

## GOD'S WILL

***40 And a leper \*came to Jesus, beseeching Him and falling on his knees before Him, and saying, "If You are willing, You can make me clean." 41 Moved with compassion, Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, and \*said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed." 42 Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed. Mark 1:40-42***

Beloved in the Lord,

This incident raises a very important question – can God do as He pleases?

This is a question that we must answer for ourselves. Can God do as He pleases?

Many would answer and say no. God has to do as I please, and if He doesn't, then I am not going to believe in Him. I will not trust and serve a God who does not fit who I want Him to be.

Modern man has a tendency to create God in his own image and forget the simple fact that the reverse is true. Man is created in God's image. God is the Creator and we are the creation.

Therefore the correct answer to our opening question is yes – God can do as He pleases. He is God. This is His world and He can do as He wills. Nothing happens apart from His knowledge and ultimately outside of His consent. All things are from Him, to Him and through Him.

We are blessed in our lives when we can accept and understand this vital truth. Sadly most people have trouble accepting this truth and that is when they run into problems. Even though many Christians pray: "Thy will be done, Thy Kingdom come" they do not really mean it. What they mean is Thy will be done so long as it is acceptable to me.

When God's will for us is pleasant and palatable and requires little from us we are happy. It is easy to praise and worship Him. But what about those times when His will for us leads us into loss, suffering, illness and the valley of death?

That is when our faith really undergoes a proper test. It is easy to praise and thank God when the days are bright and sunny, but what about the cloudy, stormy days?

When and if God's hand allows us to experience suffering and hardship, pain and sickness and loss are we able to still praise and worship Him? Can you proclaim: "Everything that God does He does well!"

The great man of God was able. He was God fearing in all his ways. In one foul swoop he lost it all – his children, his slaves, his possessions, his livestock, his servants and even his own health. How did he react/ He stated: "The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

Wow. That is a good confession. The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

If and when you reach this level of simple faith, then you find yourself in a good place. You confess that God can do as He pleases.

The prophet Habakkuk had a great attitude, and we would be well served if we engraved these verses on our hearts:

<sup>17</sup> Though the fig tree should not blossom  
And there be no fruit on the vines,  
Though the yield of the olive should fail  
And the fields produce no food,  
Though the flock should be cut off from the fold  
And there be no cattle in the stalls,  
<sup>18</sup> Yet I will exult in the LORD,  
I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.  
<sup>19</sup> The Lord GOD is my strength,  
And He has made my feet like hinds' feet,  
And makes me walk on my high places." Hab.3:17-19

Where would we be, what heights of faith would we scale if this were our confession? No longer a dirge – woe is me; why is this happening to me..."

In the Latvian Bible the heading for this passage is Joy and trust in spite of all woes. I love that. In spite of all my problems I will be joyful and trust in the Lord!

A man of faith does not dwell on his problems, but looks to the solution. Despite my problems I will exult in the Lord.

A person of faith can do that, because faith rises above feelings and circumstances and looks to Jesus. He is greater than any problem we can ever face. He is far mightier than any principality or power or demon or devil, or even death itself.

He said: "Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, <sup>18</sup> and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades."  
Revelation.1:17-18

Over and over God says to us in His Word: "Fear not" "Do not be afraid, for I am God."

We read in Isaiah 43:1-5

<sup>1</sup> But now, thus says the LORD, your Creator, O Jacob,  
And He who formed you, O Israel,  
"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
I have called you by name; you are Mine!  
<sup>2</sup> "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;  
And through the rivers, they will not overflow you.  
When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched,  
Nor will the flame burn you.  
<sup>3</sup> "For I am the LORD your God,  
The Holy One of Israel, your Saviour;  
I have given Egypt as your ransom,  
Cush and Seba in your place.  
<sup>4</sup> "Since you are precious in My sight,  
Since you are honoured and I love you,

I will give other men in your place and other peoples in exchange for your life.

<sup>5</sup> “Do not fear, for I am with you;

Even though these words were specifically given for Israel we can apply them to all who believe in Jesus, who are His children by faith.

God gave His Son for us to redeem us from sin and death. He shed Jesus precious and holy blood on the cross in order that we may be saved from sin and rescued from eternal death. God paid a tremendous price for our salvation, and so we must understand that we are precious and valuable in His eyes.

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” John 3:16

A great price was paid. Our salvation came at a great cost. We can be sure that God will protect that which cost Him so much.

We know that in our own daily living. If we have something that cost us a lot, then we treasure it, we look after it.

Let us be clear – God loves each and every one of us, and we are valuable and precious in His eyes.

Let us learn to fully trust in Him and to always be sure that His ways are always right. God is never taken by surprise. He knows all things. Nothing happens that He does not know about or that He has not allowed to happen.

Let us learn to trust in Him in faith and to live a life of thanksgiving and praise, knowing that whatever happens to us, if we are in Christ, it will be for our ultimate good and His glory.

Paul wrote: “And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” Rom.8:28

Please notice Paul wrote: “We know”. There is no doubt for the one who believes. Faith confesses I know, even though I may not understand. I know, that God loves me; I know that He will turn this situation for my good and His glory.

Let us understand that we are talking about “ALL THINGS.” Not some, but ALL.

God knows every star in the galaxy, He sees every bird, He knows and has numbered the very hairs of your head.

Let us never doubt, but live in faith.

The leper had no doubt. He said to Jesus: “If You are willing, You can make me clean.”

He had no doubt that Jesus could heal him. He also did not tell Jesus that He must heal him, but simply said “If you are willing, you can.”

He found that Jesus was willing. Jesus is compassionate. “I am willing” said Jesus and then He healed Him.

He is love and mercy. Never forget that truth.

As I wrote these words, I received a call that a dear friend had been hospitalised and was in palliative care. All I could say was that God is merciful and to leave my friend in God's hands. Then there is peace, because even in death, if we are in Christ we win.

***Amen.***

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All Bible quotations taken from New American Standard Bible.