

The Wide-open Mouth Filled

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"I am the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt: open your mouth wide, and I will fill it." [Psalm 81:10](#).

You have, no doubt, met with various interpretations of this metaphor—"Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it." You will find that several expositors say that there is an allusion, here, to a custom which is said to have been observed by the late Shah of Persia, who, being greatly pleased with one of his courtiers, made him open his mouth and then began to fill it with diamonds, pearls, rubies and emeralds. I shall expect that, under such circumstances, the courtier would open his mouth very wide indeed!

Well, you may use that incident as an illustration, if you like and, certainly, the spiritual blessings which God gives to His children are far more precious than pearls, diamonds and rubies—and there is every inducement for you to open your mouth to receive such treasure as He is waiting and willing to give you! But I do not feel sure that the Holy Spirit intended the Psalmist to allude to any such custom as this. It is too expensive an operation to be very frequently performed and it strikes me that even such semi-maniacs as Shahs and Sultans usually are, would not be likely to often attempt such a feat as that. In default of a more suitable illustration, it might be used, but it does not appear to me to be in accordance with the chaste and natural tone of the Word of God.

Another illustration of the text may be found in a custom which is much more common in the East. At Oriental feasts, when the head of the household wishes to select the best part of the meat for an honored guest, he usually chooses the fattest portion he can find, as the Oriental mind conceives just what we would not conceive, namely, that a mass of fat, all dripping with grease, is the most delicious morsel that can possibly be given to a guest. So the host searches for the fattest piece of meat in the dish, takes it in his hand and puts it deliberately into the mouth of the principal guest, bidding him open his mouth wide that he may receive it. This seems a revolting practice to us, but it was evidently the custom then, as it still is in the East. Thus we have David saying, "My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise you with joyful lips"—as if the lips sucked it with delight even while the fat was still upon them.

But I am inclined to look for quite another explanation of the text, though admitting that the second one is probably that upon which the Psalmist was thinking when he wrote these words. One springtime I discovered a bird's nest, in which there were a number of

little birds. They were not fledged enough to fly and their judgments were not well developed and, therefore, they mistook me for their mother or father. I would not touch them, but I held my fingers over them and they opened their mouths wide—no, the little creatures seemed to me as if they were all mouth! I could not see any other part of their bodies—all seemed lost in one great vacuum. If you have ever seen the mother bird come to the nest with a worm in its mouth, you have noticed that, in an instant, all her little ones are up and eager to swallow that worm. She can only fill the mouth of one and she can scarcely do that, for, no sooner has it swallowed what she gives it than it begins to gape again!

So the parent birds have to keep flying very fast, all day long, collecting food for their family but, however many times they come, they never have to use the exhortation of our text! The little birds in their nests are far more sensible than we are. When God hovers over us with His wide-spread wings and covers us with His warm feathers, He has need to

say to each one of us, "Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it." But the little birds take good care, without any teaching, to open their mouths wide that their mothers may fill them. This illustration may occur again during the sermon, for, whether it is the one to which the Psalmist alludes, or not, it is a very useful one and is full of instruction. It also has the further advantage that it does not appertain to either the East or the West and, as this blessed Book is neither for East nor West, alone, but for both, I like to find an illustration which, in all times and in every clime, may open up the meaning of the Word. "Open your mouth," then, as a bird opens its mouth when the mother bird returns with its food, and He who, in the infinitude of His condescension, likens Himself to birds, says, "I will fill it."

Let us imitate the Inspired teachers in using things in Nature to illustrate the meaning of the messages they have to deliver. Look from our Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of Preachers, through the long line of Prophets, to Evangelists and Apostles, and you will see that they did not utter the Truth of God with their eyes closed, but, with large sympathy, they looked abroad upon the whole range of creation, both animate and inanimate, and yoked every creature to the chariot of Truth, if, by any means, through the use of simile, metaphor and illustration, they might enable the Divine message to ride triumphantly into the hearts of the people!

If any of us are to succeed in teaching either few or many, we must imitate these masters of the art. God has given the preacher eyes as well as a tongue—yes, two eyes to one tongue—and he must take care to observe all that can be seen and to make abundant use of his observation. Otherwise he will find his speech prove to be, as Shakespeare says, "stale, flat, and unprofitable." The true teacher should not seek to soar on the gaudy wings of brilliant oratory, pouring forth sonorous polished sentences in rhythmic harmony, but should endeavor to speak pointed Truths of God—things that will strike and stick—thoughts that will be remembered and recalled, again and again, when the hearer is far away from the place of worship where he listened to the preacher's words.

The text naturally divides itself into three parts. First, there is the exhortation—"Open your mouth wide." Secondly, there is the promise—"I will fill it." And thirdly, there is the encouragement contained in the name by which God speaks of Himself—"I am Jehovah your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt."

I. First, then, Brothers, here is THE EXHORTATION—"Open your mouth wide."

What does that expression mean? Well, I should have to open my mouth very wide, indeed, if I were to explain all it means. You probably will know, by putting it in practice, better than by any explanation that I can give you, but, certainly, first of all, I should say that it means that there should be a greater sense of your need. The wide-open mouth means that you hunger. The little birds need no instruction in opening their mouths except the inward monitor. They feel a lack of food—they are growing, and growing fast, and feathers have to be made—and they need much food and those strong needs of theirs make them open their mouths by instinct, as we say. Brothers, if we had more sense of our need, prayer would be more of an instinct with us—we would pray because we could not help praying! We would pray, perhaps, less methodically, but we would pray, probably more truly, if we prayed because there were groans within us caused by intense pain and moaning that came out of inward agony and longings that came out of the consciousness of our dire necessities. Surely, this kind of opening of the mouth, by the sense of our need, ought to be easy to us, for our needs are very great. I must not say that they are infinite, for we are only finite beings, but they are so vast that only Infinity can ever supply them! What is there that you do not need, my Brother? Someone said in prayer, the other day, that we were "a bag of needs." That was a very accurate description. Are we all conscious of our many needs?

Dear Brother, are you growing conscious of your own power? If so, pray against it with all your might! A much better thing is to become conscious of your own weakness. You will not open your mouth wide if you do not realize how weak you are. If you feel that you are strong, you will cease to cry to God for strength. Are you getting proud of your experience of Divine things? Strive to hurl that pride down, for you will be no wiser than a wild ass's colt if you rely on your own experience. Do you feel that you have now attained to a very high degree of Grace? You have certainly not attained it if you think you have! If you are still conscious of your own shortcomings, you are probably far ahead of your own belief—but if you are conscious of your attainments, you are far behind those attainments, rest assured of that.

I do solemnly believe, Brothers, that it is as good a test of a man's spiritual riches as can be found, namely, his own sense of his spiritual poverty. Oh, get less and less in your own esteem! Grow poorer and poorer, weaker and yet weaker—become, in yourselves, nothing and less than nothing! This is a grand way of opening the mouth because our needs, when they are truly felt, are really prayers, for prayers are merely the expression of the needs of our heart. And if, to the

consciousness of our need, there is added the knowledge that God can supply that need, we have, at any rate, the basis of all true prayer. Oh, for a great sense of our spiritual poverty! Oh, for an awful vacuum within the soul, a consciousness most truly felt that there is room for God! Oh, for a deep chasm to yawn within one's nature, which only Christ, Himself, can fill!

The next way of opening the mouth will be to increase the vehemence of desire. How did the Psalmist do this? He said, "I opened my mouth and panted." This is what we need to do, to get such vehement desires after good things that we cannot take a negative answer to our petitions. We know that what we ask is for God's Glory and our own good and, therefore, we are not going to ask as men who may be put off, but our resolve is like that of Jacob at Jabbok—

"With You all night I mean to stay,
And wrestle till the break of day." We cry, with good John Newton—
"No—I must maintain my hold,
'Tis Your goodness makes me bold.
I can no denial take,
When I plead for Jesus' sake."

Those prayers speed best that are most full of holy vehemence. There is an evil kind of vehemence which we must get rid of. I am not sure that all the expressions we sometimes hear in prayer are right—there is no need for us to seem to fight with God at the Mercy Seat. I feel, sometimes, a sort of shivering when I hear Brothers make a great noise in prayer without any evidence of corresponding earnestness deep down in their soul. Yet I know that our Lord Jesus said, "The Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force." If you want to have great things of God, you must want them terribly! You must get to want them more and more. Your sense of want must keep on growing. You know also that our Lord Jesus said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst"—hunger is bad enough and thirst is awful, but hunger and thirst combined bring a man to the verge of death—yet Jesus says, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for"—Christ's promise is parallel to the text before us—"they shall be filled." Get that blessed hunger and thirst, Brothers! When you cannot live without conversions, you shall have conversions! When you must have them, you shall have them! May the Lord drive that "must" into us all! May He urge us on with a passionate desire to resolve that we will know the reason why if souls are not converted to God!

Another way of opening the mouth is to ask for greater capacity. If you have ever fed a lot of little birds—no doubt my friend, Archibald Brown, has often done it—with pieces of egg. If you have some very small pieces, you drop them into the smaller mouths, but if you have a large piece of egg, where does it go? Into the biggest mouth you can find! You seem to feel, "That little bird cannot have a large piece because he has only a tiny mouth. But here

is one whose mouth yawns like the crater of a small volcano!" So you drop into his mouth a larger piece and I have no doubt the mother birds exercise a good deal of discretion in feeding their young. They do not give the large worms to the little birds, but they drop the large ones into the large mouths and, in like manner, if we get large capacities, we shall receive large blessings.

What a wonderful difference there is in the capacity of different individuals! I have heard it said that a sinner sucks in happiness, such as it is, with the mouth of an insect, but that a Believer drinks in bliss with the mouth of an angel—and it is so. The stream of mercy seems to run right over some men because there is no place for it to run in. It runs into others in dribblets because there is only a little hole into which it can drip. But when the mouth is opened wide to receive the blessing of the Lord, how capacious it is! I should like, spiritually, to have my mouth like that of Behemoth, of which the Lord said to Job, "he trusts that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth." Oh, for a mouth of such mighty capacity as to be capable of receiving a far greater blessing than we have ever yet received!

Dear Brothers, we are not straitened in God. If we are straitened at all, it is in ourselves. No wise man will try to put a gallon of any liquid into a quart pot. You cannot expect to put a bushel of anything into a peck measure. "Be you therefore enlarged," is still the message we need to hear—and one part of that enlargement must consist in the enlargement of the mouth in prayer and in holy vehemence! God grant to all of us far greater capacity! What little men we all are! We sometimes call one another great and perhaps fancy that we are. I wonder what our Heavenly Father thinks of us? We see our little children, one of them three years old and another only two, and another only a month or two—they think the baby is a very little thing and that they themselves are ever so big—and they talk of their big brother who is only four or five years old! It is very much like that with us! There is not much more difference between the greatest and

the least of us than between those children. So, if we can, we must grow—grow at the mouth and grow all over. We need to have greater Grace given to us, but the Lord will not give us great blessings until we are able to bear them. You remember how He said to His disciples, "I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now"? And He might say to us, "I have yet many things to give to you, but you cannot bear them at present." If God were now to give to any man all the blessings that He means to bestow upon him in a few years' time, it would ruin him! When God has given us any success, it is a great addition to the mercy if He has first fitted us to bear it. Some of us can recollect Brothers taken almost straight from the miners' pit and elevated suddenly into a position of great popularity with no training for the ministry—no persecution, no criticism from the public press and no unkind remarks from Christian men—and we remember with sorrow how they failed. So, if you, while you are young men, have to run the gauntlet of a good deal of trial, difficulty, opposition and failures, you ought to thank God for it! You are now being made ready to

receive the blessing for which you were not fit before. The Lord is increasing your capacity and when the capacity is sufficient, He will fill it.

Next, dear Brothers, I feel that the text must mean seek for greater blessings than any that you have yet received. You have opened your mouth and you have received something. Possibly you think that you have received a great deal. But the Lord "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." I have heard people say in prayer, "You are able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think." Well, I suppose that is true, but that is not what Paul was Inspired to write. We can ask and can think a great deal, but Paul says that God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we actually do ask or think! Well, then, as this is the case, will we not ask for greater things than we have ever asked for before? It is a singular fact that the certainty of obtaining is in proportion to the largeness of what you ask. Some men go to God and ask only for temporal favors and, possibly, they do not obtain them. He who would be content with this world will probably never get it—but he who craves spiritual good may ask with the absolute certainty of receiving it! Christ's promise is, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." If you ask only for temporal mercies and can be satisfied with them, you may get what you ask. There are gushing springs from which you might drink if you would, but the muddy waters of Sihor are evidently good enough for you.

But if you ask the Lord for spiritual blessings, He is sure to give them to you. It is more natural for God to give great things than little things—they are more in His line—more in His way. You know that certain men have certain ways. There are men whom you can get to do anything if it is in their way, but they will not act in another way. Well, now, the Lord's ways are as high above our ways as the heavens are above the earth! Yet David knew what God's ways were, for he said, "Then will I teach transgressors Your ways." One of the ways of God is to do great things for His people. Some of them sang, "The Lord has done great things for us; whereof we are glad." So you are more sure of getting blessings from God if you ask Him for great things—therefore be sure to ask for very great things! When you do get to the Mercy Seat, do not begin asking for littles and go home with trifles, but ask for as big things as ever your soul can desire and as big things as the promises of God cover! There you have a task before you that will tax your greatest powers, but give your heart and soul to it and you will find it to be a very pleasant and profitable one!

Ask great things for yourselves, Brothers. Ask to know all the Truth of God. Ask to know the fullness of God. Ask to know the riches of His Grace. Ask to know "the love of Christ, which passes knowledge." And when you have asked for all that, ask for holiness—and do not ask for anything less than perfect holiness. Continue to open your mouth wide that every Grace may be given to you, adding "to your faith, virtue, and to virtue, knowledge, and to knowledge, temperance, and to temperance, patience, and to patience, godliness, and to godliness, brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness, love." And do not rest sat-

isfied until you have all these Christian virtues! You may also ask for joy and oh, what an ocean of bliss is before you in the joy of the Lord! In "the peace of God, which passes all understanding," what a wondrous depth of joy there is laid up in store for you! Our Lord Jesus said to His disciples, "These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." It may be the same with you—therefore ask for great things! Do not be satisfied with being little Christians—seek to come to the full stature of men in Christ Jesus! I will be thankful to get just inside the gate of Heaven, but if I can sing more sweetly and if I can have more fellowship with Christ nearer His Throne, why should I not get there? God grant that we may all have that high privilege!

Once more, I think that this exhortation, "Open your mouth wide," means attempt great things for God as well as ask great things from God. Brothers, go in for something great! Go in for saving one soul—that is something great. Go in for preaching the whole Truth of God—that is something great. Go in to be faithful to the teaching of the whole Word of God—that is something great. It is not sufficient if you have filled your own place—a good many of you have not done that yet—go in to preach the Gospel somewhere else as well. Open some other building for worship! Penetrate into some region where the Gospel is not yet known. I wish that our College would open its mouth so wide as to include the whole world in the sphere of its operations. Brother Wigstone tells us that if we open our mouth wide, we shall swallow up the whole of Spain and Portugal. Other Brothers want us to open our mouth wide enough to absorb France, Germany, Russia and all Europe! Some of our Brethren have gone to India—there is a mouthful for us! If we open our mouth wide, India may be evangelized—and China—and the new world of America and the far-distant world of Australia will feel the power of the Gospel that we take there in the name of the Lord! Let us pray, as David did long ago, that the whole earth may be filled with God's Glory! What is the whole earth, after all, compared with the greatness of God, and with the Infinite Sacrifice that Christ has offered? Well may the Lord say to each one of us, "Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it."

I like big prayers, Brothers. I have some regard for the memory of William Huntington, though I would be sorry to endorse all that he said and did. He was a man whose prayers God heard and answered, but what often were his prayers? I smile, sometimes, as I think of what he asked of God—"Lord, give me a new pair of leather breeches," or, "Give me a horse and carriage"—and he got them. William Carey cried, "India for Christ," and his prayer has kept on ringing right down the ages! And the Church of God is still praying, "India for Christ," and that prayer will be heard and answered in God's good time. Little boats that carry small cargoes come quickly home, but the big ships that do business in great waters are much longer in reaching the home port. But they bring back much more precious loads! Huntington's prayer was the little boat that proved God's faithfulness, but Carey's prayer was the big ship which will come home as surely as the other one did!

So, "open your mouth wide," Brothers, and ask something that will be honoring to God to give. Did you ever think, dear Friends, how wonderful is the condescension of God in listening to the voice of a man? That He should hear our prayers at all shows that in His condescension He is as Infinite as He is in His Glory. Do you know, in your own soul, that God has ever heard your prayers? Then bless Him and love Him all your days. You know how the writer of the 116th Psalm put the matter—"I love the Lord because He has heard my voice and my supplications. Because He has inclined His ear unto me, therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live." It is truly marvelous that though our prayer is so full of faults and has to do with such insignificant worms as we are, yet that the Lord hears us and grants our requests.

There are some who talk as if prayer was a meaningless form to us. "It is a beneficial thing, no doubt, for you to pray," they say. Surely, Sirs, you must be measuring our corn with your bushel if you imagine that we could do such an idiotic thing as pray to a god who cannot hear us! That is an employment only fit for imbeciles and if you tell us that no doubt it is a good thing for us to do, we reply that it would probably be a good thing for you to do it, for it could only be suitable to the imbecility which originated the charge brought against us! We assert and rejoice to assert that without working miracles, God still accomplishes His eternal purposes in answer to the supplications of His people. In earlier days He worked miracles for the deliverance of His servants. But today He does the same thing without the miraculous process and as manifestly grants the requests of His suppliants as if miracles were as plentiful as the leaves upon the trees in summer.

II. Now, secondly, we turn to THE PROMISE—"I will fill it."

Great asking seems to me to be on a scale proportionate to the great things that are according to the very Nature of God. I have never been able to believe in a little Hell because I cannot find, in the Bible, any trace of a little Heaven, or of a little Savior, or of a little sin, or of a little God. I believe in a theology that is drawn to scale. If it is on the scale of an inch all round, I can receive it, but if it is on the scale of a foot in one place, I think it should be on the same scale throughout. Look, Brothers, at the brightness of the Shekinah Glory shining above the Mercy Seat—and that Mercy Seat red with such blood as was never spilt but once! And the Eternal Spirit leading us up to that Mercy Seat—can we go there to ask for a mere trifle? That does not seem to me to be at all congruous. Far more congruous does it seem that before the great God, with the great Mediator and the great Spirit helping our infirmities, we should open our mouth wide

and expect God to fill it! O Brethren, we may be quite sure that in dealing with the Infinite Jehovah, if we can rise to His scale of things, He will fill our mouths when we open them!

It is hard work to fill a hungry mouth, for the food disappears down the throat in a moment. When once fed, it opens again and is as empty as it was before. But God has the

way of filling mouths that makes them stay full. He gives us water to drink of so wondrous a kind that we do not thirst again! Jesus said to the woman of Samaria, "Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." And God says to each child of His, "'Open your mouth wide,' and though it seems to be like a horse-leech crying, 'Give, give,' 'I will fill it.' Though it seems as insatiable as the grave, 'I will fill it.'" The great God Himself says it and, therefore, it must be true. If He had not said it, I would not have believed it, but having said it, He can do what seems impossible to us—He can satisfy our most insatiable cravings and longings—and He bids us keep on longing and craving that He may keep on satisfying us again and again!

This promise is given by One who knows what we are going to ask. The Lord says, "Open your mouth wide," and He knows what we desire to receive from Him—and He has it all ready to give to us. Did you ever bring home a present for your children and ask them to wish for something, although they did not know that, all the while, it was in your pocket? You have brought them up to the point of asking for something that they need—then they go to bed and when they wake in the morning, they are surprised to see the very thing they longed for lying on their pillow! In a similar manner, our Heavenly Father gives additional sweetness to His mercies by tempting us to long for various things that He has all ready to give to us. He may well say, "Open your mouth wide," when He has so many good things ready to fill it!

What will He fill our mouths with? Sometimes He will fill them with prayer. Do you not find, at times, that you cannot pray? Never mind, Brother, if it is so with you—open your mouth wide, for He will fill it. He will fill your mouth with arguments. Kneel down and groan because you cannot pray, agonize because you cannot pray and the next day you will say, "I wish I felt as I did yesterday, for I never prayed with greater power than when I thought I was not praying at all." Open your mouth with a sense of need, a sense of desire. Open your mouth with the sensibility of insensibility. You can comprehend, by experience, the paradox that I cannot explain. God knows how to fill your mouth with prayer when you go to your pulpit. Perhaps before the time for the service came, you thought you could not pray or preach at all. You remember how the Lord said to Ezekiel, "Eat this roll and go speak unto the house of Israel," and the Prophet said, "So I opened my mouth, and He caused me to eat that roll." You also may be able to do the same thing. Sitting in your study, you may be anxious because you cannot get a subject to really lay hold of you. At any rate, Brother, open your mouth with desire, eagerness and longing as you sit there—and if the Lord sends a roll to you, and shows you how to eat it—when you go to talk to your people, you shall get that promise to Ezekiel fulfilled in your own experience, "I will open your mouth, and you shall say unto them, Thus says the Lord God." When you open your mouth in private

and eat the roll that the Lord gives you, He will open your mouth in public and you shall tell the people the Truth of God upon which you have privately feasted.

Next, the Lord will fill our mouth with all manner of spiritual blessings. David says that the Lord "satisfies your mouth with good things; so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's." Time fails me to attempt any list of proof texts upon this point. I can only say that when the Lord opens your mouth, you may be quite certain that anything He puts into it is wholesome and good even though, sometimes, it is not according to your own taste—though it will be if your spiritual palate is in a healthy condition. If your taste is out of order, even sweet things will seem bitter to you. If your heart is not right with God, you will ask for that which would injure you if He granted your request. When the Israelites craved for flesh in the wilderness, they made a terrible mistake. It will be far wiser for you, when you open your mouth in prayer, not so much to go into details as to say, "Lord, I am a mass of needs. I hardly know what they really are and what I think I need may be a mistake, but my mouth is open to receive whatever You see to be best for me." Then you may expect that He will fill it with all sorts of good things.

Further, the Lord will fill your mouth with sacred joy. When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, His people said, "Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing." It is a blessed mouthful when you get such an amazing mercy that you cannot understand it! Have you not, sometimes, received a mercy that has been like Isaac, the child of laughter? It has come to us as Isaac came to Abraham and we have heard the sound of the mercy and have laughed for very joy! God will also fill your mouth with His praise. That was a wise prayer of the Psalmist, "Let my

mouth be filled with Your praise and with Your honor all the day." What a blessed mouthful it would be to have your mouth so full of the praise of God that you could not help letting it run out!

III. Now I must close by noticing THE ENCOURAGEMENT. "Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it." Why?

"Because I am Jehovah, your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt."

Brother, it is Jehovah who says to you, "Open your mouth wide." It does not always do to open your mouth wide to man, but the Lord says to you, "I am Jehovah, your God; open your mouth wide, and I will fill it." When you stand before men, ask little and expect less. But when you stand before God, ask much and expect more—and believe that He is able to do for you exceeding abundantly above all that you ask or think! "I am Jehovah." That is a boundless name! We know that our asking can never exceed His benevolence or His might. We are asking of a King, yes, of Him who is King of kings, so let us open our mouths wide as we approach Him. His very name prompts us to do so. Then He adds, "I am Jehovah, your God." So, will you not ask great things of the One who has given Himself to you? Is God, Himself, yours? Then, what is there that you may not ask of Him?

There is great force in Paul's argument, "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" There is equal force in this other argument—As He spared not His own Deity, but freely gave Himself up to be the God of His chosen ones, saying, "I will be their God, and they shall be My people," then He will not deny them anything that they ask of Him if it is really for their good. Indeed, all things are yours already! Since He is your God, you have only to ask Him to give you that which is your own by His own gracious Covenant. I should not feel afraid or ashamed to ask anyone to give me what really belonged to me, however big it was. And, in prayer, you have to ask from God what He has already given you in Christ Jesus, for "all things are yours," because "you are Christ's and Christ is God's."

Then He adds, "which brought you out of the land of Egypt" Notice this argument, Brothers. Our own experience of deliverance from sin is a wonderful reason for asking great things of God. I speak with the utmost reverence, but it seems to me that God Himself cannot give me anything more than He has already given me in the unspeakable gift of His only-begotten and well-beloved Son. His blessed Spirit has given unto us eternal life! All the embellishments and enrichments and sustenance of that life are not equal to the life itself. The life of God in the soul is the chief blessing—and that we have already received. Well, then, as God has given us life, surely He will give us all other great blessings that we need and will deny us nothing that is for His own Glory and our present and future good. Paul often uses this kind of argument. For instance, "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more, then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." The greater mercy having come, the lesser one will also surely come! So, ask God for large things, for you have already received larger things than you are ever likely to ask for! And so you may rest assured that you will receive, in the future, whatever God sees that you really need.

God said to His ancient people, "I am the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt." Might they not well ask large things of that God who smote Pharaoh with all those terrible plagues? Might they not well ask great things of Him who darkened the sun at midday, who brought up the locusts till they covered the land, who made the very dust of Egypt to crawl with noxious life and who sent terrific hailstorms, with fire mingled with the hail? Who would not ask great things of such a great God as that? Then think of His slaying the first-born of Egypt and dividing the sea, even the Red Sea, and leading all the hosts of Israel through the deep and through the wilderness. He that could do all that, could, in His Infinite might, do all else that His people needed—so they might well ask great things at His hands!

Moses sang, on the borders of the Red Sea, "He is my God, and I will prepare Him a habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt Him." The Israelites might well ask great things

of Him who had overthrown all their adversaries! And you who have experienced such a marvelous deliverance by the blood of Jesus Christ, ought surely to be bold when you go to the Mercy Seat! The deliverance of Israel out of Egypt was by blood. The paschal lamb was slain and its blood was sprinkled upon the houses of the Israelites. But you have not been redeemed with the blood of earthly lambs, "but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Can it be possible, after such a redemption, that anything that is needed to bring you into the promised land and to enrich you with all temporal and spiritual blessings should ever be withheld from you?

Let us, each one, go to the Mercy Seat with our mouths wide open and then let us go to our pulpits and preach with our mouths wide open, even as Paul wrote, "O you Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged." Your mouths may well be open to your hearers because they have first been opened unto God!

I am thankful that throughout this Conference, I have seen no traces of doubt and no signs of despondency. Every Brother has seemed to have confidence in God and to have hope, like a bright light, guiding him on his way. I have no doubt that some of you will see "greater things than these" even here on earth, while others will see them from the heights of Heaven. As surely as we have the Gospel with us and the Holy Spirit with us—as surely as God has led us thus far through the wilderness, as surely as He keeps us knit together in love and unity—so surely will He lead us from strength to strength—and the Lord will be magnified in our mortal bodies whether by life or by death! And we shall, by His Grace, all appear before Him in Zion. God bless you, Brothers! Amen.