

Sermon preached by Mr J K Popham
at Galeed Chapel, Brighton
on Wednesday evening 24 November, 1926

I CHRONICLES 16 v 8/13

"Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon His Name, make known His deeds among the people. Sing unto Him, sing Psalms unto Him, talk ye of all His wondrous works. Glory ye in His holy Name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD. Seek the LORD and His strength, seek His face continually. Remember His marvellous works that He hath done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth; O ye seed of Israel His servant, ye children of Jacob, His chosen ones"

Praise is comely to the upright; it is acceptable to Him to whom it is offered; it becomes such people as we are to be thankful. What we profess is that we deserve hell but God has had mercy on us; say that "He has not dealt with us after our sins nor rewarded us according to our iniquities" and, professing such things, though we may often be low in our minds, dry in our souls, perplexed in our circumstances, still we have enough to thank and praise and bless Him without ceasing, and I felt today that it would be very becoming in us, in me, in you who know and fear the Lord, to endeavour with all our hearts to praise His great Name. This beautiful Psalm was delivered by David to be sung before the Ark of the Lord when the Ark was blessed in that tent, in the midst of that tent, which David had prepared for it. It is a beautiful Psalm, full of humble gratitude, and high praises and extolling of the God of Israel. A Psalm that may sometimes even grate, if I may so express it, on the afflicted mind of an exercised child of God, but a Psalm which, when the heart is a little tuned by the Holy Ghost, will move the mind, draw out the affections to the God of all grace. No child of God in a right mind, would say he has nothing to give thanks for. We have nothing to complain of but everything to thank the Lord for. Has he not brought us out of Egypt? Has He not delivered us from the house of bondage and the iron furnace? Has He not given His dearly beloved Son in whom we

hope and from whom we have drawn supplies of grace from time to time by faith? Has He not spoken to some of our souls, discovered His mercy to us and again and again sent answers to prayer and made us look to the end? Look for the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls. And my bringing this before you may be a means of exciting you in a spiritual sense to look up, lift your heads up, and thank Him to whom thanks are due. "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His Name. Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness" Have you no thanks, only complaints? Think again. Think of His goodness, think of His coming to you when you were not expecting Him here and there. Think of His sweetness expressed to your soul in some manifestation of His mercy, some sweet incoming to you of the Lord Jesus. Therefore give thanks unto the Lord. 'Tis kind of Him to accept thanks of poor worms. 'Tis condescending of Him to open His ear and bend to the feeble lispings of gratitude that such as we are, now and again feel we must offer to Him. We are not worthy to name Him, and yet He said - a great word - "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God". Think of it when you sing a hymn of praise, when you quietly alone sometimes say in your spirit, Lord I thank thee for salvation. When some sweet mercy comes and touches you, then you offer praise. No words perhaps are uttered, but you offer praise. What is that? "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me" It is called the sacrifice of praise because a sacrifice was an offering to the Lord and praise is an offering to the Lord, and giving thanks. And it is against a proud, unthankful nature, that it is done. It is against the wishes of the devil, but it is according to the commandment of the Lord. "Let us offer the sacrifice of praise unto God even the fruit of our lips, giving thanks unto His Name" And that follows the atonement, that follows having an altar whereof we have a divinely given right to eat. O give thanks unto the Lord for this, His matchless goodness. Even in an evil day we may give thanks to God for His mercy, for His promise to keep the feet of His saints, for the fulness of the Saviour to supply every need. "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus". In an evil day, the light shines and when in Egypt when darkness covered it, thick darkness, then Israel had light. So again and again God gives His people, one here and another there, a blessed inshining of His gospel, the glorious gospel of the blessed God. And as it becomes an individual

who is favoured in that way, so it becomes a church, to offer. This Psalm was to be sung by the whole nation and David gathered the people together by many many hundreds and they sang and made noise with cymbals and timbrels. So, when the Lord has blessed a church in any degree with His presence and His favour, that is not to be passed over in silence but rather the giving of thanks is due unto His Name. "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His Name" my beloved friends. It is pleasing to God this, I feel, and therefore would exhort you and exhort myself to do this. Give thanks unto Him, call upon His Name. Call upon His Name? What for? The things you believe He has to give, for the supplies out of His fulness, grace for grace. When they pass through the wilderness, what do they do? They dig wells. What then? The pools are filled with rain. So when we are passing through the wilderness as we are and by prayer and supplication, as it were, dig wells, come with emptiness and needs, there is a rain let down from heaven. Righteousness is poured down, grace is given, love is made manifest, power is felt, some deliverances are wrought, so that we should say, while thanking the Lord, do help us to the end. "Call upon His Name". If we have faith in exercise this will be our daily concern, to call on the Name of the Lord. And it seems that the two go well together, thanksgiving and supplication. Blessing and praising for mercies received, and bringing, at the same time, prayers and supplications that God would continually supply our needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. "Call upon His Name". What a mercy to be led to do it, to be taught how to do it, to be kept at it, even when there appear no answers. What a mercy to see God on the throne of grace, yea to see the Redeemer and Mediator and Advocate and Intercessor, ever ready to help, more ready to save than we are to be saved. More ready to fill than we are to be filled. "Call upon His Name". We have much to call upon Him for if we have but faith and prayer. A weak soul, an erring heart, a dark understanding, a perverse will, a deadness that is continually coming upon us, spreading itself over us, as a darkness spreads itself over the earth when the sun has gone down. We have much to call upon Him for. Dangers around us, difficulties to arise, and O what ignorance we have. We do not know how to meet these things. Therefore call upon His Name. Ask Him to preserve you from falling, from apostatising, from turning aside from following after wisdom. Ask Him to keep your feet in the way of understanding, and to establish you in the truth

and to grant that the testimony of the Lord Jesus may be confirmed in you. Ask Him for mercies in providence, for guidance when you are in difficulties, support when you are in weakness, and for more life as you feel death spreading itself over your souls. "Call upon His Name". Yea, He both commands prayer and gives it." Call upon Me in the day of trouble", that is His Word. Then His promise is "I will pour upon the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplications".

"Make known His deeds among the people". When the Lord works for us it is something for us to speak about. When He gives deliverances let us praise His Name among our brethren. Christ declared the works of God; Christ came from heaven to declare God's works which had been done in eternity, in the decrees of the Almighty. Christ came to make His Father's Name known and declare His Father's righteousness unto His brethren. Shall we be silent? Has God wrought some work in us? Has He given some deliverance, blessed us with some guidance and direction? Has He enabled us to cast our care on Him and given us a sweet persuasion that He cares for us and will not let us turn aside and sink into everlasting darkness? Then tell all His wondrous works. The Psalmist said "Come all ye who fear God and I will tell you what He has done for my soul". When it pleases God to bless you do not keep it to yourselves. You may say, but I am afraid of losing it by repeating it. The Lord can help you, with all humility, to declare it and keep it also. It will lose nothing by being declared in a right manner. Rather it will seem to increase because the goodness of God will be made manifest when you are enabled to exalt Him by declaring His works. "Talk ye of all His wondrous works. Glory ye in His holy Name". Have you nothing else to glory in? Not if you are born again and taught of God. Not if you have had Jesus Christ in any measure manifested to you. No flesh is to glory in His presence. "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption": that according as it is written there shall be no flesh glorying in God's sight. No poor, weak creature shall glory in himself but He shall glory in the almighty Lord Jesus. Glory ye in His Name. Said the Psalmist - " My soul shall make her boast in the Lord". He was not always in that state but that is the principle that a man of God has in his soul and it comes up sometimes in sweet feeling, that whatever shame, whatever

pain, whatever trouble comes, there is one thing you desire to do, and that is make your boast in the Lord. "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord. The humble shall hear thereof and be glad." And this making of our boast in the Lord is not a vague thing, not vague, distinct rather, something to bless Him for, something to glory in - a manifested Saviour, wisdom, righteousness, redemption, everything given out of God's fulness into an empty sinner - and therefore in the spirit of faith and thankfulness the soul says, I can glory now in His holy Name, I can bless Him for His mercy, sparing mercy, saving mercy, teaching mercy, delivering mercy, supplying mercy, and O patient mercy in bearing with a poor, weak, foolish creature. Glory? Let the church of God glory in her Saviour, in her Head, in her Lord, in her Master and here glory in that He has given good laws and statutes in the holy gospel. Let us glory in that He has given us His good Spirit, manna for our hunger, water for our thirst. Is He not good? If it were put to us individually by Himself - "Have I been a wilderness to you, a land of darkness?" what should we say individually. What should I say? Barren as I am and always have been more or less, what should I say? "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not". And if we say, but He is so often chastening us, what then? Faith will say, "He does not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men." Faith will say in the heart you have brought this on yourselves. Your waywardness, your ingratitude, your hardness of heart, your turning aside and wandering out of the way of understanding, these things have brought the chastening rod on your back. Give glory to Him who, though He has chastened you sore, has not given you over unto death. Is not that wonderful, that God whom we have so provoked has borne with us, chastened us lovingly, faithfully, but has not given us over unto death. He asks a question in this point, "How shall I give thee up Ephraim?" Then glory in Him who keeps covenant and will not withdraw and take away His gifts, for "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Thus may we be enabled to follow David in giving lead so to speak to the whole nation; glory in Him who has made you a nation, who has brought you out of Egypt according to His Covenant, has given you the land of promise which He promised to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when they were strangers in it. Glory ye in Him who gave you the Ark of His Covenant, and the blessed presence which He has promised there. And have we nothing that answers to all that?

Has not the Lord brought us forth thus far? When I think of His goodness to me these many years, and the little I have praised and thanked and gloried in Him, it covers one with shame. What do you feel? Have you thanked Him as you should have done? Have you gloried in Him as you should have done? Has it not more frequently been just a complaint, a confession as it were of your leanness and darkness, and scarcely any humble, grateful acknowledgement that He has been good to you, notwithstanding your death respecting Him. Therefore may he help us to rise. You say, I am so dark, and it is a dark time. I remember that when the sin of the princes of Israel was brought to the notice of Ezra he rent his garment and he kneeled before the Lord, but also this, at the time of the evening sacrifice he rose up from his heaviness and that is what the Lord sometimes causes His people to do, to rise up from their heaviness, to confess that it is of His mercies that they are not consumed, to confess also that because He is faithful we are not consumed. O Lord, he said, I blush and am ashamed to lift up my face unto Thee, for we are before Thee in our trespasses and we cannot stand before Thee because of this. Yet Thou art righteous; therefore we are escaped. Glory in Him my friends. Glory in Him by humbling yourselves, debasing yourselves, getting into the dust. Glorify Him in these things. Glory ye in the Lord. He is sufficient for us; I know He is sufficient for us. He is sufficient for a Church to keep it, sufficient for a poor minister to help Him and make Him useful, and for deacons to enable them to "use the office well and to purchase to themselves a good degree and great boldness in the faith" and He is sufficient to help members to walk according to the precepts and exhortations and admonitions of Holy Scripture. He is God sufficient for us. Sufficient to make us remember when we are scattered about this town that we are as much a people as when we are gathered together here, Glory in God who has given us union to Himself and consequently union one to another.

There is something for us to consider, something for us to look at closely, and to kneel over as it were and pray about, asking that we may be led into a right spirit of acknowledgement of the great goodness of God to us, that, with Isaiah, we may say, I will sing to the Lord. Praise Him for His goodness and His righteousness which He has made known to us. "Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord". Here is something for us, a good God who has never said and

never will say "Seek ye Me in vain". What do you seek? Grace, life, light, mercy, liberty, peace in your consciences, righteousness to justify you, blood to cleanse you from your sin, power to hold you up. God is able to make a weak creature stand. O these are the things we seek, perseverance in the race, a good end, an obtaining of the prize. Many run but only one obtains. Many run in a profession; the church obtains. She obtains the crown. "Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord". Let them rejoice that they have grace to seek Him, that they have wants to take to Him, that they have weakness to confess, and sins to lay out before Him in humble confession. Let them rejoice that He has got an ear to hear them, a heart to receive them and the power to help them. There is enough in God to make us rejoice; enough in sin to make us sad, but more in Him to make us glad, a great deal more. My brethren, seekers of God, you will never seek Him in vain, never. He will never mock a seeker. "If ye being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him". Are you perplexed? Seek Him. Empty, seek Him. Weak, seek Him. Distracted, seek Him. He is a good God, you will find He is. You will never say, if you are blessed with the Spirit to seek, that I am a false prophet in saying you will find Him. Yea, the Lord says it Himself "They that seek shall find and to him that knocketh it shall be opened". Does the church here need Him? Yes, every moment. The vineyard needs Him and He has promised the vineyard a good blessing. He has said, "I will keep it night and day. I will water it every moment." That is His gracious word. What can we here need then as a little church more than that that God has promised in the covenant of grace. We need to be increased with the increase of God; to be increased with the increase of God is to have grace on grace, mercy on mercy, manifestation on manifestation. It is to have faith, roots striking themselves down deeper and deeper into the Lord Jesus. Then we shall bear fruit upward. And do you see a brother troubled? Seek God for him. Do you see one who appears to be not in a lively state? Seek to do what the Lord says, "Let each look on the things of another, let each seek each other's wealth." "Seek the Lord and His strength" Seek here means more particularly to enquire, to enquire of Him what you are to do. "Seek the Lord". Said David in a strait, Lord will Saul come down to this place? He will said the Lord. He had befriended that city of Keilah. Will the men of Keilah

deliver me into the hands of Saul, said David. They will said the Lord. So David made good escape. Are you shut up in some trouble? Seek the Lord, enquire at His hand. Said Judah in a case, Lord shall we go up and fight Benjamin? They got direction. "What shall I do to be saved?" said the jailor. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved", said the Apostles. Here we have seekers, here we have God to answer. "Seek the Lord". The arm of the flesh will let you down into trouble, but the obedience of faith to this direction will end in good, it must do so. What encouragement the Lord gives to His people and faith in their hearts keeps them from sinking, from fainting. "I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord" Seek the Lord, enquire at His hand. He still speaks my friends. Not in the measure and in the continuance of it as in former days, alas for us, but He is a good God. Some of you know that He speaks, for He has spoken to you, you know it. Now may what you know be an encouragement to go on to seek to know Him. "Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord. His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain..." (Hosea 6 v 3) There is no trouble that you can get into that will shut you out from this. Seek the Lord, enquire at His hand. Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? "Show me the way wherein I should walk for I lift up my soul unto Thee." My steps are tottering, my way is perplexed, I am afraid of turning aside, and wandering out of the way of understanding. O Lord show me Thy way. Lead me in Thy paths and teach me for I lift up my soul unto Thee.

We have good examples set before us in the Scriptures, may we follow them. May we endeavour to do what is said, "Follow them who through faith and patience inherit the promises" They had their troubles, you have yours; follow them. Put your feet down, as you are enabled, in the footsteps of the flock, in seeking the Lord, seeking His helping hand. "Seek the Lord and His strength". His strength is Christ; Christ is the power of God. Seek this - for some manifestations of the Son of God to your souls, some strength to enable you to hold on. When you have got hard questions, take them to Him who is the strength of Israel, who will help you; and who is wisdom, who will teach you. Seek Him when you have difficulties, difficult and hard questions. Lord how is it if I have Thy life that death is so powerful in me? If I have grace how is it that I am so

graceless in my spirit? If I have light, how is it that I so stumble and get into dark places? You go to a friend with these questions and he may perhaps say, well, but you will come out well. When you take them to the Lord in the spirit of faith, He will say something to you more than that. He may say, the life I have given to you is trampled under foot by your carnal heart, your wandering mind, and your wickedness, your unwillingness, your hardness of heart, and the light that I have given you is obscured by your turning to your own understanding which is nothing but foolishness. And when the Lord answers your questions like that, you will say, O how wicked we are, how wicked we are, how good He is, and so it will be with the Church. If she feels death and goes to Him for life, He will speak to her. You see what He did as recorded in the Revelation and it is said "He that hath an ear to hear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. "Seek His face evermore." That is, do not give up. "Seek His face continually". This is just what we have in the gospel, "Pray without ceasing". "In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." The Word of God is wonderful in its agreement from the beginning to the end. Seek His face continually. As you have continual need, seek at that fountain. Seek continually to get supplies from that fountain. You will never be better in self. Seek Him who takes the badness of a sinner away, takes his filthy garments away and gives him His goodness and His righteousness. My brethren what a good God we have to teach us like this in the Scriptures. May we take heed to the word more and more. May our hearts be more and more simple and more and more attached to this great, blessed Word that gives such holy guidance, such gracious direction. Seek the Lord continually. Seek His face to shine upon you. "The Lord", as it is in the book of Numbers "The Lord make His face to shine upon thee". That shining is very wonderful. It is in Jesus Christ. Nay, He is that light. "I am come a light into the world that whosoever believeth in Me should not abide in darkness but have the light of life." The light of life is a beautiful expression and sets forth this, that whenever you get heavenly light you will always have gracious feeling because there is life in the light. Sweet is this light, sweet is the life that is in it. "Truly the light is sweet and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun." "Seek the Lord." "Seek His face continually". When you get this inshining you will, for the time, be happy, happy in

Him. It is very wonderful how the Lord sometimes, for a little ~~reason~~, will make a soul happy in Himself, when circumstances are painful and miserable and calculated to depress. You know what I mean who have had this gracious experience. I have been so happy in some of the troubles that I have had, I have been sure of deliverance before deliverance came near. Could not see it but believed it was coming and said it. What a God we have. May we have the prayer of faith to bring the blessing down to us, when seeking the light of His countenance. "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me". My half heartedness troubles me. Does yours trouble you? It is a trouble where grace is in exercise that the soul is so languid, faith so soon depressed, hope so soon put out of countenance, and love so waxing cold. May God enlarge our hearts. "I will run in the way of Thy commandments when Thou shalt enlarge my heart." But I verily think this, that if the Lord should enable us to regard this word more closely, and move us to walk according to it, even to praise Him, we should find good, for He is a good God. He meets him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness. No conditions to an acknowledgement of grace; that is what it is, an acknowledgement of grace, for it pleases Him so. Yea, in this He sees of the travail of His soul and is satisfied. "Is Ephraim My dear son?" What a mercy to belong to the Lord, and have grace to do this, "Seek His face continually". Do you ever feel sorry that your prayers are, as you might express it, so spasmodic, hot and cold in a very short time. The budding of faith nipped at once almost by unbelief, and down you sink. Love seeking to move and enmity choking it back. This is a path that a child of God finds to be very trying but here is his direction - "Seek His face continually". There is enough in Him? Do you believe it? More than we could hold. May He give out more and more to us that we may thank Him more. "Remember His marvellous works that He hath done". Remember what you were. We are not to forget what we were. Wherefore says Paul remember that ye being in times past Gentiles according to this and that, remember that God then came to you. When you were dead in sin, He quickened you; when you were darkness, He made you light in the Lord. When you were worshipping idols He turned you to Himself to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, even Jesus. Remember His marvellous works, remember His gracious voice that turned darkness into light, brought you into liberty. Remember His kindnesses in giving you prayer and giving you answers

to prayer. Remember His deliverances here and there. Remember His kind providences. Remember His leadings and do not give up His leadings. O cleave to Him in His marvellous works. O follow Him in His marvellous works even though it may seem that you are wrong here in this and in that. Venture on Him. When you remember what He has done, venture to wait on Him and to wait for Him. When you remember what a good God He is wait on Him, although He may seem for a time to take no notice of you, "Remember His marvellous works that He hath done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth; O ye seed of Israel his servant, ye children of Jacob His chosen ones". Now I have brought these things before you without in the least thinking of preaching a sermon but just to bring before you these divine testimonies. It will be our life to notice them. It will be our mercy to believe them. It will save us from many troubles if we are enabled to follow them. We get into trouble when we turn our back on God and we get into trouble when we disbelieve Him. We walk in the light when we are enabled by faith to honour Him in His Word, to venture on Him, venture wholly and let no other trust intrude. My brethren it will be our life here if we are enabled to observe these things. They, as brought to us, will humble us, will show us our shortcomings, our sinfulness, and open to us the rich grace, the full fountain of life in God in Christ. They will encourage us to follow on to know Him of whom it is said "Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord." O beware, may I who have suffered from sin and indulging it say this, beware of turning your back on God's Word. Beware of that slackness of spirit that comes creeping over us, imperceptibly sometimes. Beware of that world that is in you for the world is set in the hearts of the sons of men, and beware of being satisfied with anything out of or short of the living God manifested in Jesus Christ and brought by the Holy Spirit. I speak to the Lord's Church and every one in the congregation who fears His blessed Name, we are in an evil day, and if God has made me a watchman it becomes me to warn, and I see in His blessed Word everything that we need. May the Holy Spirit bring to us the things that we really need, to warn us, admonish us, and guide us, and save us, and bring us at last to be with Himself.

AMEN.