and have you or are you making sense of them?

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The right sense can only be made in the light of God's Word, Direction, And Expectation for you. But it all starts with the True Acknowledgement of the Only True and One Almighty God; with Repentance; And With Coming to Him on His Own Terms.¹⁰ He says that there are many ways that appear great to human beings, but they all end in destruction. A rational being will agree with that statement. **Our lives are testimonies to the tragedy of living outside of God's will and purpose. Every week or time that you receive this devotional, you are given the opportunity to have a rethink, in light of God's expectations for your life. There are blessings in the Hard Places of your life; you must learn how to take advantage of them.**

Have a Blessed, God-Centred, and Victorious Week.

Further & Daily Readings: Exd.20:1-20; 1. Exd. 20:18-20; 2. Amos 4:7-11; 3.Exd.20:20; 4.Exd.4:22-23; Rom.2:17-20; 1Pet.2:9-10; 5.Exd.20:18-20; 6.Isaiah 59:1-11; Hab.1:12-13; 7.Matt. 27: 22-23; Acts 2:14-23; Col.1:15-20; 8.Isaiah 48:10-13; 9.Jer.2:14-19; Lam.1:1-6; Rom.10:1-3; 10.Hos.14:1-4; John 17:3; Acts 4:8 -14.