

Series: Ephesians
Title: Him That is Able
Text: Ephesians 3: 20-21
Date: March 13, 2014
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

The church at Ephesus was in need of God's grace in the heart, in need of more faith, but the apostle Paul was in prison, unable to do more than write to them to remind them of the glorious riches we have in Christ. He was unable to do more for them than pray to God that he would enlighten their eyes and strengthen their hearts. That is our case. All we can do is speak the truth, ask God to bless the word and then leave all...

Ephesians: 3: 20: Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, 21: Unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Title: Him that is Able

Proposition: No matter the obstacles, our God is able.

I. FIRST, THE TRUE AND LIVING GOD IS ABLE TO DO—Ephesians: 3: 20: Now unto him that is able to do...

The true and living God is **able to do**. To do means "to effect or work out or accomplish whatsoever one is pleased to do." The true and living God is the Mighty God. He is Omnipotent God. He is able to do whatever pleases him.

Idol gods are not able

The idol god of men is not able to do. They say their god is unable to do. They say, "He wants to." They say, "He has done all he can, now it is up to you." So they say that their god is not like our God. When you state scripture, "They say that's not my god." God said they would say their god is different from our God.

Deuteronomy 32: 31: For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.
32: For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter: 33: Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps.

It proves their god is an idol made of man when you consider where this venom of asps comes from:

Romans 3: 13: Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:

Why call on sinners to believe and put their trust in a god that is not able to do as he pleases?

God is Able

Our God is so mighty and so able to do, he tells us beforehand what pleases him then he does it.

Isaiah 46:10: Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

If I said that I do what pleases me but I never told you beforehand how I am pleased to do it, then it might be that I had to go to plan b or c because I was frustrated from doing it the way I was pleased to do it but not with God. He tells us from the beginning what pleases him then he does it that way—because God is able!

John 14:29: And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

Oh, the true and living God—the Mighty God—our God is “**him that is able to do.**” His arm is full of power. God is able to do what pleases him. That is the proper definition of God. God is able to do. Who or what can resist God’s ability to do? Who is stronger than God? None!

II. SECONDLY, NOTICE WHAT AND HOW GOD IS ABLE TO DO—Ephesians: 3: 20: to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think,

Brethren, God is able to do what we ask. That would be enough. But God is able to do even more than we think that God is able to do.

God Does What Pleases Him

This does not mean that God has not told us what pleases him to do. On more than one occasion, I have given you these things that please God.

- It Pleased God to Save Through Foolishness of Preaching (1 Cor 1: 21)
It Pleased God for all Preeminence & all Fullness to Dwell in Christ (Col 1: 18-20)
- It Pleased God to Save Each Child through Faith in Christ (Heb 11: 6)
- God Calls Each Child & Gives them Faith When it Pleases God (Gal 1: 15; Jn 6: 37)
- God Gifts and Sets Each Member in his Church as it Pleases God (1 Cor 12: 18)
- It Pleases God Never to Forsake One Child—(1 Sam 12:22)
- God works in each believer by the power of Jesus Christ that which is well-pleasing in his sight. (Heb 13: 20-21; Phil 2: 13)
- It Pleased God in the End to Gather All His Elect in Christ—(Eph 1: 9-10)
- Lastly—Luke 12: 32: Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

There **are** things God is **not** willing to do. 1. God does nothing contrary to his holiness and justice or contrary to any other aspect of his character. There are set ways in which God is pleased to do certain things. I just stated them to you. And God will not do them otherwise. Folks who say God saves another way than what pleases him, limit his promises and limit his faithfulness to his promises. But when it comes to whatever God is willing to do, God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.

Application: Brethren, God has plainly told us from the beginning what he is pleased to do. The problem is the things that God is pleased to do—though stated plainly in scripture—is exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think he is able to do.

Illustration: When the LORD told Abraham, “I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son.” Sarah heard that and laughed. Why? She looked at herself rather than God. She did not think there was any way she could have a child, being old and past the age of child bearing. So based on her inability, she limited God’s ability to do what he said he is pleased to do. And God said, Genesis 18: 14: Is any thing too hard for the LORD?

I have heard men say,

- “I don’t think Christ could be born of a virgin.”
- “I don’t think Christ could be made sin.”
- “I don’t think Christ could rise from the dead.”
- “I don’t think God saves all his people through the foolishness of preaching.”

What do you base that on other than your own inability and the limitations of your comprehension? The reason we must be born again and given a heart of faith is because everything God does is beyond the ability of a natural man to comprehend.

As far as the believer can go in these promises in asking or in our thoughts, still, God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think. Notice the progression:

- God is able to do **all** we ask or think. That is great. But it says more than that.
- God is able to do **above all** that we ask or think. Still, he goes further...
- God is able to do **abundantly above all** that we ask or think. It goes even further...
- God is able to do **exceedingly abundantly above all** that we ask or think.

Application: Brethren, when we read the things God is pleased to perform, whatever expectations we can form of these divine promises, we can rest assured that the infinite ability of God to do them, will exceed all we ask or even imagine in our thoughts.

Things We Ask God For

What are some things we have asked God for? Before we ever asked, God regenerated us—prayer is the evidence of life. The power regeneration was above all we even thought.

Since God made us to see the sinfulness of our flesh, always constantly full of sin, we have asked, “Father, have mercy on me. Don’t deal with me according to my sins.”

Psalm 103: 10: He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.
11: For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

We ask, “Father, forgive me of my sins.”

Psalm 103: 12: As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

Hebrews 8:12: For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

We only asked God to forgive us our sins—he has done much more than that. The LORD went exceeding abundantly above all that we asked or thought. God recreated us better than Adam was created in the first creation, before he plunged us all into sin. God went exceeding above that, the LORD has made us heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ, unable to be separated from the love of God in Christ Jesus. This is not just God supplying our need; this is God doing exceeding, abundantly, above, all that we asked or even thought!

Application: Our prayer is so limited:

- **Limited by our knowledge**—of God and of ourselves
- **Limited by our need**—we don’t know the fullness of our need. We only ask him for the needs we can see. We don’t even know the depths of our needs—much less God’s ability to provide our need.

- **Limited by our desire**—we don't desire all that God could give us. If he gave us opportunity to meet here every day of the week to hear his gospel, we wouldn't desire it. Some don't have the desire as it is now. Until he gives us fullness of desire we would not be happy in heaven, praising Christ all the time.
- **Limited by our faith.** We don't half believe him. Yet, God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or even think.

Spurgeon—"God never means less than he says, but he always means far more than we think he says."

Application: Brethren, do not be afraid to ask God for more than you can comprehend his ability to do. Paul asked, "to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." Can you comprehend what he asked for? No. But God says to his elect,

Psalm 81:10: I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: [out of this world, out of false religion, out of our dead flesh, out of our unbelief; and since he has done all that freely for his elect, he says to us,] open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.

Illustration: Picture a child dipping a cup in a mighty river. Does his little cup diminish the fullness of the river? It is much more so with our little cup dipped in God.

Brethren, "God gave us his only begotten Son, shall he not with him freely give us all things." God bids us ask whatever we need, believing God is able to do it exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.

III. THIRDLY, HOW IS IT OUR GOD IS ABLE TO DO SO EXCEEDINGLY?—Ephesians: 3: 20: according to the power that worketh in us,...

For His People

God is able to work his power FOR his people. Without our help, God chose whom he would in Christ before the world was made. He sent his Son—the Power and Wisdom of God. By his power God made him of a woman, by his power God made him under the law, by his power God made him sin, for us, who knew no sin. When Christ put away our sin and brought in everlasting righteousness, like Joseph was loosed from prison, so Christ was loosed from death, and God Psalm 105: 21:...made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance: 22: To bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom. All of this God was able to do. And all is done, exceeding, abundantly, above all that we ask or even think.

In His People

God is able to work power IN his people. He is able to send the gospel to his lost sheep like he did the Eunuch, Lydia, and Philippian Jailor.

God is able to regenerate the dead sinner and work faith in us—Paul described our regeneration this way—

Ephesians 1:19...the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, 20: Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,

God is able to subdue our old man of flesh.

Philippians 3: 21: God is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

Nebuchanezzar learned "those that walk in pride he is able to abase." (Dan 4: 37)

He is able to draw us to cast all our care into Christ's hand.

John 6:44: No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

1 Corinthians 2:5: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

God is able to keep us by his power--"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." "He is able to keep us from falling." (Jude 24).

One day he shall raise us by his power and make us fully the righteousness of God in final glory with him.

Illustration: God raised the three Hebrew children out of the Nebuchanezzar's fire—not even smelling of fire. They went into that fire declaring, "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king." (Dan 3: 17)

By His People

God is able to work his power BY his people. He is able to make his preachers by his power. Paul said,

Ephesians 3:7: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

By his power, God is able to use his ministers to save his people

2 Corinthians 13:4: For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

Colossians 1:29 Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

2 Corinthians 4:7: But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

God is able to do all this by irresistible power. So let this be our prayer,

Jeremiah 32: 17: Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee: 18:...the Great, the Mighty God, the LORD of hosts, is his name, 19: Great in counsel, and mighty in work:...

IV. FOURTHLY, PAUL DECLARES WHO IT IS TO BE PRAISED AND WHO IT IS THAT SHALL DO THE PRAISING—Ephesians 3: 21: Unto him *be* glory in the church

To Whom Be the Glory?

First, to whom be the glory?—**Ephesians 3: 21: Unto him...**[our great and good God]. We adore and glorify God alone.

Psalm 86: 8: Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto thy works. 9: All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; [it

means every knee shall bow and this is what every tongue shall confess] and shall glorify thy name.
10: For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone.

We adore his person. We adore his work toward us.

Who Glorifies God?

Secondly, who is the “us” who praises him, who is God working this power in, who shall praise him?—**Ephesians 3: 21—unto him be glory IN THE CHURCH.** These are those chosen of God before the foundation of the world, those sons for whom he sent his Son into the world to be propitiation, those he brings to faith in Christ by his Holy Spirit. It is the church of God which he purchased with his own blood.

Application: It is a difficult thing in this world to find a true gospel church. But the sure and certain mark that you have is that all God’s children praise only him! You will not hear us preaching our goodness only his goodness, not our ability or our works—only his! The acid test for every message you hear as to whether or not it is the true gospel is this: who gets all the glory—God or man. If God gets all the glory then it is true; if man gets just part of the glory then it is false. And believer’s live our lives to glorify God. **Ephesians 3: 21—unto him be glory IN THE CHURCH...**

V. FIFTHLY, BY WHOM IS GOD ABLE TO WORK ALL THIS EXCEEDING, ABUNDANT POWER AND BY WHOM DOES HIS CHURCH BRING GLORY TO HIS NAME?—Ephesians 3: 21: by Christ Jesus

God the Father gave the work to his Son in eternity—the work of bringing all glory to God. The worlds were made by Christ Jesus to glorify God. Christ Jesus upholds all things by the word of his power to glorify God. Redemption was accomplished for his people by Christ Jesus to glorify God—his righteousness and his mercy; his love and his justice. Christ Jesus is the Head over his church, with all power, over all, to fill all in all in his people that God might be glorified. Christ Jesus works all providence to glorify God. He has one foot in the sea and one on the land—all power. Christ Jesus shall put down all his enemies to glorify God. Christ said, “Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. (Mt 10: 28) Not one elect child of God shall be lost but all shall be saved by Christ Jesus to glorify God. Here is why the church glories only in God. Because Christ said,

Psalm 22:22: I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee....25: My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him.

Psalm 40:10: I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.

Christ did so when he walked this earth, but he continues to bring glory to God by the gospel his preachers preach and by commanding it in the heart of his people:

Psalm 111: 1: Praise ye the LORD. I will praise the LORD with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation.

The chief song leader leading the choir of the blessed is Christ Jesus—**Ephesians 3: 21: Unto God be glory in the church by Christ Jesus.** Have you ever noticed the purpose why ever tongue in the end shall confess Jesus Christ is Lord? Philippians 2: 11: And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, **to the glory of God the Father.**

VI. HOW LONG SHALL GOD EXERCISE HIS POWER AND BE GLORIFIED IN HIS CHURCH BY CHRIST JESUS?—Ephesians 3: 21: throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

All Ages

Throughout all ages, as long as this world is in existence, God shall exercise this great power for his people and we shall give all the glory to God by Jesus Christ.

Application: This good news is to the weak and worthless. It is power that you need; and this power is at hand. This is the day of grace! Seek him while he may be found! Your cry may be very feeble, but a feeble cry brings power unimaginable. God delights to show mercy. His power comes forth in all its fullness to make us cry then in answer to the weakest sinner's weakest sigh come greater power. So it shall be throughout all ages.

World without End

And in that world to come which shall never cease beholding his power and glorifying God by Christ Jesus.

Amen

When you find the word "Amen" at the beginning of a statement in scripture it means: surely, truly, of a truth; when you find it at the end of a statement it means—so it is, so be it!

So of everything I have said here tonight, I say,

Amen!