Why Was the Son's Prayer Heard?

In the days of His earthly life, the Lord Jesus offered up prayers and supplications to the Father. He did not offer them quietly, but with strong crying and tears. He prayed to the One who was able to save Him from death. And the Father heard Him. Scripture also tells us why:

“Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;” (Hebrews 5:7)

Because of His godly fear. These words open a mystery that Scripture calls great: “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” (1 Timothy 3:16). This mystery shows how the citizens of the Kingdom of God live. They look upon the Lord Jesus with such deep reverence and admiration that they do exactly as He did.

The Son's prayer raises a question for each one of us. If He was heard because of His godly fear, how will we be heard? The Lord Jesus is our model, and the Word of God tells us to live as He lived. If He was godly, we must be godly too.

But what was this godly fear, because of which the Father heard the Son? Many believe that being godly means being pious, devout, scrupulous in religious matters. Yet it is hard to see the Lord Jesus, who prayed with tears, as devout in that sense. The dictionary says, broadly speaking, that godly fear is reverence and admiration towards someone who is above you.

But the definition is not enough. Anyone who has a dictionary at home can look it up. You can know it and still remain like the man who has eyes but does not see. Towards God, reverence and admiration have a clear shape: they mean keeping His Word. That is how the Son who was heard lived.

What did this reverence look like in His life? The Lord Jesus Himself said it:

“Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.” (John 5:19)

The Son looked to the Father and did exactly as the Father did. It was not a form of godliness, but true godliness: complete reverence and complete admiration. Because of it He was heard when He cried out with tears. This obedience passed through suffering:

“Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;” (Hebrews 5:8-9)

The Son obeyed the Father exactly. Now salvation is for those who, in their turn, obey Him. Godliness is not something we produce ourselves. It is the godliness that the Lord Jesus had towards the Father, received by us and lived out towards Him.

Alongside the Son who does exactly as the Father does, Scripture sets another kind of person. Of the people of the last days it writes:

“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.” (2 Timothy 3:5)

This form can be seen even in a much-loved hymn: "Jesus, I want to be like You". When we sing it, we are saying that we admire and revere the Lord Jesus so much that we would like to be like Him. But the hymn can remain just a hymn. How many have the godliness because of which God would hear them, as He heard the Son?

People with a form of godliness deny nothing with their mouths. They say: "Yes, God is great, God does all things." But when God tells them, "Go and do", they answer: "I will not go." This is what it means to deny the power of godliness. We are not godly when we say "I will not go". We are godly when we do, just as the Son did what He saw the Father doing.

The godliness of the Lord Jesus is the standard. He did not obey the Father only halfway. True godliness is a total reverence that follows the Lord Jesus in everything, not halfway, nor even 90%. If we have transgressed anything in His Word, our godliness is only a form of godliness.

Why is this mystery great, and why do so few attain to it? Because there are two things in it: reverence and admiration. If you do not admire the Lord and the things He brought, the mystery of the Kingdom of God, and if you are not drawn to the Father, there is no way you can be godly. And without practice, this mystery is never understood and remains mere theory.

So we return to the Son who prayed with strong crying and tears and was heard. The mystery of godliness is His very life: a reverence and admiration so deep that you do exactly as He did. Whoever does not do as the Lord Jesus did never comes to know true godliness, which leads into the Kingdom of God.

Do not stop at the hymn "Jesus, I want to be like You". When the Lord tells you, "Go and do", do not answer, "I will not go", but do exactly as He says, as the Son did towards the Father. May the Lord help us so that this is imprinted on our hearts, that we may worship our heavenly Father and be drawn to Him.

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