

Can God? – Part 2

Last time, we looked at Psalm 78 and I'd like to continue with that study today, and the question goes forth, "Can God?" The people of Israel asked that question in this psalm, and of course, they asked that in more than one place in the Old Testament. And we looked at that question, "Can God?" and we saw the condition of the people of Israel and verses 20 and 41 show that they were faithless. The people of Israel were also forgetful, and they were also foolish. That is the condition of the people of Israel as we see it in the Bible.

And next, we looked at the character of their God. We saw His promises. God kept His promises to the children of Israel and He keeps His promises even today to us. He keeps His promises to those who trust Him. He says, "If you come to me I will in no wise cast you out." In other words, He gives to all of those people who come to Him, faith believing; He gives to those individuals. To us who believe in Him, to those of us who have trusted Him, to anyone who calls upon His name to save them, He gives each one of us eternal life. The Bible says that He will not take that away from us. We have eternal life and that eternal life is in His Son, Jesus Christ. We come to that saving knowledge by asking Jesus to come into our heart. We're willing to turn from our sin.

And I'll have you know today that, if you're trusting in your own self to turn from your sin, you can't do that. You must ask Jesus Christ to do it for you. It's a free gift. The gift of eternal life comes through Jesus Christ and if you don't take that free gift, you don't get the gift. He'll take your sin upon Himself. The Bible says that He became sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God. That gives me, every time I think of

that, I get somewhat of a chill bump that goes up and down my spine, because God gave His only begotten Son for me that I could go to Heaven, and He wants to do that for you today if you'll just simply trust Him and ask Him to come into your heart.

You see, God hasn't changed from the time we're reading about the children of Israel. He's still a God who keeps His word. He is God. Everything God has promised He will do, and there are some verses in the Bible, and we've read this the last time, that bear out the fact that He keeps His promises. In Romans 4:21, it says, *And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.* In Titus 1:2, it says, *In hope of eternal life...* that means an assurance... *which God that cannot lie promised before the world began.*

Well, we also looked at God's performance. In Psalm 78:4, it talked about not hiding from their children, showing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord and His strength and His wonderful works that He had done. In other words, the children of Israel were to convey all the things that God had done for them, and this was to be passed down from generation to generation. In verse 12 of Psalm 78, it says, *Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan.* This evidence of God's power was to be passed down from generation to generation, and that's the next thing we looked at was His power.

Verse 4 that we looked at there talks about His strength. Throughout their history, God had proven that He was stronger than every obstacle that Israel faced. He was more powerful than Egypt and the Amalekites. He

proved Himself to be greater than their thirst, their hunger. He was able to overcome all they faced by His great power.

As we keep looking on in this psalm, we see not only His performance and His power, but we also see His patience. In Psalm 78:38, it says, *But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath.*

While God continued to show Himself strong on behalf of His people, Israel continually lacked the faith to trust the Lord as they should. However, the Bible tells us that many a time He turned his anger away from them. He was patient with them and led them along in love and in grace.

Thank God we serve a patient God. How many times has he demonstrated that to you and me? And there have been many times when we failed to walk in faith in the Lord, but instead of throwing us away and taking a new people unto Himself, He continues to love us and work in our lives. We have a patient, loving Lord. All I'm saying is that we can trust the Lord with everything in our lives. We have a God who has demonstrated His power, His grace, His love, and His character many times over.

Well, we've looked at this the last time we were together and we've looked at this just now briefly, the condition of the people, and also the character of their God, and now let's look at the challenge for today.

Verses 6-8 in Psalm 78 says this: *⁶That the generation to come might know them...* Well, what's "them"? Verse 5 tells us about that; it's the testimony of Jacob and that He, God, appointed a law in Israel. They were to remember this and know these things. And it

goes on to say ... *even the children which should be born... should know these things... who should arise and declare them to their children...* The people were to do this. *⁷That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments: ⁸And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God.*

When we look at Israel's history, we see the way God proved Himself to them. Then, when we consider how he has proven Himself in our own lives and when we look at His power and His ability, what are we to do with that information? These verses tell us in no uncertain terms what the Lord expects from us in relation to these truths.

You and I face three challenges from God right now. First of all, we're challenged to have confidence in God. That means to trust Him. Mark 11:22 says, *And Jesus answering saith unto them, **Have faith in God.*** Psalm 62:8 says, *Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.* John 14:1 says, ***Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.***

These verses teach us that we are to trust God. We are to trust Him for all our needs and in every situation. When the world wrings its hands in despair and doubts and asks the question, "Can God?" we who believe the Bible should stand forth and cry out, "God can." When the world looks at declining morality, escalating violence, economic trouble, decrease in the popularity of the church, increasing evil, and asks the question, "Can God?" we must be ready with the answer, "God can." This has always been the way it was throughout the Bible, and it still is in today.

I'm reminded of Daniel in the lion's den. Darius spends the night wondering if God can. Daniel enjoys the Lord's peace and rests well, knowing that God can. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego... Nebuchadnezzar stood with a smirk on his face as he sentenced the three Hebrew boys to death and asked, "Can God?" Those boys came out of the furnace shouting loudly, "God can."

And I'm reminded of the widow of Zarepheth. She stood watching as the prophet ate the last of the meal and wondered, "Can God?" Three years later she was still eating while all around people starved, and when she finished her meal, she could whisper, with all the assurance of her soul, "God can."

And I'm reminded of the disciples on the ship. They were afraid. They were in the midst of the storm and thought that they were finished, and their hearts were filled with this question, "Can God?" But in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus came walking on the waves, displaying all the power of the Godhead, reminding the disciples, "God Can. God Can."

I remember a day when I stood condemned to die, under conviction of sin and lost without God. I remember feeling like I was the most awful and sinful person who ever lived. All I knew was that my heart was filled with the question, "Can God?" But when I bowed at the feet of Jesus and placed my faith in Him for salvation, I heard Him shout in the depths of my soul, "I can, I can." I am here to tell you that He still can. He is still God and He can. Yes, He can. By the way, He can do it for you too, if you are lost. If you are lost and you don't know Jesus as your Savior, He can save you today.

Something else that we are challenged to do today and that is to have confidence in God, and we are to call to mind His past works.

Remember, in other words. Think of the times He has delivered you when He saved you and the times he moved mountains in your life. Remember His power and all that He has done. Let His past works remind you that He is able no matter what you face in life. God is able and He will come through for you every time. Let the past be your reminder and learn to trust Him no matter what. 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.

Where to trust? D.L. Moody said this: "Trust in yourself and you're doomed to disappointment. Trust in your friends and they will die and leave you. Trust in money and you may have it taken from you. Trust in reputation and some slanderous tongue may blast it. But trust in God and you are never to be confounded in time or eternity." D.L. Moody said that.

As Christians we have no trouble believing what the Bible says about the Lord Jesus Christ saving all who place their trust in Him. We know our sins have been forgiven and that Heaven is our eternal home, but we sometimes fail to take the Lord at His Word when it applies to other areas of our lives. When we learn to place what I call our everyday trust in Christ, doubts, fears, and uncertainties, which sometimes plague us will have a way of disappearing. I'm not speaking of problems that come into our lives. I'm speaking of the doubts and fears that we let accompany those problems. We need to turn the doubts and fears over to God and let Him take care of those, as well as the problems that come into our lives.

God also carries out His plan and we are to carry out His commandments. We are to obey God. We're to keep our eyes on the eternal Lord. There are many today who fail to trust

the Lord and fail to remember that God can. As a result, they live their lives defeated and discouraged. It doesn't have to be that way. Let me invite you to come to the Lord and find out for yourself that God can. Won't you bring your doubts, your fears, and your questions and lay them to rest at the feet of Jesus?

As I close, let me leave this thought in your minds. God can. He can save you today if you'll turn from sin. Ask Him to turn you from that sin. Ask Him to take that sin. And call upon Him and receive Him as your Savior.

And if you've saved, you need to turn your life over to Him and remember this, God can.

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