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117/ Sermons preached by Mr. F. L. Gosden at Galeed Chapel, Brighton,
Wednesday evening, 23rd July 1975

"I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of
the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will
fill it."

Psalm lxxxix 10

There are four things in this text, and it is very important for us to look at them, and for them to look at us and see whether they have a place in our experience. The first thing is; "I am the Lord thy God," and the second thing is, what He has done; "Which brought thee out of the land of Egypt:" and then a gracious exhortation, or indeed it is an invitation, "Open thy mouth wide," and then a gracious promise, "And I will fill it." O how we should be enriched if the Lord would fulfil the text in our experience !

The first thing then is a declaration, "I am the Lord thy God," and this may perhaps be the most difficult part of the text to some here who 'Would gladly receive Him in their best room, but fear to presume," and I am always careful not to answer questions that the Lord alone really can answer. It is not for me to tell you whether God is the Lord your God, and if you are rightly exercised you would not want me to do it, you could not receive the verdict of anybody; but at the same time, I do desire to have right words on this important matter; "I am the Lord thy God" that He, by His word, might answer that question.

" 'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought"

Does it ? Does it cause anxious thought ? Do you love the Lord ? Could you sing that last hymn ? If you could, you do love Him.

"Am I His, or am I not ?"

They are anxious enquiries of a living soul, and they are enquiries that a dead soul has never known. Do you know them ? Has that hymn ever come right out of your heart ?

" 'Tis a point I long to know"

There was a very popular evangelist in the years 1860/70 who composed a selection of hymns and he turned it over in his mind whether he should put that hymn in the hymnbook, and he came to this conclusion, 'no, I will not put that hymn in my hymnbook, "Tis a point I long to know" because they ought to know it ! O, my friends, doubts and fears alternate rise where hope is, and the Lord has made the one as a mortise and tenon to the other. If you have no doubts and fears you have no evidence that you are in the footsteps of the flock.

But let us try, as the Spirit may help us, to show whether this God is your God or not. "I am the Lord your God." What are you here for this evening ? You are not compelled to come, What have you come for ? Can you do without this God ? Would it make much difference to you if you never opened the Bible again and never came to any services? Would it make much difference to you ? And I do feel that hymn that was once made such a help to me will really give you some indubitable indication that the Lord is yours. Now look into your heart before I quote it, let everything else take a second place, can you say, from your heart, before God -

"Thou, O Christ, art all I want,
All in all in Thee I find" ?

If you can, you are in the first clause of the text; "I am the Lord thy God." And do you need Him? Do you need His Gospel, His grace? Do you need His sin-atonement blood? Are you willing and do you seek first the Kingdom of God? Could you stand the test and sing from your heart

"Emptied of earth I fain would be,
The world, myself, and all but Thee" ?

If you can you are in the first part of the text: "I am the Lord thy God." It is a most important, solemn question; I thought of it coming along, it is a tremendous confession to make, and yet a blessed one.

Well, if He is your God, how did He become so? In the first epistle of the Corinthians, chapter i we are told how His people are His and in Him: "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." So if the Lord is your God you are in Him, and if you are in Him, you were in Him in the covenant of grace, and

"Once in Him, in Him for ever,
Thus the eternal covenant stands."

Well, I do hope that the Holy Spirit will bear witness with any poor, trembling soul, and if those evidences that I have named are right, that He will bring you into a sweet confidence of faith so that you can say the first clause of the text, "I am the Lord thy God."

But if He is the Lord your God you will increasingly seek to know more of Him. You will not be satisfied with just a nominal name in the Church Book. You will want to be confirmed of your interest in Him and that your name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. So there will be a following on to know Him. The incorruptible seed of divine life is in your soul and there will be times when you will feel it germinate within your heart and you will thus grow in grace and in a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ; because where once He has begun a work of grace, He will perform it and complete it unto the day of Jesus Christ.

"I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt." The 'Land of Egypt' represents this world that lieth in wickedness. I feel that the consideration of some that the land of Egypt represents the people of God under the law is a mistake, this cannot be; for Pharaoh was an enemy of God, he was a rebel; "Who is the Lord, that I should obey Him?" (Exodus v 2) so it cannot represent His people in Egypt, His people under the law; but the Lord brings His people out from Egypt, and it needed ten plagues to bring them out. The Lord could have brought them out with no plague at all if it had been His method and His purpose, but the reason was that He should demonstrate His divine sovereignty, that He is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. So that if the Lord is your God He has brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the world that lieth in wickedness. And really, with some of us it seemed almost as if the Lord had to use ten plagues to bring us out; there are greatly differing conditions of experience and realisation of the depth of evil. You take, for instance, the case of Lydia. The Lord dealt gently with her, the only thing we have of her experience is "The Lord opened her heart that she attended unto the things which were spoken.." (Acts xvi 14). Another tender case of being brought

out of Egypt from her idolatry was Ruth. Distinguishing grace. Orpah remained. O the blessedness, the solemnity, of divine sovereignty ! Divine love attracted Ruth. Naomi's God saved her by the same grace as He saved Naomi, He put His love in her heart. "Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee." (Ruth i 16) But the apostle Paul was dealt with very much more severely. A Pharisee of the Pharisees he was, as touching the law blameless. He was alive without the law but the Lord killed him, killed his religion, turned his righteousness into filthy rags and reduced him from a proud Pharisee to a wretched man. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans vii 24) But he was brought out of Egyptian darkness; and each, in the measure and manner that it pleases God, if He is our God, have been brought out from the world.

This is very beautifully illustrated in the Hebrews, chapter xi and as it says there - "And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned." The world is still there. Those of you who have been brought out from Egypt, the world is still there, but the same reason why they did not go back into the world is the same reason that you will not, and cannot. They sought a better country, their eyes had been opened to know the truth that Solomon speaks of in the Ecclesiastes, vanity and vexation of spirit has been stamped upon everything in this world. O there is wonderful teaching in the Book of Ecclesiastes; and all those brought out from Egypt will be given to realise just what that Book of Ecclesiastes declares. And so Moses, he had respect unto the recompense of the reward, and the recompense of the reward is the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away; and a view of the glory of Christ and of that inheritance in Him eclipsed everything in this world and made a royal court look a poor shabby affair. Do you know that? Do you understand that language? If you do you are no more a foreigner and stranger but a fellow citizen with the saints and of the household of God. "I am the Lord thy God which brought thee" out of the world.

Some have needed greater power to bring them out than others, but when they came out of Egypt it is said they went to go into the land of Canaan and into the land of Canaan they came. Not all of them, there were only two adults that came out of Egypt that entered into the promised land. Two adults. The others, their carcasses fell in the wilderness of unbelief, and that is very solemn. Their carcasses did not fall in Egypt, not in the world, but in the wilderness which is between the world and Canaan. O how many may come out of the world and never get to heaven ! And this may try some of you; it tries me very solemnly. They fell in the wilderness through unbelief, and Paul takes that point up in Hebrews iv "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the Gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it," therefore, says he, "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip". (Last sentence from Hebrews ii 1) For "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" (Verse 3).

So that it is a very solemn thing to be brought out of the world and yet to fall in the wilderness through unbelief. But not one of the Lord's people fell. Ah, my friends, there may be a reformation, one may come out of the world into religion if that be their disposition, but there is only one thing that will bring a sinner into such vital union with Christ, and under the protection and conduct of the covenant of grace, and that is to be born again. There is no substitute for it. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh", it may be profane flesh, it may be religious flesh, but what a mercy it is if in that sense our flesh and our heart fails. It does spiritually with all His people when they are brought under the law and strive to keep the law, strive to do what is right, their heart, their natural heart and their flesh fails, they cannot do it, and the Lord brings them to destruction, brings them into a furnace, brings them into that place spoken of in Zechariah xiii 9 "And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried:" And what will they do? "They shall call upon My name, and I will hear them: I will say, it is my people: and they shall say, the Lord is my God." They go through the fire and there they lose all earthly religion, all religious notion, everything that is merely traditional and ideal and imagination; that is all destroyed.

"I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt." Brought them out. Bunyan describes the experience; he saw this world to be a land, a city of destruction, he put his fingers in his ears and fled crying, life, life, eternal life! and the teaching previous to this is to see that there is death, death, eternal death in everything outside of Christ and His Gospel; and you will feel it, you will realise that this is a dead world, with dead honours, dead attainments, dead pleasures, dead wealth. You will know it. "I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt." And as you are given a sight of what this world really is, and see the condition of it today, at the same time, by the same Spirit and the same heavenly inshining, given a glimpse of the land of the living; and O the contrast! The contrast is sacred, it is sweet. Do you know it? Have you felt the contrast? You may have felt it under the preaching of the Gospel when the Holy Spirit, the presence of the Lord, is in the place. Then you feel the death that is within your nature, the death that is in the world,

"Death's within thee, all about thee"

But that is not the end -

"But the remedy's without thee,
See it in the Saviour's blood."

"I..brought thee out of the land of Egypt", out of this dead, dark world. Does it appear like that to you? We were speaking of that word the other day - "Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth. Gather not my soul with sinners..."(Psalm xxvi 8;9) O the contrast!

"I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide." It is as though the Lord said, the greatest thing, the greatest miracle in the Old Testament was when He brought His people the Israelites, out of Egypt, and it is celebrated continually throughout

the Word of God; it is as though He said to them, I have done the greatest thing, I have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and having brought them out of the land of Egypt He will be their guide and He will bring them by the right way to the city of habitation. Therefore, He gives them this ~~exhortation~~ invitation - "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." Well, there are some mighty influences brought to bear upon this favoured soul brought out of Egypt which will constrain him to open his mouth wide. The Lord has no time for little sinners who only want a little, can hardly just open their lips, no hunger, no thirst after righteousness. Those that can say we will eat our own bread and wear our own apparel only let us be called by thy name. Those who only want the name of religion as that Church "Thou hast a name to live but art dead". I say the Lord has no time for little sinners. "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it."

Now there are some reasons and ground for sinners to open their mouths wide, and the first thing is, because it hath pleased the Father that in Christ all fulness should dwell. It is a fulness as infinite as Christ Himself. It is a fulness of everything that derives its virtue from the Person of Christ. It is a fulness of everything that is spiritual, everything that is eternal. A fulness that comes from heaven. It is a fulness of the same nature as the inheritance. A fulness that is incorruptible and can never fade away. The fulness is the Gospel itself. Open thy mouth wide as My fulness. There is a need or a desire that His people have which cannot be satisfied except by the fulness that is in Christ. That is the first thing, "Open thy mouth wide" because there is a fulness in Me. But a sinner that has been taught his complete and universal destitution and poverty, he alone can open his mouth wide. And in experience you will find that you will open your mouth wide and there are two main reasons why you will open your mouth wide. The first is you will open your mouth as wide as you have been convicted of your sins. The early verses of Psalm cxix are much on this point; "Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live." (Verse 17) Deal bountifully; Lord, I want a lot. I want all the virtue there is in Christ's precious blood, I want the justification that is in His righteousness. I need all His wisdom to make me wise unto salvation, therefore, deal bountifully, Lord. I come feeling to need the whole of Thee because of what I have been taught, that in the whole of myself, from head to foot, inside and outside, nothing but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores. Open your mouth as wide as you have been taught what you are. On the other hand, open your mouth as wide as Christ in the Gospel. He is eternal therefore every blessing is eternal. He is immutable, nothing can alter Him or change Him; and that is just what you will need. You are a poor changing creature of a day, crushed before the moth. Open thy mouth as wide as my righteousness, as wide as my redemption. In Psalm lxxxvi you will find plenteous mercy and great mercy several times "Be merciful unto me, O Lord, for I cry unto Thee daily.....for great is Thy mercy toward me; and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell!" The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, and so the invitation is "Open thy mouth wide" as wide as the mercy of the Lord, from everlasting to everlasting. And that is the nature of everyone of His blessings .

You take again Ephesians i The apostle there thanked the Lord that

His people were made partaker of all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, but that was according to a rule; "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world." I believe the hymn that we sing is a safe hymn according to the text: "Hope all that heaven has good." For the Gospel is the fulness of Christ. A fulness, a mediatorial fulness which fills the church. It is the same dimension as the need of everyone of His people for their salvation to the end of the world; and so Ephesians iii concludes with this text really: "Now unto Him 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. Amen" O look at the dimensions of this fulness of Christ! And it derives its eternity from His Person. "Open thy mouth wide", wide as the Gospel is.

"I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt" I have done the greatest thing, you cannot ask me for anything greater, so open thy mouth wide and I will do it. It just means this, "Pray without ceasing." Prayer is a method; so far as the Lord is concerned He needs no prayer, He knows what His people need before they ask Him and He is able to exceed abundantly beyond what they ask, it is not that He needs prayer, but He will be enquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them. It is a blessed method, because in this asking, opening your mouth wide, there is a communication, contact with the exalted Redeemer in heaven. It is prayer, and it brings into exercise the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the offices which He assumed. He is the Mediator between an offended God and a sinner, and therefore, these blessings can only come to us through the channel of His incarnate Son. It will make Him precious. "I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it."

Well, He has bound Himself by this promise. The promises of the Lord are immutable and therefore if He has brought you out of Egypt and brought you to feel your deep, deep need of His salvation, then this invitation comes to you, and the promise "I will fill it." And when you open your mouth wide you will be following hard after Christ, you need all that He has. I have on an occasion or two so felt my 'worse than nothingness' in my nature, and yet at the same time have realised the infinite fulness and merit of salvation and grace and heaven that is in Him, that in secret I have said to Him, Lord, I want everything that is in Thee. I want all thy righteousness, all thy salvation, all thy precious blood as though I was the only one that thou didst come to save. You will want it all. "Deal bountifully with thy servant." "Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it." I will fill it. There is a blessed Redeemer in Psalm cvii and the promise is the same: "He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with good things"(verse 9) There is the character, the hungry soul; and that is another evidence. Do you hunger and thirst after God? "I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." There is the plain word, and He will fulfil every promise.

Now who is there here among us? I have tried in my very feeble way to give some evidences whether the Lord is your God or not. Did you follow that? If He is your God then He has brought you out of the land

of Egypt; and do you feel that deep need of Him? Is He your only hope? The Psalmist said, "And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in Thee." (Psalm xxxix 7). Jeremiah said, "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in Him." (Lamentations iii 24) And it is this portion that the Psalmist here is exhorted to open his mouth wide for, so that it may be filled; O what a portion it is! a divine portion, an eternal portion, an unlosable portion, a spiritual portion, a portion of heaven itself. "Hope all that heaven holds good" Ask Him for it. Ask Him to sanctify you and make you fit to be there.

"I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." I will fill it. Why is it, my friends, that we are so little? "Ask and it shall be given you" is the same thing; "Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." How is it that we receive so little? Because we often ask without faith. Why is it that we find so little? It is because we have not that diligence in seeking; And how is it we have so little opened unto us? It is because our knocking is so feeble.

Well, may the Lord bless the text; O my feeble remarks! I hope they are true, but they are feeble; but may the Holy Spirit bring the text into your heart, and bear upon you such an influence of the Holy Spirit that you will follow hard after Him with your mouth wide open.

Amen.

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Reading Psalms 81 and 82