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Sermon preached by Mr J K Popham  
at Galeed Chapel Brighton  
on Sunday evening 16 July 1922

GENESIS 17 v 1

"And when Abram was ninety years old and nine  
the Lord appeared to Abram and said unto  
him, I am the Almighty God, walk  
before Me and be thou perfect"

I think that a good Scripture test of the nature of our religion may be this, what place God occupies in our hearts. Clearly in the Scripture He occupies the first place; there is none like Him. If that be so, may we not say that it must be a rule for all His people, and that He will occupy the chief place in their hearts. Put yourselves to that test. Take not an odd hour here and there; not a feeling which, passing away almost at once, you may regard with a fear that it was spasmodic; not a single day; not your conduct in some particular trial for a time, but take the course of your profession whether it be long or short, and put it to this test. What is the attitude of your spirit, judgement, affection toward God? What place does He occupy in you? This was one effect that God had in dealing with Abram, that Abram should feel Him to be first and last; as He was really, as He will be; so was the effect. God was made everything to Him. A lonely, childless man, with the living promise of God in his heart that he should be the father of many nations, waiting 20 years or so for the fulfilment of that promise, waiting till its fulfilment became a natural impossibility. Then comes God and makes Himself first and last and everything. "I am the Almighty God". I am sufficient for you, I am sufficient for My Covenant, I am sufficient for My promise. "Walk before Me". Keep your eye on Me. Look not on your natural condition; dwell not on the natural impossibility of My promise coming to pass. Look not at your comparative poverty, and absolute with regard to possession in the land in which you have been so sojourning. Look not at all these things. If you do look at them, if you put them together, if you make them a rule for Me, or for yourself, then confusion, unbelief, barrenness, deadness, loss of all things must appear to you, but look on Me. I made the world out of

nothing; I uphold it by the word of My power; all creatures are Mine; "I am the Almighty God". My brethren, a fullness resides in Jesus our Head, a fullness of life, of truth, of wisdom, of power. In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. If your eye be on yourselves then you will waver and be as a man with a double mind. If your eye be fixed on the Lord God omnipotent, then you will be steady in your walk before Him. You will be perfect in that sense of the word, sincere, whole-hearted, not double-minded. Your eye, being single, your whole body will be full of light. Look at an empty purse, at an empty cupboard, at a declining business, at failing health, at your short days, look at your friends, and what will you see? Death. View God by faith, and you will see all you need. And so again this evening I would bring before you, as I endeavoured to do this morning, the all-sufficiency of God. This morning I drew your attention to His all-sufficiency for His Covenant, and made a few observations on that. Then looked at His all-sufficiency in respect of His promise, and made some remarks upon that. Now this evening I would in the first place draw your attention to the all-sufficiency of our incarnate God and of His Father and of His Spirit, that is, of the Trinity, to accomplish two amazing things in the kingdom of Christ, and the first is to make it a kingdom. It is a great thing that there should be a kingdom of Christ in the world, a stone cut out of the mountain without hands, growing, multiplying. O it is a great thing to see this, this great and blessed God able to make all things according to His divine promise. A stone cut out of the mountain without hands that shall fill the whole earth. O my friends, if we be part of that kingdom, how happy is our everlasting state. If we be of that number that the Lord God will bring to Himself and make His Own, how wonderful it will be. Wonderful that there should be a kingdom, a kingdom of Christ, a kingdom of grace, a kingdom wherein grace should reign, a kingdom where the love of God, the death of Christ, shall be supreme. Now look at this - it comes to this my brethren - either we belong to God or we do not. If we belong to Him then this has taken place, that the Lord God has brought to pass a most intimate, wonderful union with Himself, and I take it that a very large part of the work of God in the soul is to bring that union to pass. "I in them". An intimacy this is that is beyond all expression. It must be felt to be believed in. Union with Christ and union with the Father, and union with the Holy Ghost. First of all notice this, in this

great work of God - He alone is sufficient for it - namely that He takes sinful creatures and makes of enemies, friends; of aliens, children. According to His predestinating love He does adopt these people unto Himself to be His children, as Paul teaches in the Ephesians. Pieces of sin, children of wrath even as others, taken up and made children of the Most High God. Think of it; O the abounding grace of God, the abounding love of God, the abounding wisdom of God, in this great matter, that there should be an innumerable company of sinners taken hold of by God Himself and born again of Himself, becoming His Own children, His proper family. Who is sufficient for this? Who can change his own state and condition? Who can make of himself, though an enemy, a child of God? Who can bring himself into that condition? No creature. We have neither the power, nor the will, nor the wisdom, to do it after the flesh. 'Tis wholly God's great work to make a person, a sinful person, a child of God. "I am the Almighty God". Of sinners, God is able to raise up children to Abraham. Out of graves to bring children to Himself. Out of graves of death, of spiritual death, corruption and carnality, He brings sinners to be His dear children, and in time causes each one to say "Abba Father". This is for the praise of the glory of His grace and if every child of God here were blessed this evening with the Spirit of Adoption and enabled to say "Abba Father" there would stand up in each one that which would be a witness for God in this particular point. Each would say he is the chief of sinners; each would say, now I am a child of the living God. And what happier thing can there be? What peaceful feeling takes possession of the soul when this is realised. What entering into the love, and goodness, and wisdom of God in doing this great thing, to make one who was an alien, an enemy, who deserved hell and was fitting himself for that dark abode, into a son of the Most High God; a relationship never to be broken. Interrupted, the sense of it may often be; it is never touched.

And the second amazing work I would just draw your attention to is this, that to these adopted children of the Most High God, there are made the most intimate and wonderful communications by the blessed God - Father, Son, and Holy Ghost - and do give me, for a minute or two, your attention to this, for I would say that the sinner who never gets a communication from God has no evidence, clear, indisputable evidence, of being a child of God. But what do I mean

when I say communications from God? I mean no new thing, no revelation that shall supersede this, that shall be added to this. I do not mean any visionary thing. I mean this, that the gospel which this Book contains, the Lord Jesus whom it reveals, the holy Father of Jesus Christ it speaks of, the Eternal Spirit, the Author of this Book, that this Book shall, in some operation of it, be made over and made known to a soul born again. "The words which Thou gavest Me I have given them". It is a great point in true religion and we may well ask ourselves, when did we hear from God? What did He say to us? What did He make out to us? Something of His love, His grace, His purposes to us? His kind thoughts to give us an expected end? His promise that He would never leave us nor forsake us? What did He say? Did He let us know that our cases were before Him, that our tears were put into His bottle, that our oppressions were known to Him, that our sighs were heard by Him, that He meant good to us? There are communications made by God to His children. I mean that. "Thy Word is truth", sanctify them by that. "Ye are clean through the word that I have spoken unto you". Such things coming with efficacious power into the soul are the very words of the living God, to that soul, and, being Scripture, or according to Scripture, they are the very words that Christ heard in eternity. "The words which Thou gavest Me" - the commandment Thou gavest Me to come and lay down My life; the commandment Thou gavest Me to communicate Thy mind to My brethren in the church; the song that I would sing to Thy Name in the church; - I have communicated to them, "and they have received them and have known surely" - in the light of them, in the power of them - "that I came out from Thee". "O beware of trust ill-grounded". How many people have been lost in their religion. They have had fancies, thoughts about religion; some fears of hell, some feeling that sin must be punished; they have been driven out of the world by these things, but have received no words from God, and that is very solemn. There is an intimacy in the matter, a communicating to sinners. The Word of God speaks to them. It is not a sound - confusing them - in their ears. It is a word speaking to them in their hearts. It flashes into their minds sometimes suddenly, surprising them. Now it convinces them of their sin, now it reproves them for their unbelief, now it tells them that they are straitened, not in Him, but in themselves. Then it encourages them. Now it chides them for their thinking that He had forsaken and forgotten them. Then it tells them that He will never

leave them nor forsake them. They find themselves doubtful about the way in which they are walking. Then the Lord comes and shows them that that is the right way that leads to the city of habitation. Something communicated. I am not going to say the Lord never speaks to people's hearts without the Scripture, without some particular passage of Scripture. I believe He does communicate many times to people things without distinct passages of Scripture, but this I will maintain that anything He does in the heart, any feeling that is wrought in the mind, any instruction sealed on the heart, will be in strict accordance to Scripture. If you have a dream by the Lord, it will be according to Scripture. There will be something in it that will be in exact accordance with the blessed Word of the living God. And then you will find He will teach you by that, draw back your soul from death and your life from the pit. How intimate this is; it brings you and God very near to each other; it brings a sense of His kindness into your very soul. It brings you near to the throne of God's heavenly grace; there He deals with you, there He speaks to you; there you speak to Him. You see Him dwelling between the cherubims; you see Him filled with light and life, and mercy, and patience, and goodness, and wisdom, and power, and long to participate in these things which are communicable, of His. There He lets you know that your case is in His eye always, and that every moment He waters, lest any hurt you; He will keep you night and day. So if we have God for our God, these two things will come to us in measure, namely we shall be adopted into the family of heaven; we shall receive the words of God from Jesus Christ. And O what fullness there is here. Every promise will more or less exhibit to you the God who makes it to you; open some of His fullness to you, and make you feel - Here is all a God can give. Does He give His beloved Son and will He not with Him also freely give us all things. Did the Son die for us and shall that death not prove efficacious in our souls to their everlasting life, and their peace, and their justification. Does the Lord promise something in providence? There is enough in the promise. Our horizon is a very limited one, very near to ourselves, but when faith is called into exercise, then the eye goes far beyond and sees the blessed God of all grace, all mercy, all truth. "A fullness resides in Jesus our Head". O lift your eye up, beloved friends, who know the Lord, and you will see a great God, and then your heart will be this, I wish I could for the future trust Him, and never have my eye off Him.

So for those two amazing things, God alone is sufficient.

Now the next observation I would make is this, He is sufficient for all afflictions. That is to say, to sustain under them, to bless them and make them a blessing, to bring good to your soul and glory to His Name. The Apostle Paul found that the things that befell him when in Rome, a prisoner, turned to the furtherance of the gospel in his experience, and in the quickening of many and you will find that, even though bonds and afflictions abide you wherever you may be. This, this you will find, that the Lord God will turn all to a good account. Is it not, as far as you have gone, your experience? Is it not what you can, what, when you are moved to do it, you must say, that God has been good to you in afflicting you. By affliction you have learned how apt you are to stray from Him; how weak you are; how much you need to be chastened by Him and how good He has been to chasten you. The Psalmist's experience becomes you. "It is good for me that I have been afflicted". "Before I was afflicted I went astray". (Psalm 119 v 71 and 67). Here is a good God helping a worm, weak, poor and nothing in self. Here is a mighty God strengthening faith to lay hold of Him and to say to Him: "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me". I am in affliction Lord; Thou art sufficient to bring good to me out of it. "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me." He is sufficient for you. He is sufficient for every necessity of every kind, and I think one may say there are two kinds of necessity only, of which we will speak generally, and the first is spiritual renewing daily by the Holy Ghost. If you die daily, die to yourself, die to this world, to your own wisdom, your own strength, then you will need renewing in the spirit of your mind. If you get emptied of yourself, you will need a good supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. If you feel dark, and blind, and ignorant, you will need to be instructed by the Holy Ghost. And if you feel - sitting down and counting the cost of going forward in the battle - have I grace enough to meet my corruptions? have I wisdom enough to walk in the midst of God's providential dealings with me? have I faith enough to trust the Lord Jesus for eternity, with my soul and all its undying interests? have I love enough to meet all adversity that God may send and not be offended in Him? have I enough to meet the king that I must meet, the last enemy whose fatal dart shall separate body and soul, that which is called death? if, I say, sitting down and counting the cost

respecting all these conflicts which we must enter into, we shall find this, we need grace for every step, grace for every movement. every conflict. And what then? Well, unbelief says, you will never get through all these difficulties, these devils, this world that lies in wickedness. Faith says, but there is enough in Christ. Christ said to Paul: "My grace is sufficient for thee", and the Lord maintains that in His children's experience. Grace is sufficient; it comforts them often; it strengthens them often; it brings them off more than conquerors through Him that loved them. It makes them sing to His praise; it makes them say to their enemy: "Rejoice not against me O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me." (Micah 7 v 8). And therefore they can say, continuing - "I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against Him, until He plead my cause." There is a fullness in Christ, a sufficiency. O but I have sinned. Yes, and there is no man that doeth good and sinneth not. What then? "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." O, but I fail continually. "He shall not fail nor be discouraged"; "He shall bring forth judgement unto truth" (Isaiah 42 v 3/4). The whole of our necessity is more than compassed by the fullness of Christ. Spiritual need we shall have as long as we live but, as in the wilderness the Rock that was smitten followed them by its living waters all their pilgrimage through the wilderness; the bread that came down from heaven came down every day to supply their daily need; so spiritually the Rock is Christ, the Bread is Christ. The water flows from Him to Zion, and refreshes the weary soul. The Bread is Himself, whereby the soul is strengthened, faith is nourished, love is inflamed, hope is confirmed. "I am the Almighty God", Jehovah Jesus. I, in love, died for you, in love rose again, in love ascended into heaven, and am there now to carry on your cause, and to deal with you. I, Jehovah Jesus, am about you. I will never leave you. I will give you My Spirit. I will make you know My mercy. Therefore, "walk before Me and be thou perfect" in this; be sincere in this.

Take temporal necessity. The rich are charged not to trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, because the riches, these uncertain possessions, may take to themselves wings and fly away. Does God regard the poor? Yes, specially His Own. He hath "chosen

the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom", and He says to His people, "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee". All things are Mine, with the silver, the cattle on a thousand hills, and the hearts of men, and the heart of the king; they are all in the hands of Christ. So the providential necessities of the Lord's people are met by this fullness. Nor is it only a supply of that which is necessary for our daily life, but the supply of wisdom to order the steps of His children. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." We may think this path right and walk in it, and prove what a solemn error we made. We may think we are walking in a wrong way, because it is crooked and full of trouble, and we meet many a rub in it, and stones of the field are a hindrance to us. We prove that that was the way chosen for us. "I lead in the way of righteousness" - that is only one way - "in the midst of the paths of judgement" - many paths of judgement. (Proverbs 8 v 20). That may be God's dealings with us in providence, and what a sufficiency there is here. Are you in a storm? Who sitteth King for ever? Who sitteth upon the waves and controls them? Who says to the flood, thus far shalt thou come? Who binds the flood from overflowing? This Almighty God. You need not fear, there is enough for you. Enough wisdom in Christ, and strength, and goodness, and compassion. Enough for you every day till you come to your last day and then to carry you over safely into that place where - that goodly land where - no want is; where you shall see the King in His beauty. I would that the Lord would fix your eyes my brethren on this all-sufficient Saviour. He is sufficient for every necessity.

In the next place, He is sufficient for every foe, every devil, every sin, every temptation that we may meet with; every sin. Here it is, a heart full of sin, full of deceitfulness. How will you stand? If you say, I will be watchful, why, the very thought that you will do that is a painful evidence that you are off your guard, and that sin has got the better of you in that. He who acknowledges from a painful feeling that he is foolish and weak, that he misunderstands, and misapplies, and is even prone to turn aside from God, he is in a far safer condition of mind. He cries to the Lord for help, and for strength, and for victory. He prays that God will not leave him nor forsake him. Christ is sufficient, O sinner, for all your sins. "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but

under grace." We see how the Lord in Abraham's case, turned his folly and his untruthfulness to good. He might have sung

Sin for me shall work and win  
But tis not good for me to sin

If his eye had been on the Lord he would never have denied that Sarah was his wife; he could not have done it. And you, with your eye on God, will never despair. You will begin to go down and give way when your eye is on yourself, on your circumstances. One says, and we well may unite with him - "Fix there my heart"; fix it on Christ; "Fix there my heart" Tis good to see the power of divine grace in Christ. Though we may feel the great power of sin in ourselves, to our distress, we shall not despair of victory. The blood of Christ cleanses from sin, and weans from the love of it, and breaks the dominion of it, and gives the sinner a good hope through grace that he will come well through all to the praise of the glory of God's grace. "I am the Almighty God", and have grace enough for sin, to overcome it. Yes, He may say to you that - My grace is sufficient for you. He said it to Paul; He may say it to you. He is sufficient for all devils. Yes, a legion in you would fly away at His command. Sin threatening every day to overcome you; temptation threatening to lay you down and trample you under foot; this, this Christ is able to overcome. Why, He does cast devils out. He casts out the devil of unbelief, and all kinds of things from His children. And the vile temptations that they are subjected to, the various evils that come upon them, sometimes suddenly, as if they will be overthrown; a stormy wind called Euroclydon suddenly coming down upon the lake and making it boil; and Christ is enough for that. He said, "Peace, be still", and there was a great calm. He is enough for Satan. He got the victory over him once and for all. He destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil, that He might deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Therefore, beloved friends, may your eyes be here. "God shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly". Meanwhile, as the tempter drives you to prayer, that is, his temptations coming upon you and making you fear yielding, send you with mighty cries to the throne of God's heavenly grace, that foe cannot boast of much, and one day he will be under the foot of Christ. Christ is expecting till the day shall come

when all the power of that evil, foul spirit shall be broken, and the church be for ever freed from his approaches.

He is sufficient for death. Yes, He is sufficient for that solemn hour when heart and flesh shall fail, when our mortality shall have reached its limit, when there shall be time no more with respect to us. O what a solemn thing it is to think about; what will it be to realise it? What will it be to come within the grip of that icy hand that will stop the heart's beating and land the soul in eternity, when you will want your certificate; when, as you approach the gate of heaven, you will find that, unless you have a certificate, unless you have a robe perfectly beautiful, in all respects meeting God's requirements, unless you are washed from all your sin and defilement, there will be no admittance there, for nothing that defileth or maketh a lie shall enter into heaven. I say what a solemn thing it will be to enter upon that great thing, to come into that solemn, weighty, awful, to nature terrible, experience. Who is sufficient for this? Who can assure our hearts that we need not fear? Who can give us the certificate and help us to read it? Who can give us the robe that will give us a title and the cleansing that shall make us fit for the place? "I am the Almighty God". "I am the Almighty God". My grace is infinite, My love everlasting, My righteousness everlasting, My power omnipotent. "I am the Almighty God, walk before Me" If you would enter eternity in this blessed state, so as that an entrance shall be administered to you, a welcome given you, then you must be in this condition, justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses, and when the soul is exercised about it, this comes to pass, the cry is "Prepare me gracious God". Give me indubitable evidence that I am Thine. Shine in on my soul; make matters right; end every controversy between Thee and myself in Thine Own most precious blood. Make my conscience pure by Thy blood, and witness with my heart, so as that I shall know whom I have believed and be persuaded that Thou art able to keep that which I have committed unto Thee against that day.

Lastly, as He is sufficient for us in this life, for every kind of necessity, for all sin, all temptations, all devils, and for the article of death, so He is sufficient for the last thing we shall require, so to speak, of Him in His mediation. The last thing is

this, that He shall present His children to His Father without spot, or blemish, or any such thing. No man shall present himself. A person is not presented to the sovereign by himself; someone presents him. Christ will present His children. He, He, He alone shall say, "Behold I and the children which God hath given Me." And then the crown, and the harp, then the new song, then the living fountains of waters, then the glorious temple unbuilt by hands, then the never setting sun, then the song of victory, and the harping of the harp, all, all shall be in the endless bliss of those who are blessed to have on their side the Almighty God. Dear friends, where are your eyes? What place, to repeat my first question this evening, what place has God in you? What do you think of Him? That is more than we are apt to believe. God regards that very narrowly. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." "What think ye of Christ?" is the question which Christ Himself put. What do you think of Him? Did His fullness ever appear before you? Did the infinite merit of Christ's death, which fills a fountain for sin and uncleanness, ever stand before you? Did a crucified Saviour ever appear to you? Did a risen Christ ever look in upon you? Did you ever get near to Him? Have you been adopted into God's living family? Have you received the Word of God, the Word that the Father spake in eternity to His Son and then said to Him, go and speak this word to My children? Did you ever hear that word? "I am the Almighty God". If we have heard the Lord, if we have seen Him, must not the effect have been this - Abram fell on his face and God talked with him. You will be sure to fall on your face flat if the Lord appears to you. You will be sure to be humble. Humility will clothe you, love will be inflamed in you, and faith will be strong in you, and you will worship; you will worship. Then your eye will be single and a single eye means a body full of light. Then a sinner knows in that light what way to walk. Yea, he knows what to avoid and seeks grace to avoid it; what to cleave to, and seeks grace, the grace of faith, to cleave to it; whom to follow, and seeks grace to follow Him; whom to flee from and seeks grace to flee from him, even himself he may flee from. He knows what to hate, namely sin, and self; what to love, holiness and his own life. All, all comes from this manifestation of God. "I am the Almighty God; walk before Me and be thou perfect", or sincere. Job was a good man according to God's Own testimony, and he was perfect; he eschewed evil, turned away from it; evil was bitter to him, and it is to

everyone to whom the Lord appears. May it be so with us.

AMEN.