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Sermon preached by Mr J H Gosden
at Galeed Chapel, Brighton
on Wednesday evening 20 October 1937

PSALM 72 v 17

"His name shall endure for ever; His name shall be
continued as long as the sun; and men
shall be blessed in Him; all nations
shall call Him blessed"

I need not say that this Psalm is descriptive of the Lord Jesus, the King of kings, the greater Solomon. David, speaking here concerning his son Solomon, went beyond his son and spoke as a prophet concerning his greater Son and his Lord. There is something very mysterious, but withal very blessed, in the mystery, the truth of inspiration. It is not a dry theological term merely. By the truth of inspiration known in the heart, the people of God from time to time receive heavenly dew, the doctrine of Christ distilling upon their spirit through Scriptures that may have seemed previously to be dry and obscure. Speaking of the reading of Moses and the law, the Apostle says the veil is upon the heart; but, "when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away" (2 Corinthians 3 verses 15 and 16). And the gospel, the Word of God, is a glass in which, by the light of the Holy Ghost, those to whom is given a spiritual eye, obtain from time to time a little glimpse of the glory of God in Christ. And what is all the reading of the Scripture if we never see Jesus, never hear the testimony of His Spirit through the Scriptures in our hearts? It is by the Word of God, as a means, that Jehovah saves His people. Paul told Timothy that the Scriptures, which were then the Old Testament, were able to save the soul; that is, by the power of the Spirit, who inspired them, conveying them to the heart and creating faith there to mix with the Word. Thus that which is spoken of in the Scripture becomes a substantial reality to faith and the truth is assimilated to the soul; and there is therein a measure of that transformation spoken of (2 Corinthians 3 v 18). It may seem too high for us to aspire to, but I speak of the solemn matter in a very small measure: "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to

glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." For whenever you get in your heart the slightest gleam of the glorious light shining upon the Person of Christ in the Scriptures, it has a wonderful effect to sanctify, an invincible power to draw, to attract, to separate from sin in the love of it, from the world in its bewitching power, from self, great self-sufficient self. It has a humbling power, an enlarging power. It gives rest to the mind, and yet animates into spiritual activity every faculty. O that we might have more of this! If any poor sinner here has come this evening saying in his heart "We would see Jesus", may the Holy Ghost reveal Him. Nothing will do us good but this. We cannot climb up to Him, but He can come down to us. We cannot make ourselves fit for His presence, but He can condescend to come and make us fit for Himself by coming, and that is what some crave. Stiff-neckedness, idolatry, lust, covetousness, worldly mindedness, carnality, frivolity, pride, ingratitude, wrath, malice - every evil - would flee as to any prevalence thereof, if the Lord were to visit us. And that is the only way, so far as I can see, that we shall ever come to realise the faithful Word of God in our own experience, that grace shall reign and sin shall not have dominion. It was not a little thing that David uttered when in the 42 Psalm (margin) he said "Thy presence is salvation." It was a great experimental truth, and may the Lord give us to know more and more of that.

In the text, Jehovah, speaking by David's mouth concerning His divine Son, says: "His name shall endure for ever; His name shall be continued as long as the sun." Now we are to take this to mean, not merely an empty name by which He is called; He has no empty names. Every name which is applied to the Lord Jesus by the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures is fraught with signification, is a substantial reality, and is descriptive of His character, His personal excellencies and merit, and also His suitability. Has the Lord Jesus been made a substantial reality to us? That is a question of vast importance. For what is there in religion without Christ? What is all the form of religion and all professed hope, without the reality of the Person of Christ?

"His name shall endure for ever". And first of all His name is the Son of God. That is His highest glory; and may I say, His

simplest title. He is the real and natural and eternal Son of God. That is His name; that is to say, that is who He is. He is not called by any false name. Many names are applied to Him but this is the beginning, the chief. And the Lord has given testimony of this in His Word again and again by His servants; and audibly from heaven on at least two occasions the eternal Father expressed this name - "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him." It was Jesus of Nazareth whom the Father there sealed, whom He indicated and discovered to John. It was the Man Christ Jesus; by which we may learn (and may God teach us this blessed truth) that when Immanuel, "the holy Child Jesus", appeared, that Person was God's own Son.

And He is called The Word of God. In the Revelation John saw Him riding prosperously, going forth conquering and to conquer. And he saw this name written: "His name is called the Word of God". I would not speculate. God forbid speculations in the solemn matters relating to His name and truth, and gospel! But does not Jehovah make Himself known, discover and communicate His will, His purpose, His grace, His character, His holiness, His love, His mercy, His salvation, and all His covenant truth by and through the Man Christ Jesus, the Word of God? I do not mean for a moment to suggest that He is called the Word of God because He became the Son of Man. For it is written in the 1 John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God". His name is the Word of God eternally, and it is not for us to pry more than is revealed into the eternal Being and subsistence of the Trinity. But I have tremblingly thought at times that there is some connection between this sacred name, the Word of God, and the truth that God does communicate all He will communicate of His will, and of His character, and of His grace, in and through Jesus Christ.

Then his name is Immanuel, God with us. A sweet name is that - Immanuel. Being interpreted it is "God with us", which embraces the whole sacred mystery of His complex Person as God and Man. It was not God visiting the earth merely; it was that, but it was the Son of God ~~being made flesh~~ and dwelling therein. He tabernacled among men. And this nature He took up never to lay down. He never will cease to be the Man Christ Jesus, never disown that He is the Saviour of sinners. "His name" as the Son of God, "His name" as

Jehovah Jesus, Immanuel, "shall endure for ever".

Now how does this affect us? If it is but an empty name, if it takes us not to Him, then it is very solemn. But to the believer, this Person, whose name is the Son of God and Immanuel, is everything. He is a living reality, a Refuge, a Rock upon which he can stand, a Habitation to which he may ever resort in times of trouble. It is written: "They that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee". But how is this name known? Not only by reading literally in the Scripture. You may read the names and collate the various appellations applied to the Lord Jesus, tabulate them, and dissect them logically, and yet not know His name. It is not a theory. This name is stored with rich grace, with vital power, with unction; and when known thus by the revelation of the Holy Spirit, O the influence of it upon the heart, the enriching influence, the humbling, emboldening influence! How it enheartens a poor timid, guilty, fearful sinner who is afraid and troubled at heart, amazed sometimes in his spirit because he is so ignorant of God, yet knows he has sinned against Him! And then perhaps the Lord Jesus makes this name known, makes Himself known, that is to say. That is a wonderful word we read just now (John 14). I wish the Holy Ghost would make it again in my heart what once He made it there, and in your hearts. He said to His disciples: "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me." Then He began to unfold to them who He was. Though they had followed Him as His disciples, they yet knew Him not; that is to say, they had comparatively very little knowledge of Him as to who He was. Then He begins to speak of His Father and of His Father's habitation: "In My Father's house" - the abode of God, heaven - "In My Father's house are many mansions." I am the Son of My Father, and I have come to speak of Him. I am the Word of God, to speak my Father's words, not other words than His. There is only one will in God; Three Persons, only one God, one salvation, one covenant of grace, one purpose. The Trinity can be distinguished, but not separated. Though the Three Persons may be known in their distinct love, and loved distinctly by those who are loved by them, yet the love of God is one. "God commendeth His love toward us in that He sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." So the Lord Jesus instructed His disciples into who He was. And I venture to say this, that if you thus in any measure by the Holy Ghost are led as a guilty

and lost sinner to perceive the name of Christ as the Son of God, and as declaring, "I am the Way; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me", you will pray. You will pray for mercy, you will take hold of God's strength; but not without a struggle, not without much opposition from your carnal mind. O the opposition some of us have to everything spiritual! The materialistic, sceptical-mindedness of some of us, what we suffer, and how guilty we are in that particular! But there is a power greater than that, a power that enables a poor sinner to believe; and believing, to come unto the Lord, and by Him to the Father. Did you ever run into that name experimentally, feelingly, in confessing your sins?

His name is ever available as a Refuge, never diminished in virtue, in authority. That is a wonderful thing, of great practical use in experimental religion. We want Him every moment, and yet how often do we forget Him! How often, after He has graciously looked upon us, given us a little of His love, and peace and comfort, how often have we basely turned again, contrary to His Word, to folly. And what then? There is nothing but His name, the power of it, the virtue, and unction and merit of that name that will recover us - nothing. Salvation, how much, how constantly we need it! How many times in a day do some of us feel our need of the Saviour! We can never pray without His name, we can never have access to God and admittance at the throne of grace, and acceptance, and justification and forgiveness, except through this name. And this name is available, unchangeably the same in all its sacred fulness, stored with riches. It is a name, as I say, available. I would wish to speak that word advisedly. I mean this - it is given. The eternal Father, the eternal Son, and the eternal Spirit, one God, has given this name to men for their use and for their salvation. The Apostle, in the early days of the Church, preaching the resurrection of Christ, declared this: "There is no other name given among men under heaven whereby we must be saved". And it is a given name, a name given that men may enjoy it. This is very sacred, very solemn, but very necessary unless we fall into despair, as we realize we are real sinners and need God's mercy. When we pray we usually conclude by using the formula: "For Christ's sake". Do we in any measure apprehend what we then say? Do we know, have we an understanding of what we say - "For Christ's sake"? Ah, my friends, if any take that name in vain, God

will not hold him guiltless. May we ever remember that His name is holy. Though He is the Saviour of hell-deserving sinners, He is holy, so holy that He hates wickedness. He will not be trifled with nor allow His name to be trifled with. But how wonderful and blessed it is when, by the power of the Holy Ghost, a poor feeble sinner assailed with temptation and burdened with trouble, fears and guilt, needing God, a sinner who feels none but God can help him and bless him and do him good - what a wonderful thing it is for that poor sinner when, as it were, the Holy Spirit takes him by the hand and leads him to Christ, and puts into his heart that name, makes that Person, and His mediation, and His atoning work and merit real, and leads him through the Son by that living way into the presence of God!

Not only do men obtain blessings through the mediation of Christ, but they are led into union with God through Jesus Christ. We cannot enter much into this, it is too profound. But whenever the Holy Spirit does, as I have tried to speak about, take us by the hand and lead us through and in the name of the Son to the Father, so that we understand a little of what Christ meant when He said "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father also", there is an intimacy, a sacredness. It has an influence upon the heart to sanctify, to humble, to hush all nature; and yet there is a boldness, a freedom in prayer, and a persistency. If you take hold of this name by the Spirit's merciful and gracious help in your prayer, pleading with God, you will be able to say in effect: "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me." And Christ has given His own name. He said, "Whatsoever" - a very extensive word is that - "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son". And again in the same chapter He says "If ye shall ask anything in My name, the Father will give it you." Just for a moment consider this, my friends. We need God, we need His mercy, His salvation, His light, His defence, His truth, His comforts. O how needy we are! And yet we have no right to go to Him in our own names. We dare not. Dare you go to God in your own name, the great and dreadful God inhabiting eternity, hating sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty? The idea of the universal Fatherhood of God and His love apart from the atonement of Christ, is but a figment of the brain, a misconception of His character as a just sin-hating God. O what a deception that is seen to be by the Lord's people who are

taught something of the terribleness of sin and of God's character in a broken law! But though we may not go in our own names, the Holy Spirit teaches His people that they may go in, and use, the name of the incarnate Son.

Now if any of you were very needy and in distressing circumstances, and some illustrious individual, say, the king of England, were to say "You go in my name", that would be a great thing; and according to the influence of that person and the authority of his name and the ability of the king, so would be the result, acceptance, and attention to the needs. But what is that compared with the name of Christ in the Father's ear? A name which is above every name, at which the holy Lord God has solemnly declared "every knee shall bow", and to Him "every tongue shall confess". Has that name attracted you? Great though He is, and His name great, and it shall be great among the Gentiles, has it been attractive, emboldening, have you been permitted to go in His name, enabled to go in His name to God? "His name shall endure for ever." This means to a believer that He has power, authority from the Lord always to approach to God, that there is no bar to his praying: "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint", said Christ. "Pray without ceasing", says the Holy Ghost. And there is need for that injunction; it is because of our unbelief and carnality we pray so little. A knowledge of this name given by the Holy Ghost will cause us to pray, and to esteem it a high honour to pray in this name. And another thing. When men are led to know this name and to trust in it by taking it to the Father, and pleading that Jehovah will deal with them in their concerns, and trials, and difficulties in and through Jesus Christ, such people become in some little measure acquainted with the Person of Christ. I wish I were not so unacquainted with Christ. O it is a wonderful thing ever to have had nearness to Him, felt His presence, and gone, if I may use such a term, under the shelter of His authority and the covert of His wing, and the sweet Refuge that He is in His atonement and righteousness! To go then to God, a sin-hating God, for mercy, is a wonderful thing.

This name Jehovah was discovered to Moses in a remarkable way. Moses had found grace in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord had promised to go with him: "Certainly I will be with thee, My presence

shall go with thee". He had said He would not go up among the people whom Moses was to lead into the land of Canaan, because of their stiff-neckedness. But again and again, in answer to the persistency of Moses, the Lord said "Thou hast found grace in My sight." Moses then said "I beseech Thee show me Thy glory". And to turn aside just for one moment here, there is such a thing as rejoicing "in hope of the glory of God". There is such a thing; not much known, that is admitted, but a little known occasionally. There is such a thing as worshipping God for what He is: "I beseech Thee show me Thy glory". The answer to that is very remarkable and blessed. Jehovah said "Thou canst not see Me, and live; but there is a place by Me, and I will put thee in a clift of the rock; and I will cover thee with My hand while I pass by, and thou shalt see My back parts." And then we are told what took place, a solemn thing. The Lord passed by and declared His name. This was His name: "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty". If you know that name, it does not matter what your sin may be, though you will feel greatly troubled by your sin, you will not despair. You will know what the hymnwriter means:

Teach us by Thy patient Spirit
How to mourn and not despair

He will not clear the guilty. That is to say, He will not excuse sin, but He will forgive it for Christ's sake, and His name is in Him. That is to say, the Lord Jesus though He is Immanuel, God with us, the Saviour of sinners, has not come to excuse sin. He has not come to reveal a different standard of righteousness. But He has come and manifested God's will to forgive sin for His sake. And this name endures for ever, it is an enduring name. All the virtues of this name, with the authority of it, endure.

"His name shall be continued as long as the sun." This continuity of the name of the Lord is not here, as I take it, merely His essential eternity as He is the Son of God; but it expresses this, as I view it, that as the King of Israel, as King in Zion, as the Head of His body, the Head of His church, the Son over His own house,

He and they shall continue eternally. "Because I live" said the Lord Jesus, "ye shall live also". That means immortality, eternal life. To secure that to His unworthy people, involved Christ in a sacred, and awful, and holy, and precious, and suffering death; and all the virtue of that death is in His name, even as all the merit of His eternal Person was in that Sacrifice. "His name shall be continued as long as the sun." In the margin it reads - "Shall be as the sun to continue His Father's name for ever".

Another wonderful truth is manifested here, that He is the eternal Son of the eternal Father. Then what? He said to His disciples: "I ascend unto My God and your God, and unto My Father and your Father". When you go to God in the name of Christ, you go not to sheer omnipotence, but to an omnipotent Father. It is not for us to lightly say "Abba Father"; but in the name of the Son, men who pray have somewhat in their experience of the Spirit of adoption. And the Person to whom they come, the Father, is not only the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, but the God and Father of every truly penitent, praying, believing sinner; and he shall know it one day. And this relationship shall be eternal - the family of God: Christ the Elder Brother, and His redeemed people with Him. "The children": "Behold I, and the children whom Thou hast given Me." "I go to prepare a place for you", He said; "and if I go and prepare a place for you in My Father's house, I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, in My Father's house, as Son over that house, there ye, My brethren, may be also."

"His name shall endure for ever". Not merely escaping hell does the gospel provide for sinners. It does that, and gives perseverance through this pilgrim life, and victory at last. But also it secures to them what we cannot know here, eternal blessedness with God, rest in God, eternal worship, and eternal conformity to Him in His dear Son.

"And men shall be blessed in Him." Have we been "blessed in Him"? No blessing out of Him; nothing but the curse out of Christ. If there are sinners here ignorant of Christ, saying mentally, "We desire not the knowledge of His name, we will not have Him to reign over us", saying it practically by serving sin, self and the world,

remember this

Out of Christ, Almighty power
Can do nothing but devour

"He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life." O to be in Christ! To be absolutely in Christ, as one good man on his death-bed said. "Men shall be blessed in Him." God communicates eternal blessedness, all that He can communicate of blessedness to men, through His beloved incarnate Son. "All nations shall call Him blessed", that is, some out of all nations. Have not you called Him blessed? Have you not sometimes been unable to repress saying, even audibly in secret, "Blessed Lord!" Ah, He is a blessed Lord! If we only knew Him, we should love Him and trust Him. May He make Himself known to us, and be King in and over us.

AMEN.