

Mark 10:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

Analysis

This verse articulates the fundamental principle of divine omnipotence and its pastoral application to human despair. 'With God all things are possible' (para theo panta dynata) establishes that the scope of divine capability encompasses all conceivable possibilities. The Greek 'dynata' (things able, possible) indicates not merely theoretical possibilities but practical possibilities - what God can actually accomplish. 'Para theo' (beside God, with God) uses a preposition suggesting God's presence and partnership, not distant transcendence. The statement follows Jesus' declaration that it is easier for a camel to enter a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter God's kingdom - an apparent impossibility suggesting human salvation through wealth-renunciation is humanly impossible. The disciples respond with existential despair: 'Who then can be saved?' This verse responds not by minimizing the difficulty but by recontextualizing it. The human impossibility of self-generated righteousness becomes irrelevant when divine omnipotence enters the equation. What cannot be accomplished through human effort, discipline, or achievement becomes possible through God's transformative grace. The theological movement here is essential to Christian soteriology: salvation requires not better human effort but divine intervention. The principle extends beyond soteriology - it addresses any human situation where circumstances appear intractable. Divine omnipotence provides the ultimate hope for believers facing terminal illness, seemingly impossible reconciliation, or entrenched patterns of sin and brokenness.

Historical Context

Mark presents this verse in the context of Jesus' encounter with the rich young ruler (Mark 10:17-31), a narrative emphasizing the conflict between worldly security and kingdom allegiance. The young man possessed considerable wealth and asked what he must do to inherit eternal life. Jesus instructed him to sell all and distribute to the poor - a radical demand that wealth's security would become an obstacle to faith. The young man departed grieved, unable to relinquish his possessions. Jesus then teaches that 'How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!' The disciples, understanding wealth as a sign of God's blessing (a common Deuteronomic assumption), respond with shock: if the blessed cannot enter easily, what of ordinary people? This verse answers their confusion. The first-century context valued wealth and security as indicators of God's favor. Jesus inverts this understanding: security in God comes not through wealth but through trusting God's transformative power. The historical Jesus directed this statement to disciples who would shortly face seemingly impossible challenges - persecution, execution of their leader, dispersion. Yet Mark's gospel, written after these events, demonstrates that what seemed impossible (the resurrection, the gospel's spread throughout the Roman Empire) proved possible through God's power. The verse thus serves as an apologetic justification for Christian hope amid suffering.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does acknowledging God's omnipotence specifically address the human tendency toward despair when circumstances seem insurmountable?
2. What is the relationship between recognizing human impossibility and receiving God's transformative power?

3. Why does Jesus emphasize this principle specifically in the context of wealth and kingdom entrance?
4. In what ways does divine omnipotence address the problem of apparently permanent brokenness in human relationships and personal sin patterns?
5. How does this promise account for situations where God's intervention does not occur in the ways believers desperately desire?

Interlinear Text

ἐμβλέψας	δὲ	αὐτοῖς	ό	Ἰησοῦς	λέγει	παρὰ	ἀνθρώποις	
looking upon	And	them	G3588	Jesus	saith	With	men	
G1689	G1161	G846		G2424	G3004	G3844	G444	
ἀδύνατον	ἀλλ'	οὐ	παρὰ	τῷ	θεῷ	πάντα	γὰρ	δυνατὰ
it is impossible	but	not	With	G3588	God	all things	for	possible
G102	G235	G3756	G3844		G2316	G3956	G1063	G1415
ἐστίν	παρὰ	τῷ	θεῷ					
are	With	G3588	God					
G2076	G3844		G2316					

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 19:26 (References Jesus): But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

Jeremiah 32:27 (References God): Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?

Job 42:2 (Parallel theme): I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.

Jeremiah 32:17 (References God): 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:

Luke 1:37 (References God): For with God nothing shall be impossible.

Luke 18:27 (References God): And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.

Hebrews 11:19 (References God): Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

Zechariah 8:6 (Parallel theme): Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the LORD of hosts.

2 Kings 7:2 (Kingdom): Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the LORD would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

Philippians 3:21 (Kingdom): Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

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