

"THOU DIDST IT."

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER-

"I was dumb; I opened not my mouth, because *Thou didst it.*" David the singer has become David the silent. The great musician is mute. His harp is hung up; the most eloquent of his generation is speechless. Why? Is his heart so utterly broken that he is struck dumb? Overwhelming grief does indeed sometimes seem to paralyze the tongue, so that the sufferer cannot speak, and congeals the fount of tears so that the sufferer cannot weep. The most pathetic picture of grief that I ever saw was a noble woman, who on her marriage-day heard the terrible tidings that the man whose hand was to clasp hers had suddenly died while on his way to their nuptials. Her brown hair blanched with the shock, and she sat speechless without a tear. We pastors often encounter the cases of crushing bereavement in which even the relief of tears is denied. Congested grief is the worst of all grief.

But the Psalmist's silence was not of that character; he has told us why he opened not his mouth. He had been brought face to face with this tremendous fact, *Thou didst it!* An Almighty and All-loving Father had laid His hand heavily on David's back in chastisement, and the Psalmist lays his own hand upon his lips. "I am silenced now; I will quiet myself as a child that is weaned of its mother. God did it."

Ah, my dear friends who may be reading these lines to-day with a smarting heart, it is a glorious discovery which we make when we discover God's hand in an experience of sorrow. If a fellow man has wounded us, or wronged us, we may scold at his stupidity, or vent our indignation at his unkindness; the charity of forgiveness is the utmost grace we can exercise. But when we come up to face our Heavenly Father, and recognize His great overshadowing hand in the cloud of sorrow, then there is nothing for us but silence and submission. Questionings will bring no answer; God keeps His own secrets. Murmurings only aggravate the suffering. Rebellion is—ruin. Push as far as we can, and press as hard as we may, we cannot force that solid gate of mystery on which is inscribed "God did it."

Well, then, as we sit and read those words through our tears, let us try to take

in their wonderful instruction and their precious consolation. Did my All-wise Father do it? Then it was no blind stroke of Fate, and no hazzard blunder of ignorance. He makes no mistakes. Just wherein the wisdom of God's treatment of me lies, I do not comprehend any more than your little boy comprehends the inside works of the clock when he looks at its face and reads the figures "VIII." He says "It is eight o'clock, and I must be off to school." He accepts the fact without going behind the clock-face. So you and I are to accept the transcendent truth that God doeth all things well, although He does not admit us into the mysteries of His providence. Our peevish and rebellious *Whys?* will only chafe and worry our sore hearts, and bring no answer. Infinitely better is it for us to *be still*, and know that He is God.

If He did it, there was not a shadow of cruelty or a shred of unkindness in the affliction. This is a precious discovery; for we can bear almost any blow more patiently if we feel sure that pure love held the rod. Love never wrongs us. Love never tortures us, never deceives us. Love never inflicts a wanton wound. The same love that "spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up" for our redemption, took your son and my daughter out of our clinging grasp; and did it, too, without asking our permission.

"But I cannot understand how a loving Father *could* take my darling away, while other people have a houseful of children undisturbed;" and another says: "If I had not been so perfectly happy with my husband, then I should feel more reconciled;" and another says: "This is a strange way of showing love." Good friends, this is not the world to unravel mysteries in, or the place to demand explanations. Up yonder is another world, in which we "shall know even as we are known." This world is God's primary school; you and I are the little ignorant scholars. When the All-wise and loving Teacher is speaking, the dutiful child *should keep still.* When he appoints us hard lessons, we should learn them, even though the tears fall fast upon the page. The mightiest, deepest lesson to be learned in this world is to let God have His way. Your brain and my brain are not big enough to comprehend all the mysteries of Divine providence; but your heart and my heart may trust our gracious com-