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Sermon preached by Mr J K Popham
at Galeed Chapel Brighton
on Sunday morning 15 September 1929

HEBREWS 4 v 13

Neither is there any creature that is not
manifest in His sight: but all things are naked
and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we
have to do

We are a congregation of sinners. Every person in this congregation is a sinner and we ought not to be sinners, for God made us upright and we have to give an account of why we are sinners. And what do you think about it? The text tells us of One with whom we have to do; whether we will or not we have to do with Him, and the word means that we have to give an account to Him. Idle words, unlawful looks, covetousness which is idolatry. Madness of unbelief, ingratitude, hardness of heart, turning from God, preferring the creature before the Creator, and we must give an account to Him who knows it; to Him against whom it was all done. It is an awful thing to be a sinner; the younger sinners, the older sinners; and all, old and young, have to do with this awful, glorious, blessed God. Do you ever think of it? Perhaps some of you do not, but whether you think of it or not, you must have to do with God. One day you will have to give an account to Him; I shall have to give an account. God, the infinite and glorious God, whose perfections in their nakedness we could not bear. Glorious in holiness, holiness that forbids the approach of a sinner; holiness that will never be put off or dishonoured. And this is the God with whom we have to do. Just; Just and right is He, without iniquity, and this is the God with whom we have to do. Omniscient, seeing into, penetrating, piercing thought, the intent of thought. His eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth, and He asks - "Can any hide in secret places from Me?" "Am I a God at hand and not afar off?" And with Him we have to do - an omnipotent God, who has power to kill the body and cast the soul into hell. And with Him we have to do. I hope the Lord will make us feel this. Religion generally fixes the person upon and in himself - a poor religion, it wont stand. Vital religion not only comes from God into the soul but

it brings the soul into dealing with God, and you have to do with this great God. You may profess that you know - the Jews made that profession - "Are we blind also?" Better for you, said Christ, to have been blind, than to say you see and hate Me and turn from Me. Some of you may think you know; you may think you know what religion is, what truth is; what the doctrines of truth are, you may think you know. O, but it will be good for you to say, we are blind, Lord, open our eyes. God has balances, and a just balance and a weight and a measure, and you have to do with Him. We may seem to our friends to be what we are not in reality and they do not know. We cannot seem to be to God something that we are not. The God of knowledge, He that made the eye shall not He see? He that made the ear, shall not He hear? Shall He not see what is in a man's heart? Shall He not hear what thoughts the man is speaking in His heart, though his lips may never utter them? Let me draw your attention, as God may help me, to this solemn Scripture. The context is very important, and very arresting. "The Word of God is living" - not a dead letter, made up of so much type, but a living word entering in the power of the Spirit into a sinner's heart - "and powerful" - not to be silenced when it begins to speak - "and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart". There may be a reference here to the practice, according to God's commandment - with respect to sacrifices. The beast was slain, it was flayed, it was dissected, opened and cut into pieces. God said no blemish must be in any sacrifice offered to Him as a sacrifice respecting sin. Blemishless, and, as it were, it must be open to inspection and so it must be divided. And in the case of Abraham, when the covenant was made with him, he slew the beast, he divided it as was ordered and then he saw a lamp and a smoking furnace pass through those opened parts, searching the innermost parts. With God we have to do. A very searching consideration this, as it may be opened to us. Think of it, this awful, this blessed word, and the eternal Word speaking in His Word, shining in His Own light, penetrating into the uttermost secrets, the most hidden parts and things in us; joints and marrow, expressing the searching light, the dissecting, discovering light of God. This has made some of us tremble. We should not like the dearest we have to know what was in our hearts, but God knows.

Now we have to do with Him in several respects. First of all in the respect of our creatureship. You look at it - creatureship. We are creatures, God's creatures, and infallible Scripture tells us that God made man in His Own image and after His likeness, and you will have to give an account to Him how it came to pass that you, made without sin, have become full of sin. You must give an account. What a solemn thing. A human creature must account to the Holy Creator how he became a sinner. Adam tried to avoid this question and he said, The woman Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me and I did eat, but God would not have that. And you may find excuses, but you will find God wont have them. So you have to stand in your conscience one day and give an account of how you became a sinner. Original sin must be accounted for. Then you must give an account of your lives. All naked before His eye and yet when you have to do with Him in rendering accounts you will have to render an account of your lives. What a solemn thing. All the idle words you have said, all the fearful thoughts you have had, all the unbelief you have had, all the gaddings and wanderings away from God your Creator that you have been guilty of. All the lusts of your nature and that pride, that great sin of pride, that stalking sin. Written are all these things in books, and the doers of these things must account. And if you have stolen things you will have to give an account of your thieving. If you have stolen the Scriptures and appropriated them without having them given to you, then of theft you must give an account. And if you have called God names, appropriated them to yourself, when He has not revealed them in you, you must give an account of that sin. And if you have thought yourselves to be something when you are nothing, then of that you must give an account. O, this rendering of accounts. And if you have had confidence which God has not imparted, you must render an account of that. Naked. Naked. The light of day in its greatness cannot discover some things; it penetrates very little below the surface. The light of God penetrates to the heart, the conscience, the will, affections, thoughts, intents. Thoughts before framed and taking definite shape. Intents, intentions of the mind - these naked, laid bare, no covering; just exposed, naked, without a rag of anything to cover them, before the eyes - the omniscience - of God, for that is what is intended by the eyes of God, His omniscience. O sinner, do you tremble at this Word of God?

There are two ways in which the accounts will be rendered. The first is in your own persons. What an awful thing if you have to render the account standing alone. A debtor, a bankrupt, entering into eternity a bankrupt, a sinner and stand before infinite justice, infinite holiness and glory, to render an account in your own person. Ah this will be very solemn. If any of us so stand, better for us never to have been born. If you stand in your own name to render an account by yourself, of yourself, I say better for you never to have been born. But it is inevitable. Where men die alone - Woe to him that is alone when he falleth; I say better for such never to have been born - they will enter into the word written of kings and captains and great men, and bond and free, who flee to dens and caves of the earth and call upon the rocks and the mountains to fall on them and hide them from the face of Him that cometh and from the wrath of the Lamb. O wont it be solemn my dear hearers to stand in that way, to flee in that way, to have no hiding place, for the rocks and the mountains and the caves and the dens wont be hiding places. May the Lord press this upon us, make us listen to it. There is another way in which an account, the account, will be rendered and the context tells us about it. "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." This is a way in which some will be favoured to render an account, stand before God, and many of them have sung in this time state

Bold shall I stand in that great day
For who aught to my charge shall lay?
Fully absolved by this I am
From sin's tremendous curse and shame

That is a way to reckon. Ah Toplady sang - we sing with him sometimes

Payment God cannot twice demand
First at my bleeding Surety's hand
And then again at mine

"With whom we have to do".

Now the church of old got this teaching and grace in her desolation; her faith was directed to the Man at God's right hand and her faith said this to God - "Let Thy hand be upon the Man of Thy right hand, upon the Son of Man whom Thou madest strong for Thyself. So will not we go back from Thee: quicken us, and we will call upon Thy Name." There is an appearance made by men in this life before God, and a very solemn appearance it is when you have to go in your nakedness, confessing your sins, and then that is charged - the gospel charges it - and brings a sinner with all his desolation, with all his ruin, with all his guilt and all his fears, and all the enemies, the wild beasts and boars out of the wood and forest. Faith says, Lord, let Thy hand be on Christ. It is a wonderful favour this, if we confess our sins - "If any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." O dear friends who dread the account as seeing it belonging to yourselves, as feeling it being your guilt, if your faith is guided by the Holy Ghost to this One Person, not yourself, not your religious self, not your vain self, not your proud self, but the Lord Jesus, that will be accepted. God reigns over His people sometimes in the wilderness with terror. Then He says to them, "I will accept you with your sweet savour", and that acceptance is in Christ; that sweet savour is the Son of God in His sacrifice and there faith rests. And that enables a person to do what naturally would be impossible, for every sinner will one day fly from the eye of God as far as possible, and no natural man could wish for the eye of God to search him, but in Christ a sinner can say this - "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." I say it is impossible for a sinner sincerely to pray that, unless he has some knowledge of the Lord Jesus.

Now this is very wonderful for it brings the glorious gospel of Christ. It utterly rejects the rags of a man, a ragged religion; it utterly rejects everything that a legal heart would bring for satisfaction to God, and brings a sinner as such, as such without excuses, to plead the Name and the blood and the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom

we have to do". Now this is a wonderful thing to have to do with God in Christ. And the Apostle in this epistle exhorts the saints to consider Christ - "Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession" - and the consideration of Christ is very wonderful. Sent of God to stand between a guilty church and infinite holiness and justice and majesty. When a sinner considers his own case, he sinks; when he considers, through the Spirit's grace and power, the Lord Jesus as a great High Priest, hope rises. When he considers he can never fulfil one single word of the law, he cannot but be in despair of himself. When he considers by faith, in the Spirit's grace, the Lord Jesus who never failed at all, but offered Himself without spot to God, then hope begins to bud and love begins to move and a sweetness begins to be felt in the soul, that peradventure God will accept him, though he be a sinner, in the Lord Jesus.

Nor fear with Thy righteousness on
My person and offering to bring

Did you ever deal with God in Christ? Did you ever go to God in Christ? Did you ever feel that you could sincerely say, Lord I have not a scrap of what the world calls religion, but I would fain have Thy dear Son for my portion, have His blood on my conscience, His righteousness for my justification, Himself for my Saviour. O to deal with God like that is wonderful. You can bear, if I may speak so, you can bear the gaze of omniscience, accepted in the Beloved. The blessed righteousness of the Lord Jesus, the efficacious blood of the Lord Jesus, and the all prevailing mediation of the Lord Jesus, will enable a sinner to bear the gaze of omniscience, the searching of omniscience. This is a great gospel, meeting the case and need of a great sinner. There are no little sinners, for there are no little sins, but Christ is a great Saviour and He opens to His people, by His Spirit, the greatness of His salvation. "With whom we have to do". And this dealing of God is in time; its place is here, in time. When the tree falls it will lie as it fell. Think of it, the dealing is in time; having to do with God is in time. Now says Paul, you searched creatures, you who have been analysed and dissected, whose hearts and thoughts, hidden away from all human gaze, but opened to the Word of God, you have got a High Priest; you have got a High Priest, and a great High Priest, and He says to these poor searched and dissected

creatures - "Look unto Me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth". He speaks this to them and they hear it in their hearts. "Look unto Me". Ah, says a sinner I have been looking into myself, and I am all but in despair, for the sight of myself is a sickening, sinking, weakening sight, and now the Saviour's Word came - "Look unto Me" - and the sight is wonderful. It kills the sinner but he lives. "I fell at His feet as dead". O, the glory of Christ kills this that a man has, but it does revive the soul. "I am He that was dead and behold I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of death and of hell". And if Christ shut the gates of hell you will never enter them for He shuts and no man opens. This is a wonderful sight. Whatever God is, Christ is. O think of it, whatever belongs to God, belongs to Christ. But this is peculiar to Christ, that what God His Father, whose servant He became, sent Him to do, He did, and the commandment His Father laid on Him He obeyed. And the commandment His Father laid on Him was that He should lay down His life. "The Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep". And when you deal with God by faith, then this is the very Person your faith looks to and this is the great work your faith believes in and then it becomes your rest. Ah there is a rest which is entered into in this life. "We which have believed do enter into rest". And this rest is very beautiful; it is a rest from slavish, tormenting fear. The terrors of the law and of God are passed away. The terrors of the Almighty are swallowed up in the love of Christ, and the guilt of the conscience is washed away by the blood of Christ, and the distance of the sinner from God is removed by the sinner being near unto Him in Christ. Union with Christ, this is an experience in time. No man will go into eternity and have this experience there for the first time; he will get it here; God gives it here. "We which have believed do enter into rest". A rest from slavish fear and also a rest from attempting to make a bad case good; rest from legal works. As God rested from His works and sanctified the seventh day, so a sinner rests from all his legal efforts. Very wonderful that one who has been attempting to make himself fit for God, attempting to cut off this sin, and cease from that wrong, is brought to leave all that alone, and in his wickedness - not living in wickedness - in his wickedness fall upon the infinite mercy and merit of God in Christ, and O it is wonderful to do with God in this. You can render an account here.

Payment God cannot twice demand
First at my bleeding Surety's hand
And then again at mine

O sinner, there will be some in this chapel know it; there will be then a real delight in the Lord. It is a great word - "Delight Thyself also in the Lord"; "Trust also in Him", and both the delight and the trust are felt. Every convinced sinner understands the experience of Israel when she fled from Mount Sinai, when she said to Moses, speak thou with us and we will hear. Let not God speak lest we die. And that same sinner, that same sinner, comes to God, the same God, without fear, without dread, and that God who frowned in the law, smiles in Christ, and the frown that killed the soul passes away, and the smile of God makes a summer in a moment. It is a summer, I know it is. Oh it is great to get this in your soul by the Holy Ghost, and this is in time; this begins heaven; this makes the soul happy. This takes away all dread and tormenting fear and God is the attraction, and the portion, and the inheritance of the soul. "The eyes of Him with whom we have to do". Look at the sinner, and as the Son was the Father's delight, the sinner becomes the Father's delight in His Son. "The Lord delighteth in thee", it is said by the Holy Ghost in Isaiah - "The Lord delighteth in thee and thy land shall be married". And we read of walking with God. A man who fled from Him walks with Him; a man who could not bear the thought of infinite justice sees that that glorious attribute stands on his side

Behold, a change indeed
Justice is now for me

And this is a beautiful religion, but not in the eyes of men. It is secret; the searching was in secret, the clothing is in secret. The filth was felt in secret and the washing is felt in secret. God was the object of terror, now He is the object of the soul's faith and hope and joy and delight. It is a transaction between God and the soul, a dealing of God with a sinner, and then the dealing of the sinner with God, and this fits a sinner for life, and unfits him for life as God orders his days. It unfits him for life as the world speaks. O you wont be fit for much sometimes in your spirit, when God is with you, and yet you will be fit for life. Who so fit to live as the man whom God has reconciled to Himself in the body of the flesh of

Jesus through death? And this man, having had these dealings of God in this life is not afraid of eternity. That is very strange is it not? A man not afraid of eternity. Why, he has had glimpses of it in the gospel; he has had glimpses of it in Christ's great Word - "I go to prepare a place for you". "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you"

Eternity, tremendous sound
To guilty souls a dreadful wound
But O if Christ and heaven be mine
How sweet the accents, how divine

"With whom we have to do". And there will be one transaction in heaven with respect to God and man. Some in this congregation believe that they will be placed by the Lord Himself - they could not do it - be placed by the Lord Himself at His right hand. O what a wonder for Christ to take hold of a person who had lived in this world and had been blessed in this life, to take hold of him and say, as it were, now come to My right hand. And another person, a person who, perhaps, while here never had any doubt about religion, about himself, never had any doubt at all about being in heaven, Christ takes hold of him and puts him on His left hand. You wont have to put yourself into a place, God will do it; it is all His business, all His work. And then to the man on His right hand the Lord Jesus will say, Come thou blessed of My Father inherit the kingdom prepared for thee before the foundation of the world. O what a word! Do you hope to hear it? Sinner, do you hope to hear it? If you say you hope to hear it, on what is the hope built? And then the man on the left hand, God will deal with him. He has been unable to give a satisfactory account of his life, of his sins and of all that he owed, and now God will deal with him. May there be none in this congregation to whom Christ will say, "Depart from Me ye workers of iniquity". Have you a High Priest to look to, to go to? Do you get, O friend, do you get access to the throne of grace? Does Jesus smile? Does the Spirit move? Does He help you to pour out your heart before Him? Does He say, Come to Me, look to Me, believe on Me, receive My blood and My body; eat and drink? What a favour, what a blessing. Now this solemn Scripture I do commend to your attention. May God in His infinite goodness cause us to receive the word, to believe it, and to come and deal with Him

about our souls, and to deal with Him in Christ, and by Christ; then all will be well.

AMEN.