

Ole Miss FCA Weekly Devotional: 10/19/09

The Power and Passion of the Master Coach, Elliot Johnson



Thought of the Week:

God in infinite in power

Verse of the Week:

Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is Yours. 1 Chronicles 29:11

Outstanding athletic feats are constantly remembered and rehashed. The words amazing, awesome, and phenomenal were used in reference to people like Bo Jackson. Players from both teams watched when Bo took batting practice. A teammate said, "There's always the feeling that you're going to see something you never saw before, and we don't want to miss it." A Mariners catcher said, "Bo and Canseco are the two guys that everyone wants to watch. When they're done, you go into the clubhouse and swap stories about balls they hit. It doesn't matter if we haven't played the Royals for two months, Bo gets talked about. Everyone has to have a topper Bo story."

While Bo Jackson and Jose Canseco were strong (humanly speaking), our God remains infinite in power. It is His power that ought to be the theme of everyone's conversation! Our God is omnipotent. He can do all things that are consistent with His nature. God has an infinite number of possibilities and the infinite power to execute each one. Arthur Pink says, "Even that which is displayed of His might in the visible creation is utterly beyond our powers of comprehension, still less are we able to conceive of omnipotence itself. There is infinitely more power lodged in the nature of God than is expressed in all His works." We cannot comprehend His power by His works, for His power is greater than His works. God can do infinitely more than He has done or will do! God has an eternity of power, and through- out the rest of eternity we will see God display His power in ways we have never seen before!

Can God really do anything? Yes and no. God can do all things that are consistent with His nature. It is not within the nature of God to sin or to act in an evil way. It is not within Him to uncreate the past. It is true that we are forgiven, but what we did still happened. Even if God created the world and then dissolved it, it would still be true that He created the world. So, we answer "yes," God can do all things; and no, He cannot do anything against His nature. What a comfort to know we have such a good and powerful God!

We must define the omnipotence of God. Charnock writes:

The power of God is that ability and strength whereby He can bring to pass whatsoever He pleases; whatsoever His infinite wisdom can direct, and whatsoever the infinite purity of His will can resolve . . . As God had an ability to create before He did create, He had power before He acted that power without. Power notes the principles of the action and therefore is greater than the act itself . . . God's power is like Himself: infinite, eternal, incomprehensible; it can neither be checked, restrained, nor frustrated by the creature.

The creation of all things out of nothing was marvelous, but how much greater is the Creator! Our God spoke and the worlds came into existence. Out of no existing materials He brought everything into being!

It is God's very nature that demands His omnipotence. God is not some make-believe monarch. He is the King of Kings. None of His purposes can be thwarted (Job 42:2), and all that He desires

or promises, He does (Psalm 115:3; Psalm 135:5-6). As it is God's nature to know all things and to see all things, so it is His nature to do all good things. All of God's counsels would be vain if He did not have the power to execute them. If God only had the knowledge of creating the universe without the power to create, we would not be here! Millard Erickson reasons that if man is to accomplish anything, he must have the knowledge, the will to perform, and the ability to complete the action. If we fail in any of these areas, the effort is vain. However, God always has all three factors at work! He is wise, so He knows what to do. He is good, so He chooses rightly. He is powerful, so He is able to complete His project! He has the ability to do all He wills to do. Consider architects who build great skyscrapers. They use different materials—wood, metal, aluminum, and steel—to build a beautiful building. Or consider a young boy who builds a model airplane. He takes all the pieces—sometimes five hundred or more—out of the box and scatters them on the table. Then he takes one piece at a time and builds the airplane. Man is adept at taking materials and making something out of them. But could you imagine building a big skyscraper or a model airplane with no materials with which to build? That's exactly how God created the universe! He created it without any materials. His omniscience designed it, and His omnipotence brought it into being. He created it by commanding that it exist! In Genesis 1, God said, "Let there be . . .," and there was. Psalm 33:9 says, "For He spoke and it came to be; He commanded, and it [earth] stood firm." By the speaking of His mouth—just as we would speak to one another—God created the universe! Does God not have a voice that should be heard? Our problem is that we listen when E. F. Hutton talks instead of when God talks! We take God too lightly. What an awesome Being God must be, to bring the universe into existence by simply speaking!

After creating, on the seventh day God rested. But God did not have to rest because He was tired. God is inexhaustible. He rested to teach us a valuable lesson. We get tired when we exert ourselves. We need sleep at night because we are tired. But God never gets tired or runs out of energy. God had the same energy before He created as He had after He created! His power is inexhaustible. He never becomes weary or tired (Isaiah 40:28).

Not only do we see God's power in creation, but we also see God's power in controlling creation. God can suspend the natural laws He established in Creation. He appeared to Moses in a burning bush (Exodus 3:1-5); He parted the Red Sea (Exodus 14:21-31); He turned bitter water sweet (Exodus 15:22-27); He produced manna and meat from heaven daily (Exodus 16:1-21). Consider Jesus, who raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11:30-46). Consider Him calming a violent storm and the waves of a sea by saying, "Peace, be still" (Mark 4:35-41). Consider Jesus' resurrection (John 20:1-2), His ascension into heaven, and His return to earth for His people (1 Thessalonians 4:16). There are numerous demonstrations of His power in history. God's power has been evident ever since creation and it will be seen in the future!

God's power is also displayed in the preservation of creation. God is the preserver of man and beast (Psalm 36:6). God is said to "sustain all things by His powerful word" (Hebrews 1:3). In Him all things hold together (Colossians 1:17). It is the power of God that has preserved man and the universe, for if God were to speak the word, all things would be wiped out. The earth does not have life in itself. It is God who upholds it. All life comes from God. God's power of preservation extends from the ocean waves (Job 38:11) to His control over Satan (Job 1). If God desired, He could wipe Satan out of existence. But God restrains Satan from carrying out all his evil desires.

We must also consider God's power of judgment. How seriously God views sin! God told Adam he would die if he ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In Genesis 6-9, God flooded the whole earth and killed all living things. In Exodus 19:21, if any Hebrew touched the mountain of God, he would die. God showed His ultimate judgment on sin when Christ was crucified on the cross for our sins. Jesus was beaten and bruised for our transgressions (1 Peter 2:23-24).

Have you thought about the terrible agony of hell? As eye has not seen nor ear heard the great things God will do for His people, so has the eye not seen the terrible punishment of hell. The punishment of hell is beyond our imagination. We must take God seriously. We are not dealing with a gray-haired old man with a cigar in His mouth. We are dealing with the infinite, all-powerful God. Pink says, "We may all tremble before such a God. To treat with disrespect One who can crush us more easily than we can a moth is a suicidal policy. To openly defy Him who is clothed with omnipotence, who can rend in pieces or cast into hell any moment He pleases is the very height of insanity. To put it on its lowest ground, it is but the part of wisdom to heed His commands."

God reigns supreme over all the universe. The whole universe is in the palm of God's hand. God is the King of kings and Lord of lords. God has always reigned and ever will reign. Man is completely powerless against his Creator (2 Chronicles 20:6). Psalm 2:9 tells us that when the Gentile leaders unite with apostate Israel to defy Yahweh and His Christ, God will sit in the heavens and laugh. How futile to defy God. Our God is totally awesome and filled with power and might!

Time Out:

- 1) Take time now to give God His rightful place in your life. Find a hymnal and worship Him by meditating on the words of "How Great Thou Art."
- 2) What does studying God's power do for your faith in Him?
- 3) With the entire army of Saul against him, what did David say in Psalm 27:1?
- 4) What did Paul write in Romans 8:31?
- 5) What was Israel's mistake in Psalm 50:21 (God spoke the words of this psalm)?
- 6) According to Psalm 2, what power do the nations have against our God?
- 7) According to Nehemiah 9:6, what did God make?
- 8) What do the following verses reveal about God?

Isaiah 40:28

Psalm 135:6

Psalm 135:7

Daniel 4:1-4

Daniel 4:34-35