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La P 812

Sermon preached by Mr. J. K. Popham
at Galeed Chapel, Brighton.
Sunday evening 16/7/33.

Text: Matthew xi. v. 27 to 30.

"All things are delivered unto Me of My Father, and no man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him. Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

A very remarkable passage this. I attempted to say something on the first verse of this text, "All things are delivered unto Me of My Father." Freedom, of which men boast, free-will, human power, liberty to make your own choice of things, and to order your own matters irrespective of the Divine Will, this verse condemns utterly. Happy the man who believes this by divine teaching, that himself and his things are in the hands of the Mediator, for it is here, as the Mediator, that Christ is speaking. The mystery of the Godhead dwelling in the light that no man can approach unto, is set forth here. "No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son." Infinite in their mutual Being, of one substance, and in their eternal happiness. The Trinity is sufficient in itself. The Father is one Person, the Son is another Person, of the same substance with the Father, and the Holy Ghost proceeds from them both, of the same substance. If one should say, "What do you mean? What is intended when the word substance is used? Substance simply means that which is. Whatever exists is substance. That is what is intended when men speak of the Son being of the same substance with the Father. Around this word substance in early days, the days of Arius and of Athanasius, was a great warfare. Athanasius contended that the Son was eternal because He partook of the substance of His Father who is eternal. That is a word by the way only. This mystery we cannot enter into. It is deeply humbling when men are

convinced by the Holy Ghost that they cannot approach this Eternal Light in which Jehovah dwells. He dwells in the Light that no man can approach unto. That Light is darkness to the creature, but there is a revelation made, and the Father is revealed to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him. Depend, dear friends who have faith, depend on, look for, revelation. Philpot said - If he were asked to describe true religion, he would say, revelation, revelation, revelation." Every child of God will say, of the religion he has that is right, God gave it; the Spirit brought it to him; He wrought faith in him. Revelation, brethren, revelation, revelation, therefore, no man shall glory in himself, no flesh shall glory before the Lord.

Then comes the next verse, "Come unto Me." One may ask, "What is the connection? Surely we may say it is not an abrupt termination of one teaching or lesson and an abrupt introduction of another subject. I believe, whether God will help me to make it clear to you I know not, but I believe there is an intimate and a beautiful and a living and an everlasting connection between the first verse of this text and the second. Is it not this - Omnipotence coming to the weak child of God? Is it not a rest promised to a poor labourer, labouring in legal bondage, labouring with doubts, fears, suggestions of the Devil? Is it not, shall I say, is it not a bed for the weary, the sin-sick, weary soul? Jehovah showing Himself gracious, omnipotence coming to weakness, life flowing into a dead creature, goodness leading an impenitent person to repentance? forgiveness made known to sinners in their confessions and their sins? There is union, in this text, of a very beautiful character. Ah, sinner, omnipotence is not alone. It is set forth here, but it is set forth in Him who is the Mediator between God and man. No gift could be made by the Father to His Eternal Son. They have one nature, one being, they are one substance, equal each with the other, so the Father did not; could not; deliver anything to the

Son. Christ said in another place, "All that the Father hath is Mine," belongs to Me, naturally, properly, eternally. Here there is something given to the Son, and that gift is to the Son in another character, in the beautiful, the necessary, the saving character of the Mediator. There is one God. There is one God. I need not say to you who have had Him revealed in the law, that that truth, with all its majesty and might and terror and glory, you have looked on and felt a kind of death and ruin and wrath. And if that were all; who could hope? But there is one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. O dear believing people, has not this been made life to you in some measure, one Mediator; that Jehovah in His awfulness, His majesty, and yet also in His goodness, may be approached in this Mediator. And this truth is beautifully expressed by the Holy Ghost by Paul, He says, speaking of access to the Father, we both, Jew and Gentile, have access unto the Father through the Son, by the Spirit. The Son is the medium, the middle person, the Mediator, the High Priest of our profession, the Prophet, the Priest, the King. Looking on all about Him as He was teaching and preaching, He said, "Come unto Me," There they were, with Him. "Come unto Me," which is the motion of faith. Not a local motion of the body, but a motion of faith. One near Him, one touching Him in a crowd, came to Him as the crowd did not come. She said, "If I may but touch the hem of His garment." That was coming, my friends, and the moment she touched, the dear Saviour knew that virtue had flowed from Him. "who touched Me?" He said. His disciples wondered, seeing that there was a surging crowd about Him, but He knew. "Somebody has touched Me." When you come to Christ, you come by faith. Faith, the gift of God and that not of yourselves, lest you should boast. O, this precious gift of faith! It is a humbling movement of the soul. It is a faith that empties the soul of boasting; that brings the soul with its emptiness, its poverty, its weakness, its sin, its guilt, to the Saviour. It gets sometimes, large views of what He is, of what He has done, which is so encouraging to all the dismal fears and the burden of guilt and the labour of sin to have the victory; these are all under it. Yes, it says to them all I must venture. Eternity and my state in Eternity depends on my getting to Christ or not; I will venture, if I perish, I will perish seeking Him." He says here, "Come". Come poor sinner, Come away; come away from the lions den. come away from the mountains of leopards. Come away from your sinful self, away from your own schemes of movement, of getting better

and better and yet better. Come away from these things. Come away from your discouraging circumstances. Come away from the things that seem to be set against you even by God Himself. Come away. I think I said last Lord's day, speaking of faith, it takes a short cut. The devious paths of sin, and workings of a legal mind, may be here and there like a meandering river, not a straight course. Faith takes a straight course, "Lo, glad I come and Thou blest Lamb, shall take me to Thee as I am." Abraham was justified in uncircumcision which represents his state as a sinner. He was justified as a sinner. Jesus says, "Come", "Come unto Me," into whose hands all things are delivered; to Me in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, to Me, to whom sin was imputed, to Me, who died the accursed death on the tree. Well, my friends, this movement of faith is a great privilege and it is very pleasing to God. It is entirely contrary to nature, fallen nature. It is a contradiction to legality. It is opposite to all the claims that a worker would have, or think he might plead, before God. Needy, naked, polluted, unjust, guilty, therefore deserving death, the sinner has to come. Not once only, no, it is not one act of faith and then the matter is finished. It is a continual coming, to all who are kept lively in their souls exercises. They have to come, day by day they have to come.

"All ye that labour". Here is the Mighty God and a labouring sinner. The law is made known to him. He is made to know his duty. His duty, my friends, what is a man's duty? The same that was in Eden before the fall, to make God your chief end, His glory your chief aim, to love Him with heart, and mind, and soul and strength and your neighbour as yourself; that is your duty, that is my duty. And when God comes, by His Spirit into the heart of a sinner, giving him new life, yet condemning him by the law, he sets to work to fulfil that law. O, the misery of his failures! O, the distress of his shortcomings, the promises which he makes only to break; and he labours, he is worn out, sometimes says - "I can do no more;" he becomes desperate. What shall I do? The gospel says, "Leave off doing" and Jesus said, "O labouring sinner you never will mend this bad case, you cannot make better of it. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and will remain flesh, you cannot make spirit of it. You are only flesh, as born in sin and

and shapen in iniquity, now come to Me, I will give you rest." I am the Mediator between that God whom you dread and yourself; to Me your sins were imputed, on Me fell the punishment of them; you were deserving a bruising of chastisement; of wounds, I was wounded and bruised and chastised and smitten with many stripes for you; now come to Me, I will give you rest." There is no rest in the world that can be compared for sweetness; blessedness; with the rest of the gospel. It is a bed long enough, it is a covering wide enough. The righteousness of Christ covers the soul. The love of God in Christ is a bed to rest on, and so when sinners come by precious faith, this rest is given to them. Labouring souls, do not continue your labour, you will never get better by it, you will never improve by it; no matter how high your moral standard may be; no matter how well you live, among your fellows, you will never, by all that kind of thing, improve your condition before God; and this, every soul born of God is brought to realise. O, but may I come to God? Yes, Elihu said to Job - "I am according to your wish, in God's stead. My terror shall not make thee afraid." Jesus has no terror for repenting sinners, He has no terror for coming sinners. He would not invite them to terrify them. He is too good for that. He knows what terrors they suffer in their consciences, when they know their sins, but He has no terror for them. "Come to Me." In this invitation there are one or two things I would like to name. First, the suitability of it. The law has conditions - Do this and live. The gospel condition is that you shall be dead, that Christ may give you life; that you shall be darkness, that Christ shall give you light; that you shall be unjust, naked and guilty, that Christ may justify you, and give you His sweet blessing. And that very condition of ruin, is His own work in the soul by His Spirit.

All the fitness He requireth,
is to feel your need of Him.
This He gives you,
'Tis His Spirit's rising beam."

That is one thing, the suitability of it. O, never did mortise and tenon fit as the invitation to a sinner fits with the sinner's case. A living Saviour sends a word to one who lives, has lived, to prove that he hates God by nature. An invitation sent to one who is naked as Adam was, that He may have a covering wrought for him for his justification. An invitation sent to a weak

creature by the Mighty God. Is it not wonderfully suitable, and that to the end of the day, the end of pilgrimage? "Come to Me in all your need, in all your unworthiness, in all your sinfulness, come to Me." Jesus, the Saviour, the Mediator, sends this invitation; and sometimes it comes with such power that the sinner says - "Lo, glad I come, and Thou blest Lamb, shalt take me to Thee as I am. Nothing but sin have I to give, Nothing but love shall I receive."

Secondly, the love of it. That is the spring, the fountain: the love of God, the love of Christ, the love of the Spirit; that these lips which spake as never other lips spake, these lips of love, issue this invitation. O sinner, backslider, half-dead child of God, sleepy soul, now sensible of your condition, He says, "Come unto Me." What a wonder when it falls upon the spirit. No one can express exactly the moving of the soul, the reviving of faith, the motion of that faith to God, the response of faith to the invitation, tis very beautiful. The heart moves, enlarges, hope springs up, love returns love, and the sinner obeys the gospel. "what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel?" Now here is one who obeys it, the obedience of faith.

It is also an invitation that omnipotence gives. Man shuts his heart against God, A regenerate sinner knows that, and now, this invitation makes its own way, and gets its own welcome. O, how glad is one upon whose heart this invitation falls, and effects its own entrance! "The entrance of Thy words giveth light, it giveth understanding unto the simple;" and the man on whose heart this falls, I say, he obeys it, he can do no other. 'Tis Jesus who speaks, Jesus who stills the waves, who opens the heart to attend to the things that are spoken. Jesus who, in His Omnipotence appears, and O, how moved, deeply moved, is the soul that feels this word - "Come unto Me." Heavy laden, guilty, there is no burden that I know of, no burden that the scripture speaks of, to equal for weight, dismay, despairing feelings, with the weight of guilt. A guilty conscience, it spoils your meat, interrupts your sleep, makes everything in the day troublesome and burdensome to you. God and a guilty conscience, who can live comfortably under that? And not at the beginning only! I knew what guilt meant in my youth; I know now-a-days, more about it. You won't grow better, my friends. You won't improve nature, nor will nature be quiet. It will move, provoke, scheme, deceive or attempt by violence to overcome you; and O, the compliances of our hearts with sin's

working and suggestions. Then guilt: do not you find it very difficult, under a sense of guilt, to pray and approach God? I do not like to hear people talk about, "We will make it a matter of prayer" and, "We will pray." No, it is just this: when you are guilty, you are helpless. Guilt brings helplessness, guilt cripples, guilt maims you; and Jesus says to a guilty person, "Come unto Me." You are burdened with the guilt of your life, burdened with the guilt of your nature, burdened with the awful workings of sin, burdened with your compliance to sin, "Come to Me." O, but how can I?" When you have faith in exercise, and when the Holy Spirit moves your faith, then you say, "I venture," One may say, "I have not heard a word for a long time. If your case is desperate you will say, unbidden though I seem to be, I will venture, and that venture will always be honoured by Him to whom you make the venture.

Heavy laden: some of you have, perhaps, come to this place, many a time thus laden, have hardly known, in a sense, how to get here. Tears have dropped from your eyes, perhaps, as you have walked here. I could not tell you how often I have entered this pulpit guilty. Can such people be welcome to God? Yes. The Mediator, the Saviour, He says, "Come heavy laden." Now look at His promise, "I will give you rest." Sin spoiled the world. Sin made thorns and thistles grow. Sin made the life of man a life of sweat, the sweat of his brow. Sin mars everything. We sin in all we do and thus we ourselves mar everything. No rest in self, though we have sought it well, there's no rest in self. There is no rest in naked knowledge: you may know the whole Bible and be troubled like the troubled sea that cannot rest. Do not think that your naked or acquired knowledge will help you. Memory won't help you. But there is a rest and what is that? The blessed everlasting gospel, brought into the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost, brings rest, and this rest is manifold, but I will speak of it in two or three particulars. It is rest from guilt, it is indeed. "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity and in whose spirit there is no guile. If ever you have laid your heads on your pillows feeling guilt gone, you have had one of the biggest blessings God will ever give you in this life. I know it. O it is a blessing! I was young when God blessed me with that and I shall never forget it really. When retiring that night I said, "Now it would be as easy for me to die as it is

for me to lay my head on this pillow. No guilt. All gone, All gone. Blasphemies, heresies, hardness, rebellion, fighting against God, declaring you did not want to know Him, that where He was you did not want to be on the ground of election, all gone. Lust, pride, ambition, envy, murder in your heart, the guilt of all those things gone. Yes, my friends, the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from all sin. No happier state can be imagined. Heaven will be fuller, but the blessedness of justification is here made known in a good measure when the Lord clears the conscience and you say, "Now I know God," rather "I am known of God." That is one rest, beautiful rest! a bed to lie down on where your soul reposes, your conscience is at ease; no distrust, no misgiving for the time being, your conscience is just reposing on the atonement of the Lord Jesus. That is your plea, that is your ground, that is your justness, that is your justification, nothing else. Righteousness imputed becomes the breastplate of the sinner's heart.

The second thing that follows, necessarily, is the peace of God, "The peace of God which passeth all understanding." You can never grasp it, never fully understand the mystery of redemption, the mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God, the mystery of the imputation of sin to Him, the mystery of His efficacious death, of His blessed resurrection, of His ascension into heaven. All these were necessary to procure and bring to your soul the peace of God. He is the God of peace in this matter and in this manner. Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you." What was Christ's peace? When He had put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. When the law could not say to Him, "Pay me that thou owest." When death could not hold Him in the grave. When he rose and became the life of his people. That was His peace. His work was finished. He entered into rest on the day when sin was put away and when He rose from the dead. God rested on the seventh day from all His creation works and Jesus rested from the work of redemption in this world when He made an end of sin. And that is the peace, the real peace, of a sinner. It is Christ's peace, thus procured; Christ's peace, brought into the heart by the Holy Ghost. And it is wide and far-reaching in its operations on the mind. You are at peace with providence, adverse though that may be. At peace with the stones of the field and boulders that have crippled you before, now you are at peace with them.

You are at peace in such a way that you can leap over a wall of trouble. Providence, O, what a good thing it is to have the peace of God in your heart with respect to it. At peace with God. He your friend and you His friend. "Henceforth I call you not servants but friends, for all things that I have heard of My Father, I have made known unto you." "My peace," the peace of God, and this flows from Christ. This is the rest which He gives. And in the next place it is the rest of divine love. God rests in His love. His people rest in it when it comes, shed abroad in their hearts, as it is sometimes, by the Holy Ghost: "Love divine all love excelling." The soul reclines upon it, reposes in it, is pleased with it, satisfied with it. It is deeply humbling when you know that the Lord God has loved you and does love you. It is amazing to a sinner. You may look at your friend, godly friend and say it seems proper, in a sense, that he should be loved, but that such a person as myself should be loved, this is wonderful. Singled out, it may be, from a worldly family; and now the Lord says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." It is very wonderful, very melting. God does set out this love beautifully in the scripture. You have had commerce with false gods, have committed spiritual adultery times without number, yet He says, "Return unto Me, I have redeemed thee. I have loved thee... therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee," and so the soul rests. It has a view like this, it may be, as if the soul takes a view of the world that was once enough for it, now he says, "I have no use for this." He looks at what was pleasing to himself formerly; now he says, "That is all pain to me." He rests in God and God rests in him. Of His church the Lord says, "This is My rest for ever;" and of that divine love the sinner says, "Here is my rest, I want no other." It may be that some of you gracious people have had the Lord with you so in His love, that you have said to Him, "Lord, I do not want a creature." A man is happy when he says that, "I do not want a creature". You have enough. "Whom have I in heaven but Thee and there is none upon earth I desire beside Thee." "I will give you rest." Rest here, which is a foretaste of the rest to come. Rest in God, and you will rest in Him for ever and ever. Rest in His wisdom He orders all things for the best for His people. He knows, we do not know what is best. If God left you, if He left me, to manage for ourselves, we should very soon be ruined. That I believe for myself anyhow.

O, but when the Lord is pleased to say, "Come to Me," and you obey that blessed call by faith, then He is wisdom to you." I, wisdom dwell with prudence and find out knowledge of witty inventions." You are pleased with what He does when you are at rest. Ah, I knew one dear child of God on her death bed and when some provision was made in respect of a need, she said, "This is one of His witty inventions." Faith looks at God's work and is pleased with it. A witty invention: I dare say a good many of you have seen some of these inventions of His, and have delighted in them, rested in them, rested in the God who has wrought them. Witty inventions: He finds a place for a person, there is a witty invention. Here is rest in His omnipotence. The day may have been, and you may go back to it, when naked omnipotence was a sword, O, how you dreaded the Almighty God! The day came when that same perfection of God you saw, by faith, clothed in your own nature, God breathing, sighing human breath. God opening the grave, God calling Lazarus to come forth, God working mighty things, yes, saying to the Red Sea, divide, make a way for My ransomed to pass over dry-shod. There is a rest in divine immutability. This must be the last remark here. Divine immutability: indeed, there is immutability nowhere else. He cannot change. Why was not Jacob consumed?" I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." An immutable promise, an immutable oath, an immutable omnipotence that can never weaken, wisdom that can never be darkened. You rest upon a base that nothing can remove, when you rest here, You build upon a rock that can never be moved when you build here. "I will give you rest."

Take My yoke upon you." What is Christ's yoke? He has no yoke but the gospel, the blessed everlasting gospel, the gospel of love, the gospel of redemption, the gospel of justification, the gospel of sanctification: take this poor sinner. When God is pleased to put it out to you and the hand of your faith lays hold upon it, you take it; you say, "This is my heritage, this is my life, this is my all, this is my hope, this is my prospect, this is the blessed yoke of the Lord Jesus. "And learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." Zion was exhorted to be glad. Why? Because "The King cometh.....lowly, and riding upon an ass." A lowly Saviour suits broken hearts, touches poor meek sinners and they breathe into His Spirit and they become meek thereby. And ye shall find rest unto your souls." Restless souls find here their centre, their bottom, their top, their all and in all.

"For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." What a poor gospel it is, says the worldling. What a blessed gospel, says a broken-hearted, humbled, believer. May the Lord make it out to us. I have just given hints to-day, may the substance be given to you by the Holy Ghost and may He forgive all that has been amiss in the preaching and in the hearing. Amen.
