

## Things God Cannot Do

People sometimes ask questions about conflicting situations such as: "Can God create a rock so big that even He cannot lift it?" Often, these questions cause confusion and arguments that have no place in the Lord's work (2 Timothy 2:14).

Jesus was asked a question like that in Matthew 22:24-28. His response was, in part; "You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God" (Matthew 22:29). His power not only provides care for His creation, but it also prevents Him from doing what is against His capacity for perfect design and His qualities of love, grace, and mercy.

Psalms 139 is a study in the Omniscient, Omnipresent, Omnipotent nature of God. Some conclude that because of His unlimited knowledge and capability, He can and will do anything. They are shocked to learn that there are things that God cannot do.

For instance, Titus 1:2 and Hebrews 6:18 state that God does not lie and further, that it is impossible for God to lie. Since God is love (1 John 4:16), He can only do what is right and good for His creation. Therefore, He has restricted Himself to only speak in truth and act in love.

Concerning temptation, James tells us that "... God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone" (James 1:13). So again, because He is love and righteousness, He cannot tempt anyone with any wrongdoing.

Because He knows everything, He remembers all of His promises. Because He cannot lie and only does what is right, He cannot break His promises. During Joshua's final days with Israel, he reminds them that "Not a word failed of any good thing which the LORD had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass" (Joshua 21:45). Jesus, speaking about both His and the Father's promises: "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away" (Luke 21:33).

Because He is good, God's commandments are given for the good, and protection of His children. He, therefore, requires His children to obey Him. As Israel was about to enter Canaan, God through Moses said: "See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil" (Deuteronomy 30:15). If they learned His commandments and obeyed them, they would live and enjoy His blessings. If they forgot and rebelled, they would suffer punishment and death. The faithful were blessed with life and cared for even during captivity. God cannot forget His promises.

Since God set the requirements for rewards and punishments, He is obligated to rule and judge righteously and justly. So when an individual sins, God must take action toward the sinner. When Israel sinned, He sent prophets to explain their error and turn them around.

God said: "The soul who sins shall die..." (Ezekiel 18:20). But in the New Testament, Paul writes (Romans 8:2) "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." Since God cannot excuse sin, without breaking His law which He cannot do, He provided a perfect sacrifice, His own Son. Through Christ, God made provision to call us out of sin so that we may obey Him and escape death. (Refer to all of Ezekiel 18 and Romans 4-8)

Jesus said two times for emphasis, "...unless you repent you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3-5). God cannot ignore sin. To those who hear and respond to the call to repent, God promised to forget the sins they committed (Jeremiah 31:34). The Hebrew writer refers to this passage in Hebrews 10:17, "...Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." God cannot remember forgiven sins because He took measures to remove the sin and justify the individual by the blood of Christ (Romans 5:8-10).

Jesus taught that not everyone is allowed into the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 7:21). In John 3:5, Jesus said it is impossible to enter heaven without being born of water and the Spirit. Jesus also said, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16). Because of the promises He has made to both the faithful and the sinner, God cannot save those who are disobedient to His teaching and allow them to enter heaven.

Many quote John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." But they fail to continue down to John 3:36, where Jesus says, "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

Do you believe in the crucified, buried, and raised Christ enough to obey Him?