

Can God? – Part 1

I'd like for us to look in Psalm 78 today, and in this psalm we see a question that is asked. "Can God?"

In Psalm 78:12-20, it says: ¹²*Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers... and of course, this is speaking of God, the marvelous things He did in the sight of the fathers of Israel... in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan. ¹³He divided the sea, and caused them to pass through; and he made the waters to stand as an heap. ¹⁴In the daytime also he led them with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire. ¹⁵He clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave them drink as out of the great depths. ¹⁶He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers. ¹⁷And they sinned yet more against him by provoking the most High in the wilderness. ¹⁸And they tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust. ¹⁹Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? ²⁰Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?*

These people of Israel were called out of Egypt to follow the Lord by faith. However, they seemed to constantly doubt the power, the promises, and the presence of God as they traveled. The entire attitude of their hearts is summed up in the two-word question they voiced in Psalm 78:19-20, and that question is this: "Can God?" When they asked this question, they were doubting everything about the Lord. They needed a lesson in trust.

I realize that we who are saved are a lot like Israel. We often ask the question, "Can God,"

and I'd like to tell you today and show you from the Scriptures that God can. The God we serve is still the Lord of glory. He is still the King of kings, and He is still able to do all the things that He has ever been able to do. You may be asking today, "Can God?"

I'd like to show you today that God can, and I want you to notice this great truth from the passage that we've just read in Psalm 78 and through this chapter. Notice with me if you would the condition of the people of Israel. First of all, we see in verses 20 and 41 that they were faithless. Verse 20 says, *Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? Can he provide flesh for his people?* Psalm 78:41 says, *Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.* They kept asking, "Can God?"

Here was a people who called themselves by God's name. Here was a people who should have trusted the Lord without reservation; yet, they seemed oblivious to the power of God in their midst. I notice that many of God's people today in the church have some things in common with the people of Israel whom we're reading about in Psalm 78. Instead of trusting God and living by faith, we worry and we fret.

It doesn't have to be that way. I want to tell you now that we have a God in whom we can trust without reservation and without fear. We need to be challenged by the same words of Jesus that he spoke to Thomas. You remember Doubting Thomas. He said, "Unless I see Him, unless I touch Him, unless I feel the scars or the nail prints in His hands, I'll not believe." But Jesus told him as He

stood before Thomas, He said, "Be not faithless, but believing." We need to believe God. We need to take the Lord at His Word.

The people that we're reading about today in Psalm 78 were faithless, and also notice that the people of Israel were forgetful. We're reminded in many of the verses of Psalm 78 about Israel's forgetfulness concerning the Lord. You see that in many of the verses. Israel seemed to be unable to remember all the great miracles that God had performed on their behalf, how He had delivered them from Egypt by the plagues, how He had parted the Red Sea, how He made the waters of Mara pure, how He had put their enemies on the run, how He had proven Himself to be God and to be all powerful time and again. They were forgetful of the mighty power of God they had witnessed in their lives.

Of course, this once again describes us, doesn't it? How many times has God come through for you? How many times has He moved mountains, parted the waters in your life? How many times has He lifted the veil of affliction and suffering in your life and allowed the light of His glory to brighten the day for you? How many times has He spoken peace to your storm? How many times has He met the need, done the impossible, and proven Himself to be God for you? And how many times have we forgotten all about what He did yesterday when the trial of today pops up?

We need to take a look back right now and remember all the things God has done for us, has done for you and me. If God did it then, we can be sure that He will be able to do it today and forever! We need to take inventory and remember the Lord's power when the next storm begins to blow in our lives.

Well, the people of Israel were also foolish. They were foolish for asking God, "Can God?"

Their ignorance of God's power and of His Person were proven by the question and their actions. This same scene was played out many times during the course of Israel's wilderness wanderings and, after they arrived, even in Canaan.

One time that comes to mind is when the twelve spies were sent into Canaan. While there, they encountered a race of people known as the Anakim, who were giants. When the ten faithless spies saw the giants, they looked at them and then they looked at themselves and compared themselves to grasshoppers. Numbers 13:33 talks about that.

The same foolishness has followed the church to this very day. We are guilty of the same foolish comparison. Some problem will arise in our lives, in the church, wherever it may be, and the first thing we say is, "Can God?" It may take other forms, but it is still the same. Our doubts say, "Can God?" when He already has many times before proven Himself.

This was the condition of the people, and I'm afraid we often mirror this same kind of attitude in our lives today, and I want you to know that it does not have to be like that in our lives. We can trust the Lord, and we can know that He will demonstrate His power in our lives. One way we can know this is by having a better understanding of the character of God.

Notice with me if you would the character of their God, the children of Israel. Verses 5-7 says this: *⁵For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: ⁶That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their*

children: 'That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.

Israel had seen God keep His Word time and again. He was always faithful to do what He promised to do. Well, God hasn't changed. He is still a God who keeps His Word. Everything God has promised, He will do. There are some verses in the Bible that bear this out. In Romans 4:21, it says, *And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.*

In Hebrews 6:18, the Bible says, *That by two immutable... and that means unchanging... by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.*

In Titus 1:2, it says, *In hope of eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world began. We who have trusted Him have eternal life. We don't have to wait for it; we have it right now, and no one can take that from us.*

Notice next with me God's performance for these people of Israel. In verse 4 of Chapter 78 of Psalms, it says, *We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.* In other words, they're not going to hide these things from the children. In verse 12, it says, *Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers,, in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan.*

Throughout their history, Israel had enjoyed the presence and the power of Almighty God. Time and again God had demonstrated His power in the midst of His people. Imagine seeing Him part the Red Sea, drop manna

from the heavens every day for forty years. Imagine seeing God defeat all your enemies. Imagine the thrill of seeing His glory as He came down upon the Tabernacle. Imagine the pillar of cloud and of fire. God had proven Himself time and again to His people.

And may I say that the Lord has not changed in this area either. That is, He is still coming through for His people. Look back over the years and remember the times the Lord has displayed His great power in your life. Hasn't He parted the waters for you? Hasn't He opened the heavens and dropped the manna of His glory on your life over and over? Hasn't He moved in response to your cries of faith? He has proven Himself to you and me repeatedly!

I want you to notice next, God's power. Verse 4 speaks of His strength. Throughout their history, God had proven that He was stronger than every obstacle Israel faced. He was more powerful than Egypt and the Amalekites. He proved Himself to be greater than their thirst and their hunger. He was able to overcome all they faced by His great power. Today, God is still all powerful. The power of our omnipotent God has not and will not ever weaken. He is all-powerful and He shall remain so forever and ever.

I just want to remind you that God possesses all power in Heaven and in earth. Jesus, who is God, said in Matthew. 28:18, *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.* In Genesis 18:14, God said, *Is any thing too hard for the LORD?* Again, the Lord said in Jeremiah 32:27, *Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?* And we know the answer to His question. There is nothing too hard for the Lord.

I wonder today have you trusted Him as your Savior? Have you come to a point in your life when you said, "Lord, I can't save myself. I know I'm a sinner. Lord, I'm tired of the sin, and I want to receive You as my Lord and my Savior. Please come into my life. Come into my heart. I receive You. The best I know how, I receive You as my Lord and Savior right now."

If you've never done that before, you need to do that right now. God says, if you'll come to Him, He will in no wise cast you out. Call upon Him. Ask Jesus to save you today. Ask Him to come into your heart and take your life and use you for the glory of God, and one day, I'll see you in Heaven because you have trusted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

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