

God Can!

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word.

So good to be with you and your pastor today. We had a great time together. If you have your Bibles, open to Ephesians chapter 3.

And I will be brief, but I want to share something with you. While you're doing that, I'm going to make a commercial announcement. I do have prayer cards. We have some broadcasters.

We have one sheeter on our latest project, which is Mosul, Iraq. And if you don't know Mosul's ancient name, I'll tell you it's Nineveh.

We're arising and going to Nineveh to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, just like Jonah did about 3,000 years ago. The Bible says in Ephesians 3 and verse 20, Now unto him, that's God, that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end.

[1 : 20] Amen. I want to concentrate on the first part of verse number 20. Now unto him, God, that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for the opportunity to be here tonight. And we pray, God, that will be an encouragement and a challenge. We pray, God, that you'll strengthen our faith and enlarge our faith this evening.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Now, I pastored for 21 years, two churches, five years in the mountains of Tennessee while I was a student at Tennessee Temple and Temple Theological Seminary, and then 16 years in the western suburbs of Chicago and Aurora, Illinois.

I pastored all that time. Then for 16 years, we operated Christian radio stations in and around Louisville, Kentucky, five radio stations.

But I want to be perfectly honest with you. I had a problem in my spiritual life. And it was a problem that probably many of you have right now.

[2 : 29] And you say, what was that problem? Well, the problem was that I would only pray for things that in my little finite, peony mind that I could logic out that maybe God could handle.

Now, maybe nobody has that problem here tonight, but I would venture to say that maybe you do. And God had to teach me a very valuable lesson.

In September of 2005, I was in the Philippines on a mission trip with our pastor and 38 other men just to go soul winning and win Filipinos to the Lord Jesus Christ.

And we had a great time. The first full day we were there was a Saturday, and I went out on bus visitation with some bus captain and her helpers and was able to win a 70-year-old Filipino man to the Lord.

And he came the next day. And, I mean, that was exciting. But it was now bedtime, and a lot of the guys had bunked down for the night. And all of a sudden, the missionary walked in, and he said, Brother Zaris, your wife is on the phone.

[3 : 42] It's an emergency. Well, you know what we always do when it's an emergency? We think bad thoughts. So I thought, well, my grandmother, my little Greek grandma, 99 and three-quarters years old, who was on her deathbed when I left, she died.

Then I thought, well, maybe it was my mom. She'd been battling cancer, and maybe mom died or took a turn for the worse. I said, or maybe it was my wife's mother, Gilda Burton, who had had major heart surgery and was in the hospital for 60 days and was losing weight and on dialysis.

So you think all these bad thoughts in the time it took me to just take his cell phone and put it up to my ear and say, hey, honey, what's up? Now, let me give you a little background story before I tell you what my wife said.

We had made an application to build a Christian radio station in Baghdad, Iraq. And as a preacher, as a man who has owned Christian radio stations, I'm here to tell you that I never believed we'd get it.

Never in my wildest dream did I believe we would ever get a license from a Muslim country to build a Christian radio station that had never been done before in the Middle East.

[5 : 00] And so I just figured it wasn't going to happen. Held the phone up to my ear. I said, hi, honey, what's up? She said, good news, George. Brother Fragali just called, and he said, we got the license for Baghdad, Iraq.

Now, honest to God, I don't ever remember giving the phone back to the missionary. I don't remember saying goodbye to my wife. I just lost it. I went back to Costal, folks.

I really did. I started throwing chairs around. I jumped up and down, screaming and yelling. We've got Baghdad. We got Baghdad. We got Baghdad. Woo! Glory to God. We got Baghdad.

You say, why? Because God blew my mind. You know, God is in the mind-blowing business. You know, we think something is challenging to God, and it's no sweat.

I mean, no sweat in his eyes. So God had given us a license in September of 2005 to build a Christian radio station in Baghdad, Iraq.

[6 : 04] Now, you say, you know, when I pastored in Tennessee, my people used to say, Preacher, explain that to us. Explain that. You know what? I can't explain that to you other than, Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.

Whatever you imagine in your wildest imagination that God can do in and through you, You are limiting God. He is not threatened by it, and he wants to do even more for you and through you in your life.

Those of you who are missionaries, I want to challenge you to just say, God, enlarge my vision and help my vision to be more in focus with your vision.

God truly does want to win the world to Christ. He gave his very best. He gave his son, Jesus Christ. I've been in 60 countries, and in every new country I go into, You know what I find out?

They want to hear the message. They want to hear the message. They will get saved if we just get the message to them. In March of 06, New Testament Christian Radio went on the air in Baghdad, Iraq, for the first time.

[7 : 31] 102.9 FM, and began broadcasting the gospel of Jesus Christ. I think about it right now, and it still sends shivers up and down my body, Of what my God can do.

God is awesome. He is unbelievable. And he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we could ever ask or think.

Well, six months later, in September of 06, the station just six months old, That's a baby radio station, operating eight hours a day, Because you see, we had no Arabic language programming to hand over to Pastor Mehar And his staff at New Testament Christian Radio.

So they had to produce their own broadcasting, broadcasting eight hours a day, Producing the programming and replaying it. Pastor, as we discussed, you know, probably producing four hours worth and replaying it, So the folks could listen to it.

Because they didn't have anything else. They played instrumental music, Christian music, from the United States. Because they didn't have any Christian vocal music in the Arabic language.

[8 : 47] I mean, it was a baby station. But Pastor Mehar gets called into the minister of communications office, And the minister says this, Pastor, we want you to know the we is the government, the Iraqi government.

Not a Christian in that government. They're all Muslims. They're Shia Muslims, Sunni Muslims, or they're Kurdish Muslims. But they're all Muslims.

We want you to know that we have chosen eight radio stations out of 180 in the country at that time.

We have chosen eight radio stations to represent the country of Iraq At the International Radio Convention put on by the UN in Paris, France.

Your station is one of those stations. I can't explain that to you folks.

[9 : 45] Do you understand? We're talking about a Muslim government, A Muslim country, Telling an independent Baptist Iraqi pastor That your Christian radio station Has been chosen by our government To represent our country At an international radio convention In Paris, France.

It does not compute in my mind. I cannot explain that or explain that As my folks in Tennessee said. But I can explain this Now unto him That is able to do exceeding abundantly Above all that we ever ask or think.

You see, God wants to be God. But we limit God. Before that time, I limited God so often In my little peony mind Trying to figure out if maybe God could handle it or not.

Folks, God can handle it. God can handle it. Whatever it is, God can handle it. He is able to do exceeding abundantly above All that we ask or think.

In December of 2006, A military man from the Iraqi military Came to the church, New Testament Baptist Church And spoke with Pastor Meher Who's just a great man of God.

[11 : 12] And this man was a Shia Muslim His name is Wathik And Wathik came to the church It wasn't a church service And Pastor Meher witnessed to him And told him about Jesus Christ But this man was a Shia Muslim He knew nothing about Jesus Christ It's the first time he heard the gospel In his life And so he didn't get saved that day But Pastor Meher gave him a Bible That he slipped into his vest pocket And he walked away.

A short time thereafter Wathik and his armed forces Got into a firefight Against the Al-Qaeda type people In Baghdad.

Wathik was shot In his bulletproof vest By a hollow core bullet That can go right through that thing. And it went right through his vest And would have killed him Had he not had that Bible From Pastor Meher Sitting right there in his vest.

The bullet lodged in the Bible. When the firefight was over Wathik, as fast as he could get there Went back to the New Testament Baptist Church.

As he walked in the door of the church He held up the Bible That had saved his life. And he said to Pastor Meher The Bible saved my life.

[12 : 38] Now I want Jesus Christ To save my soul. He got saved in December of 07. On January 1st He and seven other New Christian adults In the New Testament Baptist Church Followed the Lord in Believer's Baptism.

Now I wish I could say That's the end of the story. It's not. You see, in the Middle East If somebody gets saved It's the responsibility Of their family To take them out. In other words Put a contract on them Just like the mafia would do.

So his father-in-law Who was a radical Muslim Put a contract on Wathik's life. Also, the father-in-law Got his daughter And the two children To come and stay in his home.

So Wathik lost his wife And his two children And had a contract on his life. In April of 07 Wathik's car was bombed And his driver was killed.

But Wathik was miraculously saved. Finally, he was sent First to Jordan Not Jordan But Lebanon Beirut They wouldn't accept him Because we had to get him Out of the country Then we sent him up To Damascus, Syria To an independent Baptist church there And he stayed there For a while Until one of his Ex-soldiers One of his soldiers That knew him Saw him there And he knew he wasn't safe.

[14 : 07] So he went back to Baghdad And is in Baghdad today. I'm thrilled to tell you That I just found out Just a few months ago That Wathik's wife Has returned to her husband With the two children.

Not only has she returned Wathik's wife Has also received Jesus Christ As her personal Savior. Now unto him That is able to do Exceeding abundantly above All that we could ask Or think.

Well a few years ago Pastor Mayher was called in again And he was called into The minister of communications office And he walked into the office And he sat down In front of the minister And he said Mr. Minister What can I help you with?

And the minister Said to Pastor Pastor Mayher He said First of all I want you to know That we And the we again Is the Iraqi government We are One hundred percent Behind what you're doing At your radio station.

What? Brother We can get three Three or four Baptist preachers together And we can't be A hundred percent On You know I mean This is a A Muslim government Telling a Baptist preacher That we are A hundred percent Behind What you're doing At your radio station.

[15 : 37] Number two He said If there's anything We can do To help you Just let us know. And number three He said Your radio station Is having a Calming effect Upon Baghdad.

Now unto him That is able to do Exceeding Abundantly Above All that we ask Or think. Well the word Got back to me Through Brother Forgali Of what was said To Pastor Mayher And I And I sent word Back through Brother Forgali Because I don't Speak Arabic On what to do.

So he went back Into the minister's office He rehearsed The three points He said Now are you sure You're a hundred percent We're a hundred percent Behind Now you said Anything we can What do you need What do you need Pastor And you say We're having A calming effect Upon Baghdad He said Sir I'm not a liar What do you want And we ask For a second License For Mosul Iraq Which is Ancient Nineveh And our first License took Two years To get The second License Took two Minutes To get Okay The third License took Two minutes To get And it was Actually our Third license That we got For Basra Which is in The southern Part of the city That that station Went on about Three years ago Broadcasting the Gospel into Southern Iraq Southern Iran And Kuwait Six million people Can hear that Eight million people Can hear in Baghdad Iraq A million people A day The government Tells us Are tuned in To our

Baghdad station If that is true Our Baghdad station Is the most Listened to Radio station In all Of Iraq Now in the hymn That is able to do Exceeding abundantly Above all That we ask Or think God is an Awesome God And we serve An awesome God And he wants To work in And through Us in an Unbelievable Way Well For four years We've been waiting For the local Government In Mosul Iraq Ancient Nineveh To come Along And they Had to sign A license For us too The federal Government Had given It to us This man Right here Is the Mayor Of Mosul Or Ancient Nineveh His name You're going To love This Is Zuhair Musen Mohammed

Abdulaziz He didn't Learn how to Spell his name Until he was In 12th grade I mean Name like that The man Is a Shia Muslim When he first Met Pastor Meher He told Pastor Meher He said Are you Going to Build a Christian Radio Station In Mosul He said Yes That's What we Intend To do He said Are you Going to Attack Muslims On that Radio Station He said We never Attack Muslims We lift Up Jesus Christ And tell Folks About Jesus And then Preach The Bible To Them We Don't Attack Other Religions He said How About Catholics He said We don't Attack Catholics Either We lift Up Jesus Christ And we Tell People About The Word Of God And we Teach The Word Of God This Man Was So Excited He said You know I have A Bible Now This Is The Mayor He says I have A Bible And every Night When I Go Home I Read My Bible Faithfully I

[19:16] Can't Wait To Meet This Guy I Want To Witness To Him And Tell Him About That Explain That Bible That He's Reading And Hopefully Win Him To The Lord Jesus Christ He On January 22nd Just Signed The Go Ahead And We Are On Full Speed Ahead Now To Build Our Third Christian Radio Station In Iraq But Here's The Kicker The Government Has Told Pastor Mayor That They Would Like For Us To Build A Christian Radio Station In Every Major Metropolitan City In The Country Of Iraq Now Unto Him That Is Able To Do Exceeding Abundantly Above All That We Ask Or Think Pastor This Message Was Recorded At Vision Baptist Church In Alfred Georgia For More Information Log On To www.visionbaptist.com Where You Can Find Our Service Times Location Contact Information And More

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