

21566 q
La T 971

Substance of Sermon preached by our Pastor
on Thursday, August 14. 1980.

Lesson. Mark 7.

And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well.
Mark 7. 37.

Let us to the glory of God, immediately declare the precious truth in view of the narrative, and indeed of the whole chapter: God does answer the prayers of His beloved people and responds to their cries and approaches to Him, and their applications to Him for divine aid, mercy, deliverance, compassion, healing. So let us declare categorically that the wicked adversary who so often torments us is a liar. What a blessed, positive proof it is of the compassion, love, mercy and grace and unfailing goodness of the dear Lord that it is impossible to find in the Holy Word of God one case where any sinner sought Him and was refused, whether for the casting out of devils, healing of the sick, for the blessing of the soul, deliverance from incarceration; whatsoever application was made to Him He responded lovingly, tenderly to the cries of those who heard of Him, found Him, and presented in His glorious Name their case to Him. So what will the adversary say to this?

Many of us here can say two things. The first is we have prayed to God Almighty preferring the Name of Jesus, based on His glorious merit and He has heard our prayers. You have signal, amazing, wonderful answers to your prayers. Let us therefore exalt His Name together. The other is, you may cry for a long period, and there is a word that is apposite and a great encouragement as used by the Spirit of the Lord for His waiting people. "And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing,"- not a sign; not the faintest sign. Do I find any of you? With all your pleading and looking to the sea there is nothing: and this is applicable to Churches, families, individuals. There is a robust, wonderful word of encouragement to their prayers under the influence of the Spirit for specific blessings who wait: for you will wait His appointed hour. So Elijah said, and this is a divine secret for you,- it is one of the blessed directives of the Kingdom

"Go again seven times." Seven is a perfect numeral. "Go again seven times," and child of God, never ^{give} up: you cry, plead, groan, sigh. "Go again seven times." Some of the younger ones may know what it means in due season concerning families. At the seventh time there is a little cloud, like a man's hand, a harbinger of wonderful rain, a great rain, blessing. This is to show you that the wicked, cruel adversary is a liar. He will say to you it is useless to go on. It does not rest with you; it is the Spirit of God inspiring you, and notwithstanding the difficulties and all that is so antagonistic He will enable you to pray on until the blessing you obtain. And I say to those who know the Lord, when you behold His divine Majesty there will be an understanding of the words in the Hymn,- He holds the promises and pardons in His hands; He displays them. He takes these things from the Covenant of which He is the Mediator and displays them. It is His purpose to give them, but He will be inquired of.

It is incumbent on me in the Name of the Lord to give a sweet word of encouragement to pray on. Listen: "Is any thing too hard for the Lord?" It is the Lord's purpose that things should be difficult so you should see His glory. If all was easy what would be the reaction of a tried, well-taught child of God? He would suspect danger. There are difficult things: "Is any thing too hard for the Lord?" Dear friends, it may be the adversary has tormented your minds to day or in the week: you have things that grow until they are the size of Mount Everest,- formidable, overwhelming, staggering. The Lord will make the mountains a plain. I say again, the adversary is a liar: he can quote Scripture; not in the right context. We know it; there is a flaw. The adversary is a liar, and our God answers the cries of His dear people. It is to the glory of His eternal Name.

There are two things to say concerning the subject before us. The first is, we see the sweet frame the dear ones were in,- a sweet, holy, gracious frame while in adversity. Now God had answered their prayers and granted deliverance. The Lord had granted to the dear one the great blessing to be able to hear and to speak clearly. I am sure the inference is, He has opened our ears to hear the blessed voice of the Lord, and given free speech so one is able to speak plainly. To me the inference is that the dear one will be heard sounding abroad the fame of the Lord.

If the Lord gives blessed ability to speak clearly, surely there is a divine purpose to be revealed, to blow the gospel trumpet, to declare His glorious truth, the everlasting gospel of redemption. So first the sweet spirit they were in. "And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him. And he took him aside," He answered their cries, and they were beyond measure astonished. What an encouragement it is to the Lord's people when He responds to their cries! Take the case of poor dear Hannah, so persecuted, in a condition of deprivation, and she poured out her sorrowful heart to the Lord. Eli misjudged her at first, and she corrected reverently the Lord's servant, so from his lips came the divine sentence; "Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him." She had the substance of this in her soul. "So the woman went her way, and her countenance was no more sad." See the astonishment when ~~the~~ God performs what you have been pleading for; and the language of adoration and the precise, beautiful nature of the Doxology, the ascription of praise to God. "He hath done all things well." Very sweet this is.

Before I pass I will say to you, so you will know in your exercised, waiting souls the nature of what the Lord will do for you. He will do things that astonish you. Why are we amazed? On several points. We are so sinfully unworthy it is astonishing that the Lord should do such great things for us. And another is, it will completely exceed all your human mind has capacity for. It is the receiving end of the word in Ephesians; "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." The dear ones received it and were astonished; with all their temptations, waiting, trials, pleadings, groanings they were astonished at what the Lord did. This is the nature of the work of God,- the spiritual heights and depths of it are so unfathomed as to astonish us. So the dear ones 'were beyond measure astonished'. We can never measure the perpetual wonder to the end of our days and through Eternity.... What a vista of glory did the Holy Ghost open before them in relation to the Being of God, our Triune God; the economy of salvation, the Covenant

of Grace, all divine perfections, His nature, His glorious character, holy will, purposes and decrees, the whole of the work of the Son of God, the administration of the Covenant of Grace by the Holy Ghost. "And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well."

I will give you a brief word on the term 'well'. It most blessedly sets forth the perfection and beauty, the glory and wonder of all God does and has done. "He hath done all things well." There is something else to name to you. We have described the narrative as the season when the Lord had responded to their entreaty and they were in the joy and wonder of it. What about you who are still waiting? who are not in the joy? My spirit has gone lovingly to you and I will say this. If the sweet influence of the subject pervades your spirit and distils in your heart as dew it will bring you to the language of the verse in Psalm 42. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God:" You are not yet in the great enjoyment the dear ones have been, but, "Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him." The day is coming: it is the prognosis. What do you feel the future holds for you? If any asked you, you would answer, "Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him." This is the prospect; "for the help of his countenance." I had this in my soul to speak this to you because you might say you are not in it yet. The Lord can show you what is in store for you. There is blessing treasured in the Covenant of Grace for you. Dear Medley preaches a wonderful sermon on this Scripture . "My Jesus has done all things well."

Let us see by His grace something of the glorious truth in the word,- "saying, He hath done all things well." I suppose I could take you on the point of all the works of God. At various times of the year many are on holiday seeing the beauties of Creation, and in every part of the realm of Creation you see there is a fulness in it. What is it? It is a fulness of divine wisdom, goodness, faithfulness, immutability. The glory of God shines forth from all His works. There is no salvation in Creation: there is no grace, mercy, pardoning love; but there is a fulness. The trees, bird life, all creatures God made,- grass, trees, animals, the wonderful firmament, the solar system, the creation of man; of every part we can say, "He hath done all things well." Many times we have noticed that the brilliant brains of men and women concentrate on one branch for their

whole life, and by the time they come to the end they have only been on the fringe of knowledge. Such is the work of God. "He hath done all things well." And we see the majesty of God in every drop of rain, every flake of snow, every beam from the sun. "He hath done all things well." Take the amazing constitution of your person,- body, soul and spirit: He hath done all things well. It does not matter what you examine in the whole Creation there is the glory, excellence, majesty of God in His work. He hath done all things well. It must be said solemnly that the Adamic fall, the entrance of sin into the world and death for sin touches the whole human race and the whole Creation; all dies, withers; man is ruined. But with all God's creative work He hath done all things well. A blade of grass exceeds in wonder the creative power God has given to the human brain. The Lily of the Valley exceeds all the splendours of Solomon. "Even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." As we have said, there is no pardon for a black sinner, no salvation in Creation. Salvation is in the Lord Jesus, His incarnation, virgin birth, His work of atonement, His rich atoning blood, justifying righteousness, sanctifying holiness.

"He hath done all things well." As you know, done means performed. He does things. I will show you something of the tabulation of this and how we shall build up the subject. "He hath done all things well." I will begin here, with His divine decrees, His appointments by divine authority according to His sovereign will to effect His purposes and holy will concerning His dear people and all relating to them. "He hath done all things well." It was all settled in Heaven before Adam and Eve were created,- the decrees of God, His holy will, heavenly purposes. When you are graciously exercised and hope to see in your life, the Church, your family and providence the glory in these words, "He hath done all things well," the Holy Ghost will take you back to the decrees of God, His divine will and heavenly purposes. "He hath done all things well." There are some profound mysteries that will disturb you. "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." The whole point is, if God has given man with his marvellous brain (if used rightly) to know the right order of things in building, engineering projects, machinery, engines, it is all planned precisely on the drawing board before the work

begins. This is where I begin: why are you at Dicker? why are you on the earth? Why have you so many children? why certain things? Because God fixed it: that is why. Why are a man and a woman brought together? I am thinking of cases the sun shines on. Because God fixed it by His decrees: that is why. "He hath done all things well." It is all there to the finest detail. With the Lord's exercised people one thing they desire^{is} to know the will of God, and He reveals His divine decrees by promises and persuasions and by a holy, heavenly influence He wafts your spirit toward Heaven. He unfolds to you a little of the divine decrees of the Lord. "He hath done all things well." What promise have you that is unfulfilled? Is there one? What promises are fulfilled measurably? "He hath done all things well." He reveals His secrets to His dear people, and in revealing them He writes a promise on their souls, and they carry a treasure of grace and all the Lord gives. He would never give a promise concerning anything that is abortive, only wind. If God gives you a promise it is specific.

"He hath done all things well." That is the second thing: the third gives exercise to faith, hope, love, praying, pleading, seeking, pressing, groaning. There is a waiting interim. "though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come." It relates to all the Lord had promised His dear people. You will go through the trial of faith, and you will look back and say, "He hath done all things well." The path is mysterious. Joseph's brethren used their energies unwittingly to begin to propel him in the direction where God would fulfil His promise, though they were venting their malice in selling him to the Ishmaelites. Whatever you pass through in the interim, - "Blessed are all they that wait for him. He waits to be gracious." - you will say, "He hath done all things well." As Cowper says, "God moves in a mysterious way, - you do not understand. His wonders to perform."

What is the fourth thing? With a glorious foundation under your soul and blessed words of immutability, divine faithfulness and love the Lord speaks to you; and there is confirmation to your soul of His word; the time comes when He accomplishes His purpose, and when He does there is nothing cursory about it: you view it in depth. You see the wonder and glory of the work of God, see the perfection of His wisdom, see His

goodness, divine faithfulness. What a prospect! I am sure when dear Hannah took the little lad to the temple and paid her vows, she could say with all her soul, "He hath done all things well." Yes, the tribulation, trial, all she went through was sanctified. "The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up." All the Lord does is well: it is perfection, beauty, glory, majesty, wonder. The Lord bless you. Amen.