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Sermon preached by Mr F. L. Gosden, at Galeed Chapel, Brighton,
Sunday morning 8th October 1967

"Draw me, we will run after Thee: the King hath brought me into His chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember Thy love more than wine: the upright love Thee."

Song of Solomon 1. v.4

We can hardly imagine that the same person that wrote the Ecclesiastes wrote the Song of Solomon. The contrast is wonderful. Do we appreciate the contrast between the Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon? To my mind it is a point in experience, it is a teaching. And I do trust that our young people will, in God's time, be able to discern the difference, the contrast, between the Book of Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon, for it does show the teaching of the Holy Spirit. I say the same man wrote these two Books under divine teaching. I could commend the reading of the Ecclesiastes to our young people. It would need the Holy Ghost to open their understanding and their heart. But in the Ecclesiastes, Solomon surveys the whole of this world, and everything that is in it. He was in a position, both by his eminent wisdom given to him, and his great riches, to enjoy, to possess everything that this world has to give, and repeatedly, as he speaks of his observations, he comes to the conclusion: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." It is a wonderful teaching – this world made a wilderness, really, in experience to be given to see light in God's light, as we look upon this world of sin and death and confusion and darkness, and see vanity stamped upon it all.

The whole of this Song of Solomon is the opposite. Immediately he steps out of the world in the Ecclesiastes, where he could find no satisfaction, where he could find no true riches, no happiness, immediately he steps into the sacred sanctuary of the Song of Songs. He sees Him Whom his soul loves: "Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth." O the sacred contrast! I say again, do we know it in our experience? Has that contrast between the world and the things of it, and Christ and His glorious Gospel been made out to us?

"Draw me, we will run after Thee." This is a song of love, and I thought our second hymn (968) was a beautiful hymn with regard to this subject: "Hark, my soul! it is the Lord" – and how gladly would some here hearken if He would but speak! "Incline your ear, and come unto Me," says the Lord by Isaiah (ch.55:3), and O what a beautiful sound it would be to those who are mourning at His footstool! "Be not silent unto me: lest, if Thou be silent unto me, I become like those that go down into the pit." (Psalm 28:1) "Draw me." For the most part, while here in a body of sin and death, we are "Bound down with twice ten thousand ties." (1072) There are the distractions of this life, business anxieties and worries, responsibilities, family cares, together with a body of sin and death. We shall understand what we sometimes sing:

"Up to the fields where angels lie,
And living waters gently roll,
Fain would my thoughts leap out and fly,
But sin hangs heavy on my soul."

(480)

David found the same: "My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken Thou me according to Thy word." (Psalm 119:25) But Hannah shows you how the Lord does raise His people from the dust: "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory." (1 Samuel 2:8) There you see the quickening power, the reviving influence of the Spirit, raising a poor sinner from the dust to inherit the throne of glory. But we shall know something of the dust; we shall know something of the dust here, also of our entire helplessness to raise ourselves, or to lift ourselves. It is an important point of divine teaching to know ourselves. It is not everybody that knows it, and I am persuaded of this, that if we never know ourselves we shall never need or desire to know the Lord Jesus.

"Draw me." To know what it is to go moping along in the dark, helpless with respect to prayer, unable to meditate upon the word and yet bowed down with things of this life, that we cannot shake them off. We have duties and responsibilities, and there is such an oppression upon the spirit and conviction, that you feel as though your wings are clipped, you cannot rise. Now this is unknown to a nominal professor, but how needful it is! "Draw me." It is the language of faith. It is an evidence of the life of God in the soul. I wonder how many here can use this language. I have thought, and it has caused me much heart searching, how solemn it is to speak of things we know nothing about. Very solemn for a minister; and if we never said anything at all except what we really know in experience, we should probably say a lot less than we do. And this may try some of you. Well, I could advise you in this way. It is often this exercise will come upon you of a night, when the curtains of night are drawn and you are alone, and it is good to search our hearts then. Well, it is a good thing to ask ourselves questions. Now to be honest with self, what can I say? Is there anything that I can say honestly before God? Can you say this: "Draw me" – draw me, because you know the terrible influences of your carnality, that you are earthy and are of the earth, and feel it? Well, if you can say that from your heart's feelings, there is evidence of life there. How different this is from religious activity. I feel the danger of it more and more in these modern days. There are activities in religion that have nothing of this sense of helplessness, of being prostrate in the dust, of begging upon a dunghill. Nothing, none of it at all – bright, brief and brotherly. But my friends, there is no root to that.

"Draw me" – and there is an object here: "Draw me, we will run after Thee." Peter puts the same thing in a different way; he says: "To whom coming, as unto a living stone...ye also, as lively stones..." (1 Peter 2:4) And this liveliness in these stones derives from the life in the living stone; and there is nothing that can attract a sinner to God except the life of God in the soul. The attractions of Christ are only known by the same life in a sinner's heart; it will attract nothing else. You might as well put a piece of wood to a magnet, it would simply fall away, and there is no affinity between the two. But if you put a piece of steel near a magnet it will immediately be drawn to it. Does this interpret any of your experience? And there will be the contrast. Look at it in this way. We have been speaking of the Ecclesiastes, and all the earth that is in it. Now this prayer: "Draw me" is to draw us away from things as well as to attract to Christ. Draw me away from the Ecclesiastes; draw me unto Christ, His glorious Gospel, His heavenly wisdom. And so you will ever feel that contrast; while we live we shall never lose it. There will be self, there will be a body of sin and death, there will be the earth, and there will be that kingdom which is not of this world at all. So you will constantly, under exercise, need to be drawn away from all beneath the sun, and drawn unto the glorious Sun of Righteousness. Do you feel it? That is as far as we have got. Is it in your experience? Can you

really say, from your heart, "Draw me"? I believe I can. And the worse you are, the greater sinner you are, the greater power of drawing you will need. O, but power belongeth unto God, and that is why nothing but power is of any use to you in the pulpit!

"Draw me" by Thy power, by Thy grace, by Thy love, by Thy life. And when it is so, what happens? "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" (ch.8:5) Why, my friends, under the voice of the Lord, under the attractions of Christ by the Holy Spirit, faith will rise and break through every tie. And we have known what that breaking through is; it is so sovereign, the power is not in us; it is in God, communicated to faith. "Draw me." Well then, there will be set before faith Christ in all His sufficiency, in all His suitability, in all His grace, His glorious righteousness, His sin-atoning blood and sacrifice, and that will draw. I can say this – at least, the Scriptures say it for me – that if you know what this drawing is, it is intimately connected with the everlasting love of God. The Lord made this out to Jeremiah. Jeremiah said this: "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore" – because I have loved thee with an everlasting love – "therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." (Jeremiah 31:3) So it is no little matter if you know what this drawing is. It may as yet only be under a sense of your deep need of Christ and His salvation, but if that need has given you that drawing, longing and following hard after Him, be thankful for it. But you will not be able to rest there. If this drawing and your following after the Lord is of the Spirit, you will never be satisfied until you find Him. "Draw me."

Well, there will be this, there will be a connexion between what the Holy Ghost has discovered to you, and taught you relative to yourself and your nature and your ruin and the world that lieth in wickedness, and the contrast that there is in Christ Jesus, His glorious holiness, His saving grace, His sin-atoning blood, His, justifying righteousness. There will be a connexion between the two. As we so frequently say, and cannot help but repeat it, opposites meet, and that is where the drawing comes in. What should we do if the Lord Jesus came into the world to save righteous people? Naturally, a natural, carnal religion would make that conclusion, that the Lord Jesus should come and find the best of people, the very best. Instead of which, He came to seek and to save that which was lost, the very worst. Opposites meet, and there you get the drawing. Do you know what it is to come thus to Him? Have you been thankful that grace shall reign, that "as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life"? And that will attract you, that will draw you. You would never be drawn unless there was something greater than yourself, greater than sin that is in you, greater than the devil that tempts. You could never be drawn unless there was something greater than all that, because it would never have the power to draw. But O, the mighty power of the everlasting love of God the Father, and the power of the invincible grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the invincible power of the Holy Ghost to quicken souls into life, and to communicate that life which alone can be attracted to Christ!

"Draw me" – **me**, not somebody else! O how personal true religion is! It may be that the blessed Spirit, through this text, may begin to raise some poor sinner from the dust, and lift some from the dunghill. It may be that this prayer is afresh put in your heart as you sit here: "Draw me." And where? Draw me from where I am to heaven, translate me from an experience of death and destruction in self and in the world, unto that glorious kingdom, the kingdom of Thy grace. Well, raise my soul above the ground, and draw me, draw my thoughts to Thee. I say again, do you know

it? If you do, be thankful. And I would again repeat this, the peculiar blessedness of the contrast between the Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon. I will leave that with you. You read them, read them both; in one you will find the earth, in the other you will see heaven; and see whether you know the difference, and realise the contrast, and feel that the Song of Solomon draws you away from the earth. "Draw me, we will run after Thee."

The spouse here speaks for the church: "Draw me, we will run after Thee." It is good when there is personal and individual teaching, and when those that are thus taught meet together; then there is a running together, a flowing together. "Draw me, we will run after Thee." O what a congregation that would be – a flowing together to the goodness of the Lord! "We will run after Thee." The psalmist says: "I will run in the way of Thy commandments, when Thou shalt enlarge my heart." (Psalm 119:32) Perhaps there are some here that can say that. Well, what would enlarge your heart? This drawing, as the Lord Jesus is revealed by the Holy Ghost – He can be tasted: "O taste and see that the Lord is good." (Psalm 34:8) He can be possessed. It is a marvellous thing that the eternal God, the eternal Son, the Creator of all things, heaven's highest glory, can be possessed by an insignificant sinner. But He can! And if this is made out to you, it will enlarge your heart. And when a poor sinner is given to see the love of God in Christ, how that His love loves to the very end, traces that love in His coming.

Love brought Him to that matchless condescension to become Man, to take human nature; love was in that nature. Love moved Him to suffer. Love was in His temptations. Love to His people, when He endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself. Love, when He suffered ignominy and shame and spitting. Love to His people that gave Him to endure the curse, to be made a curse, to be made sin. Love was in the garden of Gethsemane, when He grovelled there. Love gave Him to endure the greatest suffering that He ever knew: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:46) And if you get an inkling of this, it will enlarge your heart and draw you. "I will run in the way of Thy commands, when Thou shalt enlarge my heart." O what a mercy it is to have faith in Christ, and to depend wholly upon Him, and let no other trust intrude! We are apt to seek extra trust, and it is dishonouring to Him. We are apt to say, 'I am unworthy.' So we are, but are you going to honour your unworthiness above the worthiness of the Lamb? We are apt to say, 'But look, look at my nature, look at my sin, look at my life.' And who would contradict you? But are you going to honour your sin above the sin-atonement blood of the Lord Jesus? "Draw me, we will run after Thee."

Well, evidently the prayer here was answered: "The King hath brought me into His chambers." You know that in your measure. But we shall have to look at some of the chambers in order that we may know whether we have been brought therein. It is the King that brings. He is the King of Kings, Lord of Lords. His sovereignty is absolute, and His sovereignty is exercised toward His people in a way of grace. Grace is invincible. "The King hath brought me into His chambers."

Let us look at a few chambers, and see whether the King has ever brought us to them. In the first place, take the Word of God. O what a chamber is the Word of God! Not merely the written word. You may go round about a palace and not enter in. You may go round about the Word of God, but not have entered into the palace. But if the Lord Jesus should show Himself, flourish Himself through the lattice of His Word, it will draw you and bring you inside. Now, have you ever been

brought inside of the Scriptures? Well, how is it done? By the Holy Ghost bringing the Scriptures inside of you. I do not know of any other way. And the best way to read the Word of God is when the Word of God reads us, and really, unless that is so in some measure, our reading is unprofitable – and I feel this is an important point. It is a land of Bibles, and it is a land of much preaching. It needs to be sanctified, or you will become so used to it that you will become Gospel-deafened, or Gospel-hardened. Now have you ever been brought into the chambers of the Scriptures? When you have read it, as the Holy Ghost takes hold of your heart, "The entrance of Thy Word giveth light." It giveth understanding to the simple. Has it ever done that for you? I do feel these are the questions to ask, my friends. Superficial religion will do us no good. How do we read the Word of God? How have we read it this week?

"Draw me," and it is this drawing that brings us into the chambers, and so you will find that the Lord by His Spirit will draw you as you read the Word of God. There will be something like that of a magnet, that is, the life of the Word of God, as you read it, will draw the same life of God in your soul. But it makes it very precious, it will be so suitable, the promises so suitable. You take, for instance, that good word in Isaiah: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness." (Isaiah 41:10) Have you ever been brought into that chamber, so that it has been made to live in your heart? Then it may be a living word of reproof. I looked at it this morning: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." (Psalm 66:18) And that will cause you to search your heart. O the Word of God is a purging word. But have you not ever found Christ precious in the Scriptures? Perhaps especially in the Psalms?

"Draw me, we will run after Thee" – and you will find yourself running after Him in the Word of God. You come to the Scriptures, it may be feelingly cleaving to the dust, dark and dead, and you do not know where to look in the Word of God – whether to look in the Old Testament, or in the New, or to look in the Psalm – but you pray as you open the Scriptures: "Draw me, we will run after thee."

Another chamber is the throne of grace. Have you ever found that to be a chamber? I think it warrantable to compare these chambers with vineyards. The promise in Hosea is: "I will give her vineyards from thence...and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth." (Hosea 2:15) But do you know what it is to be brought into the chambers of secret prayer? Secret prayer: "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet (or chamber), and when thou hast shut thy door pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." (Matthew 6:6) This is a chamber that everyone that hath grace is more or less acquainted with. This may cause you much heart searching, because you are so unacquainted with Christ in the chamber of secret prayer. Look at it; look at it in the face. I have tried to bring the Scriptures, and how we read them. And now the throne of grace. What do we know about it? Not in the first instance public prayer, which is good, but if our public religion does not derive from a secret exercise, it is wrong. All real religion is in its source in the heart.

"The King hath brought me into His chambers" – into the secret place of the Most High. Do you know that chamber? Do you know the sweetness of it? It may be, perhaps, some of you say you remember it, but those golden hours are gone. If they are, enquire why, why they are gone. O may the Lord stir us up to secret prayer! We have only got as much vital religion as we have of secret

prayer, and where this is real, then public prayer will be real. "He will reward you openly." Your profiting in secret prayer will appear, appear unto those that hear in public. O how good it is when you can discern in public prayers the affect of secret exercise!

"Draw me, we will run after Thee; the King hath brought me into His chambers." Another chamber is communion, communion of saints. He will make the house of God a chamber, and a chamber is a sanctuary. O those sacred chambers! Some of you have known what it is to sit and listen to the Gospel as though you were the only one in the Chapel, the truth has gone up and down in your soul, and you have felt the influence of the glorious Head of grace, even felt the contact between Him and yourself, your soul, in the pew. It has put the world out, it has given you, with Solomon to stamp this world with vanity. It has given you, with Solomon to view Him Whom your soul loves. Has this place been made a sanctuary, a chamber of the Lord, in your soul's experience?

Well, you look at it, and lay your experience line by line by what we have feebly traced out, and if you can find it there, you will go to heaven. However great a sinner you are, you will go to heaven. "For greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world." (1 John 4:4) And greater is His grace than your sin. Infallible is His sin-atonement blood. The infallibility of His blood is greater than the indelibility of the stains of sin. O this will draw, this will enlarge your heart, this will make you run after Him – it will indeed! And if in these things you hear His voice, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." (John 14:15) If you don't love Me, don't keep them.

Amen.