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Sermon preached at Ebenezer, Clapham, by Mr. J. Delves on Wednesday evening, March 17th 1954

"Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for Me?" Jeremiah 32, verse 27.

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This chapter, together with some other chapters, relates to the captivity of the children of Israel and confirms it. God speaks very solemnly of the persistence of the people in their idolatry and wickedness notwithstanding the many warnings they had received. Here in verse 33 the Lord says, "They have turned unto me the back, and not the face: though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction." Therefore the Lord confirms His judgments upon them and would have them to know, "that it is an evil thing and bitter", to sin against God and to persist in a course of wickedness. Truly they did suffer for their abominations by having to go into captivity for a long period. At the same time the latter part of the chapter has some very gracious, confirming promises of ultimate restoration. God declares, "Behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: And they shall be My people, and I will be their God: And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear Me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them."

To confirm this we find the prophet Jeremiah making a purchase of a field. It may appear to have been very ill-timed to do this, when at the same time he was confirming by the words of the Lord their captivity, but this was done as practical evidence of his faith and confidence in the words of the Lord, that they would surely return and again inhabit the land and have their possessions as before. So we see here, when Jeremiah "had delivered the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah, he prayed unto the Lord, saying, 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!" He appears to have had a wonderful view of God's almighty power in the face of seeming impossibilities and indeed there were no impossibilities actually, because of the Word of the Lord to him. So that though it may have appeared to be such folly to buy Hanameel's field at such a time as this, yet he did it as a practical demonstration that God would surely fulfil His own promise and restore the people to their own land. We find the Lord speaking here to Jeremiah in verses 26 & 27:- "Then came the Word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying, Behold, I am the LORD, the God of

all flesh: is there anything too hard for Me?" It is true He is the God of all flesh, although all are not His people in a covenant sense. He is the God of all flesh in that He is almighty God and has made heaven and earth and controls all things, has everything beneath His sovereign, immutable power, so that there is nothing He cannot do. As to nations, empires and kingdoms, all flesh, however many, however mighty, all are under His power and at His sovereign disposal. So it can be confirming to see that though God affirmed the captivity, speaking through His servant Jeremiah, that this should surely come to pass because of their abominations and their persistence in them, yet still He does with equal certainty affirm their return. As though He would say, As to this matter, is there any thing too hard for Me? Is this too hard for Me, to take this people and send them into captivity under solemn judgment for their sin. Is it too hard for Me in My appointed time, to deliver and bring them back, and establish them in their own land? "I AM....God of all flesh." So it can be confirming to us to see He is the God of all flesh - that is - He is the God of all people to do with them as He will. So when the appointed time came, He put it into the heart of Cyrus to give liberty to these captive Jews to go to their own country and also to make a way for them and bring them through what appeared to be insurmountable difficulties. "I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for Me?" This may be confirming that the children of God can feel that God has control over all men; they may not be His people but He has power over them. He is the God of all flesh and He can turn their mind and heart into which ever way He will, whatever channel He will, use them as instruments, make them willing to fulfil His own purposes; though they know Him not, have no love to Him, no care for Him, no knowledge of Him, He can use them, and does use them, as instruments to fulfil His purposes.

Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for Me?" Jeremiah, as I have hinted, could believe this in his appeal to God, saying, "Thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for Thee:" Jeremiah believed it and there are times with the Lord's people when they believe it. This is not designed to warrant any abuse of divine omnipotence, in that sense, in our minds or by our actions, but is designed to confirm the Lord's exercised people that however great their difficulties may appear, they are not too hard for their God. "I am the God of all flesh." He is the God of all our enemies. He can do with them as He will. "I am the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for Me?" As to this challenge, it is not the only place in the Scripture where

the Lord has challenged men; it was so in the case of Abraham and Sarah. When the Lord came to Abraham on that particular day in the plains of Mamre and informed him that Sarah should have a son, Sarah laughed - a laugh of unbelief and incredulity, not assuming it to be a possible thing; but the Lord said to Abraham, "Is any thing too hard for the Lord?" Although this was indeed an impossibility according to the ordinary course of nature, yet the purpose of God was to show that He was above all, and that even such a matter was not too hard for Him, as events proved.

Is any thing too hard for the Lord? When we can consider this, we have to make our own confessions that there are many things too hard for us; we are in this aspect dependent creatures and have not that power to do things except it please the Lord to give it to us. Many things are too hard for us, we have to prove in our failures at times; we have to prove that we cannot do things in our own strength or as independent of this God. When we attempt to, we often have to suffer in consequence; but God has many times declared He will be the helper of His people, that He will not fail them in their time of need or leave them in their distresses but will perform His Word and promise concerning them and He will always be as good as His word. You may look at some things in your life or the future, or matters that may be pending or weighing upon your spirit and say, It overwhelms me, it is too much for me, it is more than I can carry, or I have not the grace to walk in this or that trial or to continue in this path; but if you have grace to take your matter to God, whatever it may be, and lay it before Him, in the boldness of faith, bring His own challenge, as it were, to Him, "opening your mouth wide", you may know that nothing is too hard for Him. His divine attributes and perfections affirm this. He is almighty God and this being so, nothing can be too hard for Him. There is only one thing in Scripture of which it is said God cannot do it and that is mentioned by Paul to Titus, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." That is not to suggest a limitation in relation to His power but to show that He will never do anything which is not in strict accordance with His glorious attributes and perfections. He is essentially almighty. He must be this in order to be God; nothing is too hard for Him.

The point appears to be to confirm His people's faith and confidence and that faith and confidence can only be confirmed when we turn our eyes away from our difficulties, to divine omnipotence in Christ and find a standing there for our faith. O it is very blessed when we are helped

to do this; there is something real in it to an exercised person! It can cover everything in your life, it can take in any enemy, it can overcome any difficulty, can remove any seeming impossibility because nothing is too hard for Him. Is it not a wonderful thing for God to challenge in this way? It is His own Word to His servant Jeremiah and it is His own Word to us. I am the God of all flesh however great or mighty; is any thing too hard for Me? O has there ever been a time with you when you have felt in prayer in your heart that you could plead divine omnipotence, realising that you had no hope beside it? When you get hold of God, I say when you can, then nothing is too hard for you in this sense or too black or too difficult. No, because faith sees God above the enemy, above the difficulty or whatever it may be, and anchors there. It can be very, very sweet to walk in that for a few minutes. If you can get it, it can bring a wonderful relief to your spirit, it can bring a stillness there and enable you to cast your burden on Him; it can bring you to this, to be willing to abide by the issues whatever they may be, feeling them to be according to His sovereign will concerning you. O this omnipotent God, these glorious, wonderful, divine perfections! Look at the 40th of Isaiah; see what the prophet is instructed to write there concerning the greatness and power of God, this God who "sitteth upon the circle of the earth, to whom the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers, the nations as a drop of a bucket and the isles as a very little thing," who can turn the earth upside down in a moment and consume us all in a flash if He were so disposed.

Have you ever felt a little humbling in your heart that this God is your God, this Almighty God, who said to Abraham, "I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect." Look to me, put your trust in me. This God appeared to Jacob at Bethel and confirmed His covenant to him above the ladder, this Almighty God, this covenant-performing God, who made His covenant to Jacob there and gave him that wonderful promise. Jacob saw God there above the ladder but he did not see anything above God, neither shall we if we can rightly view this awful attribute; it can be an awful attribute to the wicked, but when faith is brought into exercise and we can feel just for a minute or two that divine omnipotence is on our side, we can face anything because we see everything beneath it, and it is wonderful to see everything beneath God, to feel assured that He will bring you through. "Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me." "Call unto Me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things." O these attributes! Is any thing too hard for Him, for this immutable God who can

never change, who is the same eternally, who was from everlasting, of whom it is said in Psalm 90, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." Thou art God!-and there is only one God! "I AM God" he said, "and there is none else!" "I AM the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." O have you ever got near this God? There is only one way of approach and that is through the blessed, all-sufficient merit of the dear Redeemer, the merit of Calvary. "For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father," to this immutable almighty God. O to feel that He is on our side! "If God be for us, who can be against us?" The world may be, a thousand foes may be, but that matters not if omnipotence is on our side. Indeed it is a humbling consideration.

Have you ever got hold of this challenge? Is there any thing too hard for Me? Is there any thing too hard for the LORD? It was the LORD himself who said that. Is there any thing too hard for the Lord? Indeed in the Scriptures we have some striking instances of this almighty power, sometimes very solemn, delivering mercies mingled with solemn judgments; but here faith can believe and tremble. It was not too hard for Him to drown the world by a mighty deluge and it was not too hard for Him to divide the waters of the Red Sea and bring His people through it to the other side. Those waters were not too hard for Him to divide and make a way. O how many instances we have in the Scriptures in the records of the Kings when they prayed unto God in their trouble and He appeared for them and smote their enemies, as in the case of Hezekiah, Jehoshaphat, Asa and many others. Proofs are given in the Scriptures as to this, that nothing is too hard for Him - not too hard for Him. The fact that He may not dispose to do certain things is no criterion that things are too hard for Him. His immutable, sovereign will is the moving cause of all His actions.

To bring this for a few moments closer home - you take your things. They may, I agree be too hard for you, they may be too hard for me, too hard for us, but how can they be too hard for our God, if He is our God? Is there anything in your soul too hard for Him? Is the salvation of it too hard for Him, although it was at such tremendous, inconceivable cost - yet was that too hard for Him? God in His eternal purposes and covenant love did appoint a people, separate them in His decree, give them to His beloved Son who became their Surety, took their nature upon Him, took their place, was responsible for all their transgressions, laid down His life, shed His Blood, battled and grappled with the powers of death and hell, conquered and came forth triumphant, rose from the dead and ascended into heaven! Was all that too hard for Him? And was not

the salvation of your soul wrapped up in that? It was if you are His, and this can be confirming to us, for if those things were not too hard for Him, how can anything else be too hard for Him? If the matters that pertain to eternity are not too hard for Him, how can the matters of time be too hard for Him? O the things that some of His people have to take to Him - I mean their soul things, their soul matters! The concern, the exercise, the weight, the burden, the darkness, the bondage, the fear, the apprehension, the sin - and even to this, are your sins too hard for Him? Did He not remove them by His own vicarious sacrifice? bear them away in His own body on the tree? Is any thing in your soul too hard for Him in the concerns of eternity?

Some of you, it may be, 'grope for the wall like the blind' 'see not your signs' wonder where the scene will end, feel like Daniel, when he said, "O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?" But the Lord said, Leave that to me, put your trust in me, that is my concern, I can manage that, "Go thy way, Daniel:..... go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." O this wonderful God! Is there any thing in your souls too hard for Him? the salvation of your souls? is there anything in your body too hard for Him, these infirmities, these poor, frail bodies, these weaknesses, these things that continually come upon us - mortal creatures as we are. But is there any thing too hard for Him? Nothing too hard for Him! Nothing in your soul's need is too hard for Him, and nothing in your body is too hard for Him either! Has He not power to restore? When the dear Redeemer was upon earth did He not heal the blind? raise the dead? cleanse the lepers? and many other things beside? But was any thing too hard for Him then? and is any thing in your body too hard for Him now? Well, you say, I have this or that trouble and infirmity; I have prayed about it and still there seems no evidence of any improvement. That may be, but that does not show any limitation of His power to restore, if it be according to His blessed Will; but what I mean is this, You have, at times, had to take your soul to Him and in the language of one as before Him say, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation," and you may have had to take your body to Him (some of us have many times) and say, Here is this poor body, this sinful, corrupt body - the seeds of death are in it, but nothing is too hard for Thee. You can take your body to Him and even if it is not according to His will to heal and restore, He can give strength to bear the pain and, moreover, He can give much inward comfort and consolation and under these infirmities, render them bearable; but even so, my point is, that His people can take not only their soul but their body to this wonderful God,

this omnipotent God, and say, Lord, nothing is too hard for Thee. O the things we have to do with God in, the fears we have, the apprehensions that rise - and yet what a stillness - what a quietness faith can bring when it prevails, because you can see, we can see, all in His hands, our times, circumstances, difficulties, sicknesses, weaknesses, distempers of the body, everything pertaining to body and soul, in His blessed hands for time and eternity. We know we are mortal creatures but it is all in His hands. Is any thing too hard for Me?

Is it too hard for Him to bring your spirit into submission? Well, it can even sometimes be more profitable than having our poor prayers answered, especially when those prayers are according to the desires of nature in us. O it is sweet to believe, wonderful to believe it is all in His hands and to live in it for a few minutes, to be able to trust Him and get just a second or two of that wonderful peace that attends it. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee."

Is any thing too hard for Me? for Me? Am not I Almighty God? Is any thing too hard for Me? any thing in your circumstances too hard? I do not know how you may be feeling, some of you, but some of you may have some sinkings (and if we look away from Him we shall have some sinkings) but if we can come to this, lay hold of it, feel it, walk in it, we shall have a confidence that will carry us through. He will not fail. Is there anything too hard for Him? in your circumstances, in your future - is there any enemy too hard for Him? any friend too hard for Him? any trial too hard for Him? can He not give you strength to walk in it and grace to bear that cross, till He shall dispose to remove it? I know it can, in a way, be easy to speak like this and you may say so, and say, It is very different from walking in it. I know it is, and I have no strength to walk in these things myself, and you have no strength to walk in them yourself, but if you are favoured to feel in your heart His strength, you will prove that sufficient.

In the Scriptures we find some coming to the Lord in their troubles and distresses as the Syrophenician woman, saying, "Lord, help me," struggling against discouraging conditions. Have you ever struggled against discouraging conditions till you have come to fall before Him, live or die, saved or lost, and felt able to cast everything - yourself, soul and body - into His blessed hands for a minute or two. When that has been the case, has it not been wonderful how He has brought you through? "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God:..... I will help thee". And he can too! Is any thing too hard for Me? Is any mountain too big, any valley too deep. Was not this the word in the prophecy of Zechariah by the Lord unto the people in their

difficulties. "Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain;" Before Zerubbabel, before this God, not before our strength or our might but "Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain:" Were the walls of Jericho too hard for Him? What wonderful ways the Lord has of working! He could have cracked the walls of Jericho in a moment - but not so, they marched day after day and again on the seventh day seven times. Why all this? Because it was the Lord's purpose. So it may be in your things. Before the Lord brings deliverance, you have to keep walking round it day after day and it is just the same but even so, when the Lord's time came and they blew with the trumpets, the walls fell down flat, and the people went over - they fell down flat. The Lord does not do things half way. He usually takes it out of our hands. Is anything too hard for Me?

I know this has been a poor, rambling affair but at the same time if the Lord should be pleased to use a few broken, disconnected sentences, which sometimes He has done, more than a well-ordered, cut and dried sermon, then it will be to His praise. This we are assured of - nothing is too hard for this God! If he is our God - and sometimes I believe we hope He is, then nothing is too hard for Him to do for us! Nothing in life too hard! Nothing in death too hard! O may the Lord help us. Difficulties there will be but all is beneath this wonderful God - and He is a wonderful God! I believe some of us could not look back without saying He has been a wonderful God to us. May the Lord help us poor, weak creatures, fearful creatures, worms as it were, so defenceless. May He be our Defence, our Helper, our Saviour and our God! "Behold, I am the LORD", as though He would say, listen to Me, you may hear a thousand voices but listen to this, "Behold," I - a wonderful I, "I am the Lord: the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for Me?"

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