

## "HE DOETH ALL THINGS WELL"

– OCTOBER 27. – MARK 7:31-8:10. –

**"He hath done all things well: He maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak." – V. 37.**

IN PREVIOUS STUDIES we have noted the fact that Jesus invariably, in connection with His miracles, impressed the healed ones in particular, and all the witnesses in general, with the fact that the healing power was Divine, thus to establish faith in God. Today's lesson gives a special illustration along this line. A person was brought to the Savior to heal who was deaf and who had an impediment in his speech. They besought Him that He would lay hands on him.

From this it seems evident that most of the miracles were performed by the laying on of hands, although the record also is that some were healed by touching Jesus or touching His garments. In the latter case it is evident that the healed person exercised faith, otherwise he would not have touched the garment in hope of healing. In another case we read that Jesus could not do many mighty works at a certain place on account of their unbelief. Hence, willingly or unwillingly, the power of healing was associated with the exercise of faith; it was either on the part of the sick, or for him by his friends.

The instance under consideration is peculiar. (1) Because Jesus took the man away from the multitude and healed him privately; and (2) it is peculiar as to the means used. He put His fingers into the man's ears, as though to start some life current through them; then He spat and touched the man's tongue. We cannot suppose that the Master's power was limited to these means, when on other occasions He exercised other means. It seems preferable to understand that these methods were used in order to attract the man's attention and assist him in the exercise of faith.

As the man could not hear, nothing said to him could explain the situation; he could see the spitting, he could feel the touch, he understood what was going on, and incidentally the healing of his person. These matters meant the submission of his mind, or the exercise of a degree of faith. Additionally, after having given those lessons, and while the man still looked at Him, Jesus looked up to Heaven, and thus the patient had a third lesson on the subject, namely, that the power for his cure was expected from God. Jesus sighed, and said, "*Ephphatha*," that is, "*Be opened*," and immediately the man's ears were opened and the difficulty of his speech was gone.

The statement that Jesus sighed is worthy of note; we can only surmise that it indicated His deep sympathy with the man before Him and with the groaning creation in general. We remember another occasion on which it was said that Jesus "groaned in spirit." That was when He stood by the tomb of His friend Lazarus, and saw Mary weeping and the Jews weeping with her; "He groaned in spirit and was troubled," and wept also. The general lesson seems to be that He was

### **TOUCHED WITH A FEELING OF MAN'S INFIRMITIES,**

as had been prophesied. The fact is, He was perfect – He did not have an imperfect body with aches and pains and blemishes, such as other men have, but this did not make Him cold and unsympathetic, rather the reverse. His perfect mind would make all His sensibilities more active than ours; His sympathy would be stronger, His sense of pain keener. We, as a fallen race, have become so accustomed to many of our surroundings that they are commonplace and we are inclined to consider them natural – forgetting that the natural order of man would [R5104 : page 295] be the perfect order, and that the blemished state is the unnatural.

In yet another way may we suppose our Master was touched with a feeling of our infirmities, namely, by reason of His losing vitality on the occasion of each miracle. Is not this the meaning of the Scripture which declares that "He poured out His soul unto death"? Daily, hourly,

His vitality was being exhausted in the healing, blessing, comforting and instructing of those with whom He was in contact. We have a very clear expression on this very subject, in the case of the poor woman who had an issue of blood for years, and who quietly and unostentatiously touched the hem of His garment, saying within herself, "If I may but touch His garment, I shall be healed." She was healed instantly, and Jesus turned Himself about and asked, "Who touched Me?" for He perceived that virtue, vitality, had gone out of Him.

This thought, that the Master was not merely using a Divine power as an Agent of God, but that He was using up His physical power for man's relief, should properly bring our hearts into very close touch and sympathy with Him, and give us that much clearer view of **[R5104 : page 296]** the Savior's love, and that much better foundation for confidence in Him in respect to all our affairs.

In the miracle under consideration in this lesson, our Lord's sigh may also have been, as with us, an evidence of physical weakness – the result of His bestowing of His vitality and energy in the cure of the patient. We are not to think of the death of Jesus, therefore, as having been entirely accomplished at Calvary. Rather are we to understand that it began at His consecration, at thirty years of age, at Jordan, and that it continued day after day, and year after year, and merely culminated and was finished at Calvary.

The day before His crucifixion our Lord intimated this. Speaking of His consecration unto death, He said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!" It was accomplished fully the following day, on Calvary, when He cried, "It is finished!" His baptism into death was accomplished.

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It is following the account of this miracle that we read that the multitude declared the words of our text. We are not, however, to

understand that merely this one healing was the basis of their comment, for the account of these same instances by St. Matthew (15:29-31) tells of great multitudes gathered, having with them many lame, blind, dumb and maimed and many others, and they cast them down at His feet, and He healed them, insomuch that the multitudes wondered when they saw the dumb speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk and the blind to see, and they glorified the God of Israel.

### **"MANIFESTED FORTH HIS GLORY"**

Let us never lose sight of the great central thought connected with our Lord's miracles. His mission was not to heal the sick and to cast out devils, but to "give His life a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." The secondary feature of His work was the calling of the "Israelites indeed" to be His footstep followers, who would be received of the Father and begotten of the Holy Spirit, at and after Pentecost. The miracles and cures performed were merely incidentals and not His real work. They were incidental in the sense that they were illustrations on a small scale of the great work which His Kingdom will accomplish during the thousand years of His reign. Then "all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped."

It would have been a still greater and grander work for Jesus to have expounded the Divine Plan, and to have opened the eyes of the understanding of the people, and their deaf ears; but this work could not be accomplished to any extent until after He had ascended up on high, and had appropriated the merit of His sacrifice to the justification of believers. Hence it was that Jesus said to His disciples, "Greater works than these shall ye do, because I go to My Father."

And so it is today that the followers of Jesus are permitted to do greater things than He did, greater than any of those miracles, because it is surely a greater miracle to open the mental eyes than to open the physical; to unstop the mental ears is more wonderful than to open the physical ears; to cause the dumb to sing praises to God in the spirit of their minds is still greater work than the giving of natural speech. It is

not that we can do greater works than Jesus of ourselves, nor that we could do as great, for without Him we could do nothing. As it was Jesus who did the cures accomplished by His Apostles when He sent them forth to heal the sick and to cast out devils, so it is Jesus now who is doing these greater things through His consecrated people.

### **ANOTHER MULTITUDE MIRACULOUSLY FED**

The account in the conclusion of this lesson, of the feeding of four thousand people with seven loaves, and the taking up of seven hampers of fragments, was another manifestation of Jesus' power, or as He would express it, of the Divine power in Him. When the five thousand were fed, five loaves and two fishes were used, and they were gotten from a small boy. In this case the disciples themselves had seven loaves, and gave their all for the feeding of the multitude, and all had sufficient; and the fragments, according to the Master's direction, were again collected.

It is worthy of note that in both cases the Master displayed frugality and encouraged economy on the part of His followers. No doubt it would have been just as easy for Him to have created more delicate viands and in great variety. The loaves used then were the same as are used in Palestine today by the natives; they are about the size of our large buns and are made of the entire wheat, ground. Many of the strong natives of Egypt and Palestine seem to live almost exclusively on this bread, about two such small loaves constituting a meal. Quite possibly some of us would find ourselves equally healthy and strong on similarly plain food. It is for us to exercise faith in God and to partake of our daily bread with grateful hearts; there will be a blessing in it, however plain.

