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Forward

God is all-powerful. God's power is infinite and unlimited.

Revelation 19:6

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thundering, saying, alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

Nothing is too hard for God.

"Ah, Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm.

Nothing is too hard for you." Jeremiah 32:17

"For nothing is impossible with God." Luke 1:37

No one can stop God's plans.

"I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted." Job 42:2

He made all things and all things serve Him.

"Your laws endure to this day, for all things serve you." Psalm 119:91

He does whatever He pleases.

"Our God is in heaven; He does whatever pleases Him." Psalm 115:3

Ephesians 3:20-21

"Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen."

Stages of God's power

He is the true and living God.

He is neither inactive, idle, nor dead.

He hears and answers prayer.

God reads our thoughts, and sometimes we imagine things for which we do not dare to ask. But He can do those things anyway.

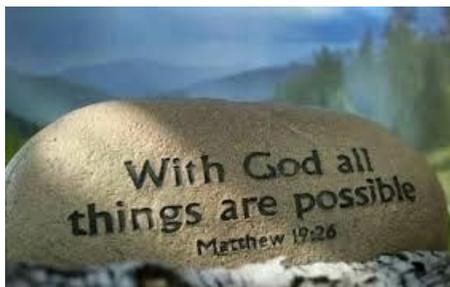
God knows it all and can perform it all.

God is able to do more than all we ask or imagine, because His expectations are higher than ours.

God is able to do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine, because

His power is unlimited.

Chapter 1



With God, all things are possible

Matthew 19:26

Jesus looked at them intently and said, "Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But with God everything is possible."

The disciples were astonished. They thought that if anyone could be saved, it would be the rich, whom their culture considered especially blessed by God.

Nothing is too hard for God.

Genesis 18:14

Is anything too hard for the Lord? About a year from now, just as I told you, I will return, and Sarah will have a son."

"Is anything too hard for the LORD?" The obvious answer is, "Of course not!" This question reveals much about God. Make it a habit to insert your specific needs into the question. "Is this day in my life too hard for the Lord?" "Is this habit I'm trying to break too hard for him?"

“Is the communication problem I’m having too hard for him?” Asking the question this way reminds you that God is personally involved in your life and nudges you to ask for his power to help you.

The Lord is king

Psalm 93:1

The Lord is king! He is robed in majesty. Indeed, the Lord is robed in majesty and armed with strength. The world is firmly established; it cannot be shaken.

Jewish tradition claims that the next seven psalms (Psalm 93-99) anticipated some of the works of the Messiah. Psalm 93 is said to have been used in post-captivity temple services and may have been written during Sennacherib’s invasion (2 Kings 18:13-19:37).

Not my will but God’s will

Mark 14:36

"Abba, Father," he said, "Everything is possible for you. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will, not mine."

Was Jesus trying to get out of his task? Jesus expressed his true feelings, but he did not deny or rebel against God’s will. He reaffirmed his desire to do what God wanted. Jesus’ prayer highlights the terrible suffering he had to endure—an agony so much more magnified because he had to take on the sins of the whole world.

This “cup” was the agony of alienation from God, his Father, at the cross (Hebrews 5:7-9). The sinless Son of God took on our sins and was separated for a while from God so that we could be eternally saved.

While praying, Jesus was aware of what doing the Father’s will would cost him. He understood the suffering he was about to encounter, and he did not want to have to endure the horrible experience.

But Jesus prayed, “Not what I will, but what you will.” Anything worth having costs something. What does your commitment to God cost you? Be willing to pay the price to gain something worthwhile in the end.

Nothing is impossible with God

Luke 1:37

For nothing is impossible with God."

Jesus was born without the sin that entered the world through Adam. He was born holy, just as Adam was created sinless. In contrast to Adam, who disobeyed God, Jesus obeyed God and was thus able to face sin’s consequences in our place and make us acceptable to God (Romans 5:14-19).

No one can stop God’s power

Job 42:2

"I know that you can do anything, and no one can stop you.

Job was quoting the Lord's earlier questions to him (Job 38:2-3). He openly and honestly faced God and admitted that he was the one who had been foolish. Are you using what you can't understand as an excuse for your lack of trust? Admit to God that you don't even have enough faith to trust him. True faith begins in such humility.

Chapter 2



The Lord is almighty

Isaiah 14:27

The Lord Almighty has spoken—who can change his plans? When his hand moves, who can stop him?"

This prophecy came true as Isaiah predicted (see 2 Kings 19; Isaiah 37:21-38).

Jeremiah 10:6

Lord, there is no one like you! For you are great, and your name is full of power.

God sendt Jeremiah to the temple gates to confront the false belief that God will not let harm come to the temple and those who live near it. Jeremiah rebukes the people for their false and worthless religion, their idolatry, and the shameless behavior of the people and their leaders. Judah, he says, is ripe for judgment and exile. This happened during the reign of Jehoiakim, a puppet of Egypt. The nation, in shock over the death of Josiah, was going through a spiritual reversal that removed much of the good Josiah had done.

The themes of this section are false religion, idolatry, and hypocrisy. Jeremiah was almost put to death for this sermon, but he was saved by the officials of Judah (see Jeremiah 26).

Genesis 28:3

May God Almighty bless you and give you many children. And may your descendants become a great assembly of nations!

Genesis 35:11

Then God said, "I am God Almighty. Multiply and fill the earth! Become a great nation, even many nations. Kings will be among your descendants!"

God reminded Jacob of his new name, Israel, which meant "he struggles with God." Although Jacob's life was littered with difficulties and trials, his new name was a tribute to his desire to stay close to God despite life's disappointments.

Many people believe that Christianity should offer a problem-free life. Consequently, as life gets tough, they draw back disappointed. Instead, they should determine to prevail with God through life's storm.

Problems and difficulties are painful but inevitable; you might as well see them as opportunities for growth. You can't prevail with God unless you have troubles to prevail over.

Genesis 43:14

May God Almighty give you mercy as you go before the man that he might release Simeon and return Benjamin. And if I must bear the anguish of their deaths, then so be it."

Joseph's brothers arrived home from Egypt only to find in their grain sacks the money they had used to pay for the grain (Genesis 42:35).

Some months later, when it was time to return to Egypt for more food, Jacob instructed them to take extra money so they could pay for the previous purchase as well as for additional grain. Jacob did not try to get away with anything.

He was a man of integrity who paid for what he bought, whether he had to or not. We should follow his example and guard our integrity. A reputation for honesty is worth far more than the money we might save by compromising it.

Exodus 6:3

I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as God Almighty, though I did not reveal my name, the Lord, to them.

Small problems need only small answers. But when we face great problems, God has an opportunity to exercise his great power.

As the Hebrews' troubles grew steadily worse, God planned to intervene with his mighty power and perform great miracles to deliver them. How big are your problems? Big problems put you in a perfect position to watch God give big answers.

Job 11:7

"Can you solve the mysteries of God? Can you discover everything there is to know about the Almighty?"

God knows and sees everything. We are often tempted by the thought, "No one will ever know!" Perhaps we can hide some sin from others, but we can do *nothing* without God knowing about it. Because God knows our very thoughts, of course he will notice our sins. Job understood this as well as Zophar did, but it didn't apply to his current dilemma.

Chapter 3



What is our inheritance?

Job 31:2

What has God above chosen for us? What is our inheritance from the Almighty on high?

Job had not only avoided committing the great sin of adultery; he had not even taken the first step toward that sin by looking at a woman with lust.

Job said he was innocent of both outward and inward sins. In Job 29, Job reviewed his good deeds.

Here in chapter 31 he listed sins he had not committed—in his heart (Job 31:1-12), against his neighbors (Job 31:13-23), or against God (Job 31:24-34).

The Lord is the king of glory

Psalm 24:10

Who is the King of glory? The Lord Almighty. He is the King of glory.

Who is this King of glory? The King of glory, identified also as the Lord of hosts, or the commander of heaven's armies, is the Messiah himself, eternal, holy, and mighty. This psalm is not only a battle cry for the church, it also looks forward to Christ's future entry into the New Jerusalem to reign forever (Rev. 19:11-21).

This psalm, often set to music, was probably used in corporate worship. It may have been re-enacted many times at the temple. The people outside would call out to the temple gates to open up and let the King of glory in. From inside, the priests or another group would ask, "Who is this King of glory?"

Outside, the people would respond in unison, "The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle," proclaiming his great power and strength.

The exchange was then repeated (Psalm 24:9-10), and the temple gates would swing open, symbolizing the people's desire to have God's presence among them. This would have been an important lesson for children who were participating.

The Lord is faithful

Psalm 89:8

O Lord God Almighty! Where is there anyone as mighty as you, Lord? Faithfulness is your very character.

God's endurance is everlasting. Righteousness, justice, love, and faithfulness are the foundation of God's throne; they are fundamental aspects of the way God rules. As God's ambassadors, we should deal with people similarly.

Make sure your actions flow out of righteousness, justice, love, and faithfulness because any unfair, unloving, or dishonest action cannot come from God.

God is the creator of all things

Jeremiah 10:16

But the God of Israel is no idol! He is the Creator of everything that exists, including Israel, his own special possession. The Lord Almighty is his name!

God's ability to direct our lives well is infinitely beyond our ability. Sometimes we are afraid of God's power and God's plans because we know his power would easily crush us if he used it against us. Don't be afraid to let God correct your plans. He will give you wisdom if you are willing.

The Lord will be your father

2 Cor. 6:18

And I will be your Father, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."

Paul urges believers not to form binding relationships with nonbelievers, because this might weaken their Christian commitment, integrity, or standards.

It would be a mismatch. Earlier, Paul had explained that this did not mean isolating oneself from nonbelievers (see 1 Cor. 5:9-10). Paul even tells Christians to stay with their non-believing spouses (1 Cor. 7:12-13). Paul wants believers to be active in their witness for Christ to nonbelievers, but they should not lock themselves into personal or business relationships that could cause them to compromise the faith.

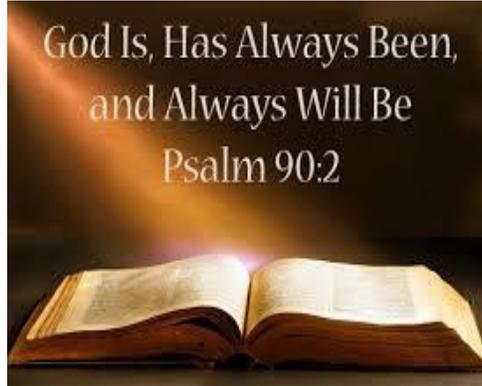
Believers should do everything in their power to avoid situations that could force them to divide their loyalties.

Belial is a name that Paul uses for Satan. For those who have discovered God's light, there can be no fellowship or compromise with the darkness (1 Cor. 10:20-21).

Separation from the world involves more than keeping our distance from sinners; it means staying close to God (see 2 Cor. 7:1-2). It involves more than avoiding entertainment that leads to sin; it extends into how we spend our time and money.

There is no way to separate ourselves totally from all sinful influences. Nevertheless, we are to resist the sin around us, without either giving up or giving in.

Chapter 4



God has always been.

Rev. 11:17

And they said, "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the one who is and who always was for now you have assumed your great power and have begun to reign.

In the Bible, God gives rewards to his people according to what they deserve. Throughout the Old Testament, obedience often brought reward in this life (Deut. 28), but obedience and immediate reward are not always linked.

If they were, good people would always be rich, and suffering would always be a sign of sin. If we were quickly rewarded for every faithful deed, we would soon think we were pretty good.

Before long, we would be doing many good deeds for purely selfish reasons. While it is true that God will reward us for our earthly deeds (see Rev. 20:12), our greatest reward will be eternal life in his presence.

God almighty reigns

Rev. 19:6

Then I heard again what sounded like the shout of a huge crowd, or the roar of mighty ocean waves, or the crash of loud thunder:
"Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.

A great multitude in heaven initiates the chorus of praise to God for his victory (Rev. 19:1-3).

Then the 24 elders (identified in the note on ■Rev. 4:4) join the chorus (Rev. 19:4).

Finally, the great choir of heaven once again praises God—the wedding of the Lamb has come (Rev. 19:6-8). See Matthew 25:1-13 where Christ compares the coming of his kingdom to a wedding for which we must be prepared.

The Lord's arms are strengthened

Genesis 49:24

But his bow remained strong, and his arms were strengthened
by the Mighty One of Jacob, the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel.

So often we struggle by ourselves, forgetting that God is able to help us fight our battles, whether they are against men with weapons or against spiritual forces. Joseph was able to draw closer to God as adversity mounted.

To trust God to rescue you shows great faith. Can you trust him when injury or persecution is directed at you? Such spiritual battles require teamwork between courageous, faithful people and a mighty God.

The Lord alone is God

Joshua 22:22

“The Lord alone is God! The Lord alone is God! We have not built the altar in rebellion against the Lord. If we have done so, do not spare our lives this day. But the Lord knows, and let all Israel know, too,

As nations and as individuals, we would benefit from a similar approach to resolving conflicts. Assuming the worst about the intentions of others only brings trouble. Israel averted the threat of civil war by asking before assaulting. Beware of reacting before you hear the whole story.

The Lord has summoned all humanity

Psalm 50:1

The mighty God, the Lord, has spoken; he has summoned all humanity from east to west!

God judges people for treating him lightly. First, he speaks to the superficially religious people who bring their sacrifices but are only going through the motions (Psalm 50:1-15).

They do not honor God with true praise and thankfulness. Second, he chides wicked, hardhearted people for their evil words and immoral lives (Psalm 50:16-22). He asks the superficially religious for genuine thanksgiving and trust, and he warns the evil people to consider their deeds, lest he destroy them in his anger.

This psalm begins as though God is finally ready to judge the evil people on earth. But surprisingly, we read that God's great fury is leveled against his own people (or at least those who claim to be his). God's judgment must begin with his own people (1 Peter 4:17).

Chapter 5



God will pour out his fury

Isaiah 1:24

Therefore, the Lord, the Lord Almighty, the Mighty One of Israel, says, "I will pour out my fury on you, my enemies!"

God promised to refine his people similar to the way that metal is purged with lye in a smelting pot. This process involves melting the metal and skimming off the impure dross until the worker can see his own image in the liquid metal. We must be willing to submit to God, allowing him to remove our sin so that we might reflect his image.

A remnant will return to God

Isaiah 10:21

A remnant of them will return to the Mighty God.

Once Assyria's army was destroyed, a small group of God's people would stop relying on Assyria and start trusting God.

This remnant would be but a fraction of Israel's former population: see Ezra 2:64-65 for the small number who returned to Judah (see also Isaiah 11:10-16).

Those who remained faithful to God despite the horrors of the invasion are called the remnant.

The key to being a part of the remnant was *faith*. Being a descendant of Abraham, living in the promised land, having trusted God at one time—none of these were good enough. Are you relying on your Christian heritage, the rituals of worship, or past experience to put you in a right relationship with God? The key to being set apart by God is faith in him.

Your needs will be satisfied

Isaiah 60:16

Powerful kings and mighty nations will bring the best of their goods to satisfy your every need. You will know at last that I, the Lord, am your Savior and Redeemer, the Mighty One of Israel.

The Lord will return in the clouds of heaven

Mark 14:62

Jesus said, "I am, and you will see me, the Son of Man, sitting at God's right hand in the place of power and coming back on the clouds of heaven."

To the first question, Jesus made no reply because it was based on confusing and erroneous evidence.

Not answering was wiser than trying to clarify the fabricated accusations. But if Jesus had refused to answer the second question, it could have been taken as a denial of his mission. Instead, his answer predicted a powerful role reversal.

Sitting on the right hand of power, he would come to judge his accusers, and they would have to answer *his* questions (Psalm 110:1; Rev. 20:11-13).

You should have recognized the Messiah because they knew the Scriptures thoroughly. Their job was to point people to God, but they were more concerned about preserving their reputations and holding on to their authority.

They valued human security more than eternal security.

The Lord has done great things.

Luke 1:49

For he, the Mighty One, is holy, and he has done great things for me.

John means “the LORD is gracious,” and *Jesus* means “the LORD saves.” God, not chosen by human parents, prescribed both names. Throughout the Gospels, God acts graciously and saves his people. He will not withhold salvation from anyone who sincerely comes to him.

The Lord will live among you.

Zephaniah 3:17

For the Lord your God has arrived to live among you. He is a mighty savior. He will rejoice over you with great gladness. With his love, he will calm all your fears. He will exult over you by singing a happy song."

The Lord himself will remove his hand of judgment, disperse Israel's enemies, and come to live among his people. He will give them gladness.

We sin when we pursue happiness by cutting ourselves off from fellowship with God—the only person who can make us truly happy. Zephaniah points out that gladness results when we allow God to be with us.

We do that by faithfully following him and obeying his commands. Then God rejoices over us with singing. If you want to be happy, draw close to the source of happiness by obeying God.

You are God's special possession.

Deut. 9:29

But they are your people and your special possession, whom you brought from Egypt by your mighty power and glorious strength.'

The Israelites had not believed God would be able to help them in spite of all he had already done. They refused to follow because they looked only to their own limited resources instead of to God.

Unbelief is the root of many sins and problems. When you feel lost, it may be because you're looking everywhere but to God for your help and guidance. (See Psalm 81:6-12; Psalm 95:8; Psalm 106:13-20; Hebrews 3.)

Put your faith in the Lord

Exodus 14:31

When the people of Israel saw the mighty power that the Lord had displayed against the Egyptians, they feared the Lord and put their faith in him and his servant Moses.

There was no apparent way of escape, but the Lord opened up a dry path through the sea. Sometimes we find ourselves caught in a problem and see no way out. Don't panic; God can open up a way.

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Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print