**Lesson 4: The Omnipotence of God**

Ephesians 3:20-21

20Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, 21to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

There is no question that the Bible presents God as almighty and powerful. In fact, throughout Scripture, this is one of the reasons people ascribe glory to God. They worship Him for His power and might. The knowledge of God’s power is particularly encouraging when we consider our own frailty and weakness. When we lack strength, we can depend on the One who has everlasting and infinite strength. And then there are those who are puffed up with conceit, who make themselves out to be great. They are exposed for how insignificant, small, and weak they are when compared to the infinite power of God.

Consider the words of King Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 20:6, “O Lord, God of our fathers, are You not God in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. In Your hand are power and might, so that none is able to withstand You.” The psalmist proclaimed, “Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord, mighty in battle!” (Ps. 24:7-8). And so Paul prays, “Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen” (Eph. 3:20-21).

Although God is all-powerful in a general sense, there are two specific aspects to God’s omniscience in Scripture.[[1]](#footnote-1) The first is that God can do whatever He pleases. The psalmist proclaims, “Our God is in the heavens; He does all that He pleases” (Ps. 115:3). Speaking about His plan for the nations, the Lord states, “As I have planned, so shall it be, and as I have purposed, so shall it stand” (Isa. 14:24). God has the power to bring about His will without failing. There is never a moment when God desires to bring something to pass and cannot.

The second aspect to God’s omniscience is related to the first. It is that nothing is too difficult for God. This idea comes directly from a statement the Lord makes to Abraham in Genesis 18:14, “Is anything too hard for the Lord?” How comforting this fact is especially when we find ourselves in a place when circumstances become seemingly overbearing. We know what it is like not to be able to do something even when we give it our best effort. God does not know this weakness.

John Frame: “When God promises something seemingly impossible, God’s people should be thinking not only that ‘God’s Word is always true,’ but also that ‘God can do all things.’ . . . We should never restrict our view of God’s power only to what he does, or has done, in history. God does not exhaust his power in his work of creation and providence.”[[2]](#footnote-2)

Even though God possesses all power and there is no weakness in Him, there are still certain things that He certainly cannot and will not do. This is simply because God cannot *not* be God. In other words, He cannot will or act against His very nature. Therefore, He cannot do anything immoral or evil. Also, because He is perfect in His ways, He cannot change His eternal plan. In this sense, God will never will or act against His God-ness, and He cannot perform the things that are limited to finite beings because He is infinite.

*Questions for Discussion*

1. What does it mean that God is omniscient? What are some passages or accounts in Scripture that demonstrate God’s great power?

2. God is able to accomplish all that He pleases. How is God’s omniscience tied to His sovereign will?

3. There is nothing too difficult for God. What are some instances in Scripture where God promised to perform what would be seemingly impossible?

4. In what ways did God demonstrate His great power in our salvation (cf. Eph. 1:18-23)?

5. The idea that there are some things God cannot or will not do seems to threaten the doctrine of omniscience. Explain why this is not the case.

**Praise the Lord! Ye Heavens, Adore Him**

Praise the Lord! ye heav’ns, adore Him;

Praise Him angels in the height;

Sun and moon, rejoice before Him;

Praise Him, all ye stars of light.

Praise the Lord! for He hath spoken;

Worlds His mighty voice obeyed;

Laws which never shall be broken

For their guidance He hath made.

Praise the Lord! for He is glorious;

Never shall His promise fail;

God hath made His saints victorious;

Sin and death shall not prevail.

Praise the God of our salvation!

Hosts on high, His pow’r proclaim;

Heav’n and earth and all creation,

Laud and magnify His name.

Worship, honor, glory, blessing,

Lord, we offer unto Thee;

Young and old, Thy praise expressing,

In glad homage bend the knee.

All the saints in heav’n adore Thee;

We would bow before Thy throne;

As Thine angels serve before Thee,

So on earth Thy will be done.

*Thoughts for Application*

1. What are some things that, as much as you tried, you simply could not do? What is the most difficult thing you have ever attempted?

2. In what ways does an understanding of God’s omnipotence bring you personal encouragement and comfort? How can an understanding of God’s power help you specifically in some current circumstances you face?

3. Understanding God’s omniscience, how does our God compare with the so-called gods of the nations?

4. How does God’s power put our own conceit and pride into perspective?

5. How could you explain the omniscience of God to a friend that is experiencing extremely trying circumstances?

1. Frame, *Systematic Theology*, 337-345. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid, 338-39. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)