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Sermon preached by Mr J K Popham
at Galeed Chapel Brighton
Sunday evening 24 August 1930

JOHN 14 v 19

"Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me
no more; but ye see Me: because I live, ye
shall live also."

The Lord Jesus was, as now, full of compassion; compassion to His people moved Him, still moves Him. Now they were sorrowful because He was to leave them. They had had His teaching, His protection, His presence for three years, and though they knew but little, had received but little from His teaching, still they loved Him, and desired His presence. And, not understanding much of the spiritual nature of His kingdom, it would seem that, when He announced to them that He must needs leave them, sorrow filled their hearts. But He teaches them that His leaving them was necessary to their good; that if they had only His bodily presence, it would be a disadvantage to them, but that if He left them, He would come and see them, and moreover He would give them another Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth who knew all His things. All the things of God are known to the Spirit. And so He tells them that when the Spirit shall come He would take of His things and show them to them; His divine Person, His wondrous work, the completeness of His wondrous work; His righteousness, the spiritual nature of His kingdom, and that this teaching of the Spirit should be better to them than His bodily presence. A little while, and I shall be crucified, shall be buried, shall rise again, and ascend into heaven, and the world seeth Me no more. All the sight that the world got of Christ was His bodily presence. Who He was, why He was with them in the world, they knew not, and when that bodily presence should be removed then they should see Him no more as they had seen Him. It was very solemn that all that the world knew about Him was that He was a poor Man, and because of His claims His poverty offended them. They knew He was a good Man, yet they said He was not. They knew He did wonderful works, and yet they ascribed them to Satanic cause because they hated Him without a cause. It was very solemn that they should know no more about Him than

that He was a poor Man. The world today knows no more about Him except that He was a great historical Person; that is all they know. They cannot deny that there was such a Person as Jesus Christ, but that is all. And today, because education increases, scientific researches bring certain results, therefore they say that He is to be presented afresh, in new lights, different views of Him. Ah, three hundred bishops wont alter the divine character of Jesus Christ. Three thousand of them wont. He is "the same yesterday, and today, and for ever." But they see Him not. Do we see Him? In another sense altogether, do we see Him? Do we see Him to be God? "I AM THAT I AM". Do we see His work, what He came for? Do we see that He accomplished it? Do we believe that He said to His Father - "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do". Do we see that He is the only way to God? That His righteousness alone can justify us? That His blood alone can wash away our sins? That His Spirit alone can quicken, and teach, and guide, and bring us into a saving acquaintance with Him? That there is a heaven prepared for a people whom He will prepare for it? That there is an endless heaven for saints, and, by His Own testimony, an endless hell for the wicked? How many here could put their hands on their hearts, so to say, and appeal to God, and say, Lord, we believe this; we believe the Scripture testimony of Thy Person. We believe that Thou art what Thou dost declare Thyself to be - "Before Abraham was I AM." But though this was the sad condition of the world, though Christ left them in their blindness - wilfully blind, now judicially blinded - He said to His disciples, "but ye see Me: because I live, ye shall live also". There is then to be had, and there is given, a sight of Christ to His disciples, and this it is that comforts them. Let us enquire what this sight of Christ is which is given. It is a sight of a Saviour. A Saviour is a relative term. If there is a Saviour, somebody is saved. His Name relates to sinners who are lost. I came to save that which was lost. A Saviour must be one who can meet, in the most absolute sense of the word, the case of a lost person, a person lost in his own sense of things. "I came, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." A sinner, in the light and teaching of the Holy Ghost, realises his alienation from God; a very solemn thing to realise. Realises that he, in his carnal mind, is enmity against God; a terrible thing to feel. Realises that his nature is polluted; a shameful thing to realise. Realises that he is guilty. Now a Saviour is one who must meet this case. "Ye see

Me". Ye see My Person. Peter got a sight of Him. "Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" Having told Him of the various conjectures of men, He turns to His disciples and said - "But whom say ye that I am?" and Peter said - "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." How did Peter, more than others, get that sight? Who gave it to him? The Father of the Lord Jesus. Blessed art thou Simon; flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven. Now we, if ever we see the Lord Jesus as He is, will see Him in that light, in that teaching. "Ye see Me." "Eye hath not seen" - the human eye, the eye of reason hath not seen - "neither has the heart of man conceived the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him, that wait for Him." "No man knoweth the things of God save the Spirit of God". You cannot know them; the Bible tells you so. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them. Search as he will, proudly thinking he can find out God, this will remain true - "Neither can he know them". Our ignorance is part of our sin, and our punishment. Do you believe it? What then? Is the case hopeless? Does a man, when feeling that he is ignorant, that his ignorance is part of his sin, and part of his punishment, does he need to be shut up in despair? No. He will send you another Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, and He shall teach you. He shall kill your infidelity, He shall remove the veil from your heart. He shall open your eyes to behold wondrous things out of God's law. He shall show you the Man Christ Jesus in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He shall show you the eternal Deity of Christ in the Man Jesus. He shall show you that wondrous Person on the cross. He shall show you that your sins were there, that Christ made an end of them when He gave Himself a sacrifice, a sweet smelling savour to God. Dear friends, have you got that sight? Have you seen this Jesus, sent of God, cursed of God, blessed of God, raised from the dead, ascending into heaven, sitting at the right hand of the Majesty on high? Have you seen Him? "Ye see Me". See Me as this Book declares, the child born, the Son given; the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. The willing servant of the Father, making an end of sin. Have you seen Him? It is wonderful to see Him. Erskine asks an important question, and a pertinent question

Dost mind the place, the spot of land
Where Jesus did thee meet

Do you remember when you were ignorant of Him, and there came a light which you did not fully understand perhaps, that brought your eyes away from all your ruin, and misery, and bondage, to look on Him who could give you life, and liberty, and peace. What a sight. "Ye see Me". Sin has made us sick people. Sin is a sickness of soul, a disease incurable to all remedies that men could imagine or devise, and when this disease is understood by God's saints, they want a sight of Him who says - "I am the Lord that healeth thee."

Jesus heals the broken-hearted

"Heal me, O Lord, for I have sinned" prays the Psalmist. And God's promise is that when He comes to heal the breach of the daughter of His people, then the light of the sun shall be even as the light of seven days. So light, so beautiful, so glorious shall be the shining in of God that a sinner shall see as if the sun were to concentrate seven days' light in one day's light. And men see Him. Ah, it is a great thing sinner, to see Christ the healer of all the running sores of your sins. He heals us of the sin, the disease, of unbelief.

Unbelief, that sin accursed
Abhorred by God above
Because, of all opposers worst,
It fights against His love

And yet Christ comes and says, as it were - "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" and the convinced, the instructed sinner, longing to be healed, says, - "Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him?" And the answer is - "Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee", and the man saw, and believed, and worshipped. He was healed of his ignorance, of his unbelief. Do you see Him as the Lord your Healer? Balm in Gilead, a Good Physician there; so efficacious that no convinced sinner shall die in despair of healing. He shall get the healing; the Spirit shall bring it to him.

"Ye see Me" as Almighty God. Less than omnipotence will not save us. Omnipotent love, omnipotent pity; the vicarious death of Christ, in love bearing the curse, removing the curse. This is the Mighty

God. Who is He that travels in the greatness of His strength; I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. And if we feel our mighty sins, sins that will take no refusal, sins that are perpetually soliciting, sins that, by fraud or force, overcome us; if, I say, we feel these things, only a mighty Saviour can do. Who created the world? The Son of God. Who is the Son of God? Jesus Christ. Therefore the healing that a soul needs in respect of all his sinfulness, and his sins, can be granted, imparted, and is granted, and is imparted by the Lord God Almighty. "I am the Lord that healeth thee". He heals men of their irreverence, and their godless thoughts of Himself. The greatest immorality in the world is wrong thoughts of God. "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself." Against law, this is; against God's nature, this is; against all His perfections, His infinite wisdom, His omniscience, His omnipresence, His omnipotence, His justice, His eternal purity. And the man who degrades the Almighty to his own level, and says God cannot do this because I would not do it, brings down divine love to human love - because I would not do this to a creature, therefore a loving God ought not to do it. Now says God, thou hast thought that I am altogether such a one as thyself. Do God's people ever think that? Yes, as they are fallen men and women they are as capable of doing it as any pronounced atheist, and Jesus can heal us of this. "Ye see Me" to be the Good Physician. The shining of divine glory in the Person of Jesus will kill all such thinking, and the application of His blood will remove the guilt of such thinking, and bring a sinner to adore Him. He will heal persons of their carnality, their carnal ambitions, and their departures from Him. If you are set on something in this world, O child of God, you may depend upon it, that, insofar as that takes your heart away from God, He will be jealous of it, and resent it. But then, when you see Him to be true riches, to have durable riches, and righteousness; that He possesses heaven, and earth, gold, and silver, cattle on a thousand hills; that He can make a little enough, while He can cause plenty to run out of a bag with holes in it; then you will find your heart healed of these ambitions. He can heal us also of all the fretfulness of our minds when we are in affliction. We may be much afflicted. Indeed, in some way we must, if we be the children of God, have tribulation. "In the world ye shall have tribulation". The threshing machine must separate the chaff from the wheat. The flail must be laid on somewhere; and O,

'tis solemn when the Lord does this. But then, though nature frets, grace comes in, and the sinner is made willing. One of the sweetest experiences that a Christian has in trouble is this, to find his will brought to lie straight, and in unison, with the will of God, so that he can say honestly, and does say it - "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done" in my heart, even as it is done in heaven.

Now the sight of this precious Lord Jesus in these particulars is a wonderful sight. It catches the eye, it touches the mind, it sinks into the heart, it pervades the conscience, it takes hold of the will, and it brings the sinner indeed to be a Christian. The Spirit of Christ is in him, the love of Christ is about him, the shielding protection of mercy is about him, and he sees all this. He is a Christian who sees Christ in the Spirit's teaching, and runs after Christ in the Spirit's power, and believes on Christ in the Spirit's grace. "But ye see Me". O, the favour of God. Do thank God if you see Christ. Though He may be seen at a distance by you, though there may be a wall between you and Him, still thank Him that you see Him able to save, kind, full of compassion; that you see Him crucified, buried, rising again, ascending into heaven, interceding. 'Tis a great sight, 'tis a wonderful sight. "But ye see Me." Ye see Me as an Advocate with the Father. The Apostle John says in his first Epistle - "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not". That is, the tendency of the gospel is to save people from sinning. But "if" - through the strength of carnality - "any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." If you have a case in court, and you put your case into the hand of an advocate, what do you do when you are there? You remain silent. Who speaks for you? Your advocate. Have you got sin? Do you feel it? Are you a backslider? Are you distant from the Lord? Are you convinced of that? Have you seen, under your conviction of that, the Lord Jesus, the Advocate, and by faith have you put the case, bad as it may be, into His hand? Then it will be with you that you will be silent, nothing to say. Nothing to say against justice, nothing to say against God's jealousy, nothing to say against His rod, against the conviction of sin, against the burden of guilt. Nothing to say. But the Advocate speaks; He opens His mouth for the dumb, in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction. He opens His mouth. He pleads the cause of the poor and needy. Then He gives wine; He gives

His wine, His mercy, and the efficacy of His advocacy, and that is a strong drink to a poor person who forgets - taking that, forgets - his misery, and remembers his poverty no more. O, dear dumb Christians, you have an Advocate. The case, you feel, is to be a very serious one.

You have backslidden, you have turned away from God, you have walked in pride in some things. You have depended in some ways on yourselves, and now, convinced, how pained your hearts are. But we have an Advocate. As if the Spirit should say, by John, to these little children, do not despair, do not lie down and say, there is no hope; we have an Advocate, an able One, One capable of dealing with your judge, or, after dealing with you, giving you the consolation of justification, the consolation of renewed forgiveness, the consolation of having the thick cloud of your transgressions wiped out. "Ye see Me".

"Ye see Me" as possessing all the river of God's pleasures. Pleasures for ever more; a river of pleasures at God's right-hand for ever more. Christ had this river showed to Him as He tells us in the Psalms. Then He shows it to His disciples; yes, He shows it to them. John said there was shown to him a pure river of water of life clear as crystal; the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, whose leaves were for the healing of the nations, and here is sweet joy, solid comfort. "Ye see Me".

And lastly on this point, "Ye see Me" as being in the midst of the throne of God, and of the wondrous company of chosen, and redeemed people, led by Me to living fountains of waters, so that they shall never thirst; the sun shall not smite them, and God shall wipe all tears from their eyes.

"Because I live, ye shall live also". Not because I shall die and then live, but I live. "I give unto My sheep eternal life." The pouring out of the soul of Christ unto death did not interrupt this life, did not cut it. I live, and I will see you again, I will come to you, and I will not leave you orphans. I will give you another Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth. You shall be under a new dispensation. And the dear Saviour of sinners shall pour His comforts into disconsolate hearts. What is the life we now live? I speak to God's people. "The life", says Paul, "that I now live, I live by the

faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me." This life of faith enters into the life, the circumstances, the afflictions of the saints. It enters into all those things that affect them, that afflict them. "Is any among you afflicted, let him pray." Let him pray in the Holy Ghost, pray the prayer of faith, that God would sanctify the affliction. Sometimes people find themselves more anxious to have the afflictions sanctified than to have them removed. Not natural, of course, but it is spiritual. O, the Spirit of God opens the things of God, and teaches afflicted saints to believe that sanctified affliction is unspeakably better than unsanctified ease, and prosperity. Nobody likes to believe this naturally, but the saints do believe it. Christ's life is enough, and it sanctifies their thoughts, it purifies their minds, it enables them to see that what God ordains for them is the best for them; that if a rough path is ordained He has provided shoes of iron and brass; that if the rod is on them laid, it is steeped, as Hart says, and softened in His blood. Pity divine always attends the afflicting hand of God on penitent saints. They come with penitence and petitions, and Christ comes to them, and comforts them with love, and consoles them with the fellowship of the Spirit. I live, and therefore you live a life of faith on Me. And following that is this, a life of prayer. Prayer is not a smooth river whose placid, serene surface is never disturbed. One may say perhaps that prayer is like a stream that has to get over boulders, stones, rocks; sometimes runs a bit underground. Now it goes in this direction, then in that. If you follow it you may walk miles, so to express it, whereas a few steps in a straight direction would suffice. Prayer is difficult, but prayer is blessed. Prayer is the soul's dealing with God. Prayer is the sinner expressing his wants to God. Prayer is the sinner's admiration of God. Prayer is the sinner's adoration of God. It is not public; it is not necessarily vocal, nor is it necessarily local, that is to say, any place, and every place, where the spirit is moved, where needs press, where affection gives direction, the sinner prays. O, the places some of us have prayed in - the streets of Brighton, our rooms, various places- because there has been necessity. Necessity presses, squeezes prayer out, and men cry mightily to God. And this is from divine life in the soul, from the operation of the Spirit in the sinner's heart. Prayer - let me say it - prayer is the sinner's dealing with God. He has got a case; he has

got a case; man cannot touch it - except God might use a minister to touch it - man cannot touch the case. It is a bad heart, it is a wandering spirit, it is a gadding mind, it is an unsatisfied spirit; God only can meet it. Berridge expresses what the saints feel from time to time

The God of spirits only can
Fill up the vast desires of man

And when a man sees Jesus able to do all he needs; when he sees Him perhaps in the Scripture - "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in My Name. Ask and ye shall receive" Ask in My Name and the Father will hear you, and answer you - then he goes with the case, with the needs, the pressing needs; he goes with these. It is not at set times only - these may be very few in the cases of men, of people, who are daily occupied in some sort of business - but the heart is engaged; the heart is engaged. I believe it would be true of some of you to say this, that sometimes, some days, you begin with prayer, and you move through the day in prayer, as if your heart cannot be silent. O, Lord, help me. The ejaculations are numerous, and they are fervent, and they are sincere. They go out of need. They rise in the Spirit's gracious spirit. The sinner needs something. I live, says Christ; I give you this life, and this life issues in prayer. This life, coming from heaven, raises the sinner. Is it so sinner? Yes, some must say; yes, it is so.

Because I live you live My life; you live a divine life, that is a life that goes after God, being like Him.

Now I must conclude with a word. Our Lord Jesus Christ, after His death, and burial, rose again, and He ascended into heaven. He is said to be our Forerunner, which means we are to follow. He is said to be in heaven, and He said Himself - "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again, and receive you unto Myself", which means that this world, this earthly life of ours, shall not continue always. The world seeth Me not; you see Me. That is to say, though you are in the world you are not of it; you are of another spirit, you are of another country, and to that country you must go. I prepare it for you, and I prepare you for it. Then the day

comes when Paul's language is somewhat understood - "Absent from the body, present with the Lord." And when the ransomed soul leaves, for a time, the ransomed body - the body to go to the dust, part of the penalty - it enters heaven, absent from the body, its companion, only for a season, for the body, being redeemed, must be raised again, and be made like unto Christ's glorious body. I live, and where I am, a living Saviour, there shall, there must be, My saved people. I, the Head, must have My body with Me. Ye are members of Christ's body, bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, and members of His body in particular. Dear friends, what a word this is. I live; a living Saviour. I am He that was dead, and behold I am, in My very Person, alive for evermore, Amen, and have the keys of hell and of death. How many of us have a hope that we can honestly say after God's teaching, we see Him. "Ye see Me". How many of us can say that occasionally He renews the spirit of our minds by fresh supplies of His Own life.

He, to the feeble, and the faint,
His mighty aid makes known,
And when their languid life is spent,
Supplies it with His Own.

"Because I live, ye shall live also". May the Lord grant that we may have this experience.

AMEN.