

God's dealings with man

Part 1

Speaker	Frank Broadley
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[00:00:00] Verse 31, or rather it's verse 32, Mark chapter 7.

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 from the multitude and put his fingers into his ears, and he stood and touched his tongue, and looked up to heaven.

And he sighed, and said unto him, A farther, that is, be opened.

And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and his [00:01:05] face plain. And he charged them that they should tell no man, but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it.

And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well, he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak. Now just a third to a scripture in Acts 26.

Verse 15, chapter 26 of the Acts, And I said, this is Saul of Tarsus who says this, Who [00:02:18] art thou, Lord? and he said, I am Jesus whom thou persectest, that riseth and standeth upon thy feet.

For I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister, and to witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things into which I will appear unto thee, delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith of the Lord.

[00:03:10] And the prophet is raised up from God when things have gone to the worse, on the part of man, and gave him his responsibility, and that applies to God's earliest dealings, and with Israel, and certainly in the present time.

And the prophet, the prophet is never a popular person, because it's the mind of God that he speaks, peculiar to the prophet.

But the mind of God is necessary for the people in that state, and it depends upon their acceptance [00:04:05] of the prophet, and what the prophet says, for their consciousness to be aroused, that their consciousness may be brought into the very presence of God, and I doubt not that in all instances of scripture where God works, you'll find that it's through the prophetic word that really brings the

conscience to know that it is with God with whom we have to do.

It is a solemn thing, but God is equal to the situation.

But man is the only living creature, is the only creature living who has successfully survived apostasy.

[00:05:01] In regard to the angels who are God's creatures, God deals with them as the epistle of Peter and Jude, in chains of darkness.

But one of the astonishing things, beginning at Genesis 1, when God created Adam, a full-grown man, and created Eve, a full-grown woman, and put them to be together, and then we get to the act of disobedience.

First in the heart of Eve was what her eyes saw. There's the danger.

The eyes saw.

And led her away, and then her hand answered.

The heart followed the eyes, and the hand followed the heart of the eyes, and there was the act of disobedience shared by Adam.

[00:06:03] And so what had been pronounced came upon them, although that death did not take place instantaneously. The strange thing to us is this, that in that fallen state they were allowed to continue the hostility, to be fruitful and even to multiply.

And so we have the belief, Romans 5 puts the finger on the spot in regard to this, to any intelligent understanding of God's wonderful ways in regard to recovery. And what an astonishing thing it is that God allows things to go on.

Even in the, can we call it development?

It's only used in the word development in the advanced stage of evil, and lawlessness, [00:07:06] and God-hatefulness.

And even when the law was given, even then, after being the incident of the flood, and the incident of Sodom and Gomorrah, as these warning scriptures tells us, and the Lord warned me in the 17th of Luke, for its application at the present time, remember what it's like, giving us warnings in Jude and 2 Peter 2, Israel's history, and the solemn warnings of the flood and Sodom and Gomorrah.

And God allows things to devolve.

Evolution rather, as one observed, it was more devolution rather than evolution.

[00:08:01] And so we have a process of devolution in departure from God.

And the whole Bible shows us, and introduces the prophetic word to give us light, even as in the

earliest days of the fall, when it was pronounced in the way of a threat, rather than the promise, when it was said to serpents, the woman's seed shall bruise thy head.

That was rather a threat, and to be carried out. And thou shalt bruise his heel. The woman's seed shall bruise thy head.

And the devil allows the activities of Satan, and allows it to apply to a duped, fallen race.

And yet the prophetic word comes and shines. It tells us that God has his own way in resource, yes, resource, to introduce blessing.

[00:09:12] And that must of course be in a sovereign way, not deserving by man, but this brings out the yearnings of the heart of God in love. And the pity that he has for his creature, who is so easily deceived. How weak is thy heart, it says in Ezekiel. That is to Israel, how weak. And how individually we are in circumstances where we thought we were strong, and how weak are our hearts.

And now we come in the fifth of Galatians.

We get a reference to the fullness of time. What a time God has waited. Patience.

Grace.

The fullness of time God sent for his son. [00:10:06] Up to then they had broken the law.

And now in the family of his son, his son is refused and rejected.

And the Spirit, the Spirit's testimony in Acts 7, on the part of Stephen, who also is martyred, that is rejected.

And since then we have the grace of God.

And whilst God sovereignly works and operates as the evidence of a company here of two hundred or more, what a wonderful thing it is to be of a company whose hearts God has bowed before him. And give us to appreciate the Christ incomparable as our sin reminds us.

[00:11:02] Join all, all the history books, prowess, accomplishments, distinctions that the world brought in. Join them all together. Hand them all together. All the angels evermore.

All are too mean.

They can't be compared. They must be considered in the way of contrast. Speak is worth, is worth, is worth too mean to set the Savior forth.

How thankful we are that our hearts are bowed to share in appreciation and the worthiness of the person of Jesus Christ our Lord.

[00:12:02] Hearts held.

Hearts, lives guided.

Hearts lifted up in hope beyond all the prospects of this world. Which hope we have is an angel of the soul, sure and firm. And that hope does not rest on anything in this world. Not even what brave men, brave men together can devise to improve matters here.

It's a hope which enters into that which is within the veil.

Whither the high feast has for us entered into that within the veil.

Wonderful words for us. [00:13:01] So our hope is sustained in all the devolvment of this world and all the boast of this world, the boast of improvement. And we live in those days when such things are advanced. And yet they promise that they have the solution to the problem. But we are not deceived. Which hope we have is an angel of the soul. And it keeps us steady and steadfast for it enters into that within the veil. It's based on the finished work of Christ. Christ, for the person who was entered within the veil for us, is the person who first went on to the, was on the cross for us. As we sang in our first hymn this afternoon. Let us not forget it. Let it burn into our souls. For the person who was on the cross for us in that perfect work, [00:14:02] provided the blood in his death of obedience, for God to see so that he doesn't see the sins to attach guilt to us. God sees the blood. If God did not see the blood, there could be no escape. But he sees the blood and not the sins. And who provided the blood? Jesus provided the blood. And he provided the blood not in his lifetime, but when all was done in the way of judgment and meeting God in regard to the sin question, and presented himself dead, that's how he provided the blood. Well, how blessed that is. And so that testimony is to be rendered. And in Paul's case, he's raised up specially a Jew, a Jew, a Gentile-hating Jew, the erstwhile Gentile-hating Jew, to be the chief servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, [00:15:04] a most wonderful man. And all in our favor, because the one who raised him up considered us, that he should be the apostle to the Gentiles, to be our teacher, and first of all, to be the herald of the gospel. Well, if we just refer to Acts 26, it is to a state of things where there is universal blindness. Now, physical blindness is sad, but I rather think that spiritual blindness is worse. Physical blindness, there can be AIDS. They can be sustained in some way. There are resources to communicate even to blind people, and to me. And they may not die because of their blindness. But spiritual blindness is contemplated in Acts 26. And that is, [00:16:01] a person doesn't know where he is and doesn't know where he's going. And the governess of Europe, and its education and universities, and the background of that, does not meet the state of abject blindness. And so, the Lord has considered us, and surely it is properly, for we did not deserve it. And he raised up this man from the Jews to go to the Gentiles, delivered him from the Gentiles to unto whom now I send thee, to the Gentiles. What a wonderful thing the Lord considered the Gentiles. I suppose we should touch this in John 17, just as it is touched upon in John chapter 10. When the Lord says, Of the sheep I have which are not of this, call them also. I must, the onus is on him, I must [00:17:01] pray that there may be one flock, one shepherd. In John 17, Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who should believe on me for this word. The testimony. And what a wonderful thing is that testimony is. And we are those who have come in. And so, the Lord Jesus answers, gives the answer to that prayer when he raises up Saul of Tarsus. And the purpose of him being raised up was to open the eyes. Now, this is not a physical touch on the eyes. The Lord Jesus demonstrated that, that he was able to do this in chapter 9 of John. And whilst we may pity that man, the Gentiles are pitied in that they are blind, blind to God's goodness. For if a man trusts in man, Jeremiah 17 says, he shall not see when good comes. [00:18:02] And good came in the first of Christ. God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself. Jesus narrows, only to be the only straight and with power, who went about doing good. Hearing all the repressions of the devil, for God was with

him. And that goodness was not interpreted as goodness. And so, if that goodness that came by Jesus, whom God sent, they shall not see it. And they are a state of blindness. Now, what is it that meets this? It is Paul's gospel. It is the message given to Paul, and first of all, it burned in his own soul, and he could face it before kings, before the gripper. As it was told here, he should witness before the Lord, before all the great men of the world, kings too.

Good to God, that not only thou, but all that hear me this day, this is to a gripper. Paul regarded himself [00:19:01] as having the advantage, evening shines, in the presence of that Roman monarch. Roman monarch, a gripper, came at that time. Good to God, that all that hear me this day were altogether such as I am, except these ones. And so, the message that Paul has is to open the eyes. And the way eyes are opened is the testimony of the Christ who has beat the cross and risen with glory. And when that is received, it is the most wonderful message that we could ever hear. And I believe that is how eyes are opened. Eyes are opened such as they have never been before. Whatever we've seen in this world would be oblivious to that fact. And it's an incident, it's a matter of first concern [00:20:01] because it is in the way of righteousness. Acts 17 tells us that God has offered faith to all men and that he appraised it from his head. And that in chapter 15 of 1 Corinthians, the Corinthians were becoming insensible to this and it was let awake to righteousness. That is, let the conscience be aroused by the truth of the gospel that the true facts of the case where righteousness really is to be seen is that the Jesus who was crucified here, God has praised him and he is there at the head and center of God's universe. Well, beloved, what a wonderful thing it is now that our eyes are opened. And then our eyes are opened to see where we are. And I believe it is, it's an action on the part of those whose eyes are opened and no one can prevent them. That is the day term. They will not have darkness [00:21:01] the darkness of ignorance of God anymore. They turn from darkness to light.

And from that which held them in bondage, the power of Satan unto God.

What a wonderful deliverance that is.

Now in the extent of an archive, Jesus is here and the state of things is represented in this man. I believe the miracles that Jesus performed he certainly came and he brought grace and he brought truth in his own person and he demonstrated it. But not only did he speak words of grace such as he said that woman in Luke 7 thy sins are forgiven thee but in the miracles he demonstrated the fact that however extreme the state of the abjection of the creature in the raising of the dead or the opening of the eyes or the curing of paralysis or leprosy [00:22:03] or whatever it was in the various miracles that he performed it was not only grace but he exhibited the power resident in him that he was able to meet man's state as to whatever it was that held him in bondage and held him from liberty before God. Now in this in the sense of Mark it's so concise and they bring to them this man who is deaf he doesn't hear anything and he's dumb and he doesn't communicate anything now that's a very sad sight in the young God's creature an emphasis on the fact of the of the degeneration and the departure the power of Satan and the evidence of the of the of the will of man that has brought him into this terrible state of abjection [00:23:03] that he needs the assistance of someone else not heard the word love not heard any message from God for his his deafness and it is because he is so deaf I suppose not having had a communication not having been able to imitate the state of being dumb is attendant to the the state of deafness and so the Lord meets this state surely in the extreme state of things and I I refer to this and I do believe it illustrates just how the creature is and especially where Israel was at that time here was the prophet who would come and that nation is represented by the that nation is represented by this man that can neither hear the words of that prophet [00:24:01]

insulated against any word from God himself therefore no prospects of hearing any word to his advantage and another state of things God made the creature for himself the last verse of Revelation 4 says this and so made in the Bible which takes us to the origin of creation and it shows how God has been outraged consistently by his creature from Adam onwards and whether it's a nation of Israel or the Gentile nations God has been deprived of what his duty is for it was for thy pleasure for thy will God's will not man's will for thy will and for thy pleasure [00:25:01] we are we are created but how God has been deprived of any pleasure from his fallen creature held by the enemy willingly there by the creature insensible of divine overtures even when those overtures come as they are at this present time in grace in the person of Jesus and so the Lord shows that there is power in him with all the compassion which is brought from God to meet this situation and it is demonstrated in this way he opens his ear and his word is we wondered once at the reading in Ipswich as to why we have this Aramaic in Mark here difficult to pronounce [00:26:01] Epharther and in the case of Jairus the another Aramaic phrase and in the circumstance of the cross lama sabachthani why is it that this is excluded from Mark this Aramaic perhaps a reminder as to where they learn this dialect or this language and a reference to remind them of their sin and their failure in that God allowed them to go into this state of captivity where this concept of the Jewish language was learned by them it could be that in the book of Mark where the servant is these three Aramaic statements find their place to remind them to prove their consciences that in a statement like this you learn that [00:27:01] then you are at your sinfulness in departure from God and there was retribution in the captivity to where you were sent but here it is he says Epharther which has to be interpreted telling us that we have to go and so in this instance the Lord demonstrates that he is able to cause the death here to here and following that the creature is recovered from God in that he can respond to God what a wonderful thing that God has a response as a result of recovery that our ears are open and we are conscious of speaking to God having first of all in the right order we get the communication from God that is [00:28:01] we get the revelation from God in the circumstance which has effected on us and our ears which were once insensible to any divine communication is broken and his will in his voice is to be deferred and then we have the corresponding response and God is set on recovery in that he will cause us to hear he prevails upon us and causes us to hear and having prevailed upon us and brought all this wealth of heaven into our world we are able to respond and there is a response in prayer there is a response in praise and thanksgiving and worship whether it be individually or in [00:29:01] the assembly how wonderful this is how simply these things are stated and yet what a wonderful accomplishment it is what the law could not do and it's one thing that God gave a perfect law which demanded a response from man and man being what he was that is the Jew representing the whole human race in whom God made trials in the Jew the fact was that man was not able to answer that righteous demand and so the result of that trial is in the early Romans every mouth is stopped and the whole world becomes subject to the judgment of God the hand on the mouth no response [00:30:01] but rather in the way that grace operates and prevails reaches our heart by way of the conscience and changes our life everything right everything pleasing to God what a wonderful thing it is that in this world in heaven it will be so but as it has been emphasized so much and as we cannot shut our eyes to fact we are living in an advanced stage of lawlessness and according to Philippians 2 which was quoted this afternoon it is where God gets us to plan without murmuring is this so in this world in Christendom it is exactly the opposite it is not doing things without murmuring man overrates himself is over assessing himself and the modern idolatry comes out in 2nd Timothy chapter 3 [00:31:01] we live in days when the idolatry takes its form men are lovers of their own selves lovers of their own selves lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God so this is the modern form of idolatry God is still behind the back of the creature even in Christendom what a wonderful thing it is when it is the reverse and God wins the day with us as he has done and God is everything to us the will broken the hearing the ear open and we don't want to miss anything that he says the word that the spirit speaks the word the word of God we love it

lovers of God rather than like the world in contrast and so Philippians 2 emphasizes the contrast in this way and it's a very practical word for us beloved in these days it's perhaps a good start in this meeting that we and God gets his triumph here in this [00:32:01] world whether it be in this country or any country of Europe or America it's all alike and man's will prevails the will of the people that which that which shows itself clever in the past in the past century in the profession of Christianity which was called Unitarianism and the mind of man coming into things setting aside the word of God that developed into a political outlet in the liberal movement and then in the in the labor movement and it cannot stop there until it devolves further into the into the communist movement and so what we see is springing from Christendom communism springs from Christendom [00:33:01] and all the lawlessness that prevails in the way of the worst crimes that are perpetrated as it sits in Christendom as a profession in a state of things like that beloved we are called to be true righteous representatives of God and so Philippians 2 puts it on it do all things without murmurs and discrepancies that you may blame us and harm us just exactly what we are that children of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked he cannot make straight and a perverse he cannot make proof of generation and by doing all things without murmurs and discrepancies we come out in our true character as children of God as lights lights and holding forth the word of life I believe the [00:34:01] holding forth of life is the power and if there isn't the power of the gospel in our lives our word in the gospel however we shout in the streets is not as effective it was Mr. Darby in his lectures in London when he was giving lectures on the official of the Hebrews in Park Street London and he said a little brokenness of spirit in this city would do more good than fill in this city with miracles and we are in a world which is exciting and there are exceptional methods that draw attention to themselves in a gang way whereas the very brokenness of spirit which becomes us in a world like this and subject as a willing subject as the grace of God prepares us to be and to be willing subjects it is here where we rightly represent God [00:35:01] as lights and it does not make a noise but a light is seen and people can't describe the light of those who have come to this world and it is the grace of God that guides us that teaches us that having denied all godliness everything that is unworthy and worthiness we should live soberly that is personally and righteously in relation to others and godly in relation to God in this present course of things that God is allowing and looking for that blessed hope and the feeling of the joy of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ Amen.