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Sermon preached by Mr J K Popham at Galeed Chapel
Brighton, on Sunday evening 16 January 1927

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TEXT: Matthew 15 verse 25

"Then came she and worshipped Him, saying Lord help me"

The testimony of Christ to this favoured woman shows that this prayer was the prayer of faith. It brought an answer. He had tried her faith. The Saviour, intending to bless her, had seemed unwilling to do it. He had tried her faith sharply, but true faith never lets go her hold of God, for that hold of God that faith has, is in and by His own power. Natural faith never reaches this, it never reaches God, it never reaches His gracious power. It soon is turned aside and withered by adversity as is quite evident from the three hearers out of the four in the parable of the Sower, who withered. Three hearers withered, yet every one seemed, at the beginning, to have faith. Faith stands in the power of God. A remarkable passage that is in the Corinthians where the Apostle disclaims all that, that nature would have dictated to him, and have had him walk in, namely, excellency of speech and words of human wisdom, and he gives the reason why he did not indulge in the things he might have indulged in. The reason was this, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. That faith in Jacob got hold of God and prevailed, having power over the angel. That faith kept Abraham and brought him to believe in the Lord and it was counted to him for righteousness. That faith enabled Jehoshaphat to set singers before the army as they went to battle to sing "Praise the Lord, for His mercy endureth for ever." That faith kept Daniel on his knees three times a day when it would have been to his temporal interest, it would seem, to give way. That faith stopped the mouth of lions; it quenched in others the violence of fire. By it others escaped the violence of death and others did not escape that violence of death because they would not accept a false deliverance. That faith enables a sinner to cast all his care on the Lord. The future may look dark to some of us, and it is so indeed. It may

look dark respecting our own personal cases, but if we have faith to cast the cares and the difficulties and the perplexities and our weaknesses all on God we shall stand and withstand in the evil day and, having done all, to stand. Reason fails, nature gives way, sin prevails, the devil drives, and the only thing to object against these, our enemies, the only shield to put between them and ourselves, is that shield that God gives, the shield of faith. This shield will quench the fiery darts of the wicked one. This shield will keep us from every fatal dart. Bless God then if we have a grain of faith. It will keep our eyes on the Saviour; it will remember at times His promise; it will plead His mercy, His atonement; it will cleave to Him; it will follow Him; it will never let Him go. And an illustrious example of this faith is in our text "She worshipped Him". Faith perceived that He was God, and she worshipped Him. And, having an urgent case, she, in the act of worship, said to Him "Lord help me". No physician can help me, help me in this matter. She brought it to Him. Now, sinner, if you have faith, you may have all the diseases of sin on your spirit and a burden of guilt on your conscience, and the native unbelief in your mind departing from the living God. You may feel dead and hard and distant, but that faith will say in your heart, there is one in heaven who can save you; a man in heaven who receiveth sinners and eateth with them; a righteousness in heaven that can justify the ungodly; a fountain of merit in heaven that can cleanse the polluted; an arm that can save; wisdom that can guide; fulness that can supply every need. God has put great honour on faith. It is the Spirit's creation, its maintenance is by the Spirit, its revivings and all its actings are by the Holy Ghost. It is a hand that the Spirit creates and gives power to hold out to a God who has promised to supply all our needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. But you have got unbelief. Every believer has unbelief to trouble him. "Lord". It means not only what I feebly tried to express to you in the latter part of the service this morning, but it means this, that the Lamb of God in heaven, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah in heaven, this faith sees. A lamb, with the gentleness of His dealings with His poor, sinful people. A lion to protect them and to beat down and devour their enemies. Faith sees this. Of all the sights this

is one of the most beautiful and encouraging that faith ever gets. My friends, what a Saviour faith sees in Jesus Christ. Whatever need we have, faith will see a supply in Him, and I would dwell a little on this, because my emptiness is very discouraging to me, my ignorance of God is very weakening to me, my powerful and wicked disposition is very discouraging. Now, if I see nothing but these things, how shall I hold on, but if, with these things before me, (you wont lose sight of yourself if you are taught of God) ^{if with these things before me,} I get a sight of the Lamb of God, of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, then I shall hold on. Now you can say the same, who are taught of God and led by His good Spirit. Other refuge have we none; other supplies have we none; other fountain to go to there is none. God will have us empty and poor and wicked, not wicked by living in sin, but wicked by conviction of what we are. O what a God, what a Lamb, what a Lion we have to look to. Now the scriptures are written for our encouragement and we have cases of a wonderful and beautiful kind to encourage us in this moving of faith, this cry of faith "Lord help me". One of the most striking and illustrious of all the cases is that of Manasseh. We read of him this evening, a wicked king, setting up idols and making the streets of Jerusalem run with blood, for he filled Jerusalem with blood and made Israel to sin. Ah, you say, I know a Manasseh. So do I. What a creature, and is he within the pale of God's goodness, within the reach of God's mercy? Yes. And, when the time came for the Lord's mercy to appear, he was caught in the thorns, bound with fetters and then the Lord made him remember God and humble himself and cry to God, and this case is written for our learning. I know that I am speaking to some idolators, I know an idolator is speaking to you. Are we delivered, has God brought us into some affliction, dealt with us in a way that is spoken of in the scripture, terrible? It is a terrible thing that God does when He comes to destroy our Dagon and our Baals. A terrible thing He does when He catches us in thorns and binds us with chains, but what is it for? Why, it is that we may cry to Him, that faith may go out to Him and say "Lord help me" "Pardon mine iniquity for it is great". You wont throw any stones at Manasseh if you are convinced of your sin by the Lord. It is a case written for our learning. Another case you have in David. I have thought even

today of the boldness of David's faith. He had two terrible sins on his conscience, adultery, and murder to hide the first. And now faith in his soul kept him from black despair when he was convinced of his double sin. O to be before God with crimes on your conscience is very solemn. It is true as Hart says

To see sin smarts but slightly;
To own with lip confession,
Is easier still; but O to feel
Cuts deep beyond expression.

Your conscience is guilty, your memory is active. Perhaps you go to sins of childhood, you go to sins you committed since you had a conscience, and you come along and look at sins all through your life and these on your conscience will make you a sore and a poor, depressed creature. Now if you have faith, well that will bring you, with all blessed, God given boldness, to the throne of His heavenly grace - Pardon mine iniquity, cleanse me from my sin, wash me thoroughly, make me white as snow. Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation. I remember Lord, you may say, I remember when I was justified and sanctified, when, I do remember when, Thou wast precious to me, when Thou didst dwell with me and I walked up and down in Thy Name, but I have sinned all these mercies away as to their comfort. I have sinned and got into darkness and confusion and I am barren and weak and poor. Now faith wont let you sink into despair. No, it will point out the way to a renewal, the blood of Jesus Christ. It may bring to you, by the Holy Ghost, that word in John's Epistle "My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not" and then you stop and say, but I have sinned, I have sinned! I have sinned against light and knowledge and mercy manifested. Then the Spirit says in that same word "and if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" and this will help you. This will constrain you to say "Lord help me". Forgive my sin, blot out my transgressions and comfort me with love. Fill me with mercy. Oh it needs faith to pray like this. This woman had it, great faith. She was a great believer, and the weaker sinner, the weaker, the poorer sinner, under the leading of the Spirit,

becomes a great believer, for he cannot leave God's throne unblessed, cannot leave it. He goes many a time in the day perhaps, many a time in the night - Lord bless my soul; save me from my sins; keep me in Thy fear; order my footsteps by Thy word. Now the whole of this lies here. The ground of the encouragement, the attraction of God in Christ. A full Christ for an empty sinner, the Lion of the tribe of Judah for a defeated sinner, the Lamb of God for a freshly defiled sinner. The whole of it is there. There is no virtue in faith apart from its divine origin, apart from its great object. It derives strength from its Creator, it derives attraction from its object, it derives encouragement from the gospel, a full gospel. It is very bitter to be a sinner. I know it is very bitter to be a sinner, but it is very wonderful to be a sinner. The Holy Ghost has made him a sacred thing. So she had this before her - The Lord God, the Lord God. Bless God if you have the proper object of faith set before you in the gospel. It is very wonderful. No creature can ever utter the amazing goodness and wisdom and love of the Holy Ghost manifested in setting Christ before the faith of a guilty person. She had also, and true faith has this, as an attraction, namely the suitableness of Christ. Now here was disease and here was the Physician. She had heard a report of what the Lord Jesus was doing. He was going about doing good and healing all manner of diseases, and she had a diseased daughter. Now this Physician and her diseased daughter had a suitableness. She saw the suitableness, she felt attracted by it. We are diseased sinners and some of us feel so, and we have heard a good report. It has come from heaven, it has entered our souls, a good report of Jesus Christ the good Physician. And these things bring, so to speak, bring before our minds, the remedy, give an energy to our faith. Do you see this point, here is a diseased soul and there is no balm in the whole world and no physician among all the sons of men on the earth that can meet this case and touch it and heal it, but there is a report from heaven, there is balm in Gilead, there is a Physician there. There is a Saviour in heaven whose heart is made of tenderness, whose bowels melt with love and faith receives this report. Isaiah said "Who hath believed our report" and you say I have, I have through mercy. I can say with you, I have. And believing this report

brings us to Him in whom we believe, this good Physician. O Lord, the disease, Lord the putrifying sores which have not been molified nor bound up. Lay them before Him. Dear friends, what an attraction this is, a Physician, a good Physician going about in the churches doing good and healing all manner of diseases. He has not ceased to walk on the earth, there are spots in the earth where He walks. He has got cases to deal with, He has got wicked, diseased souls to deal with, and so He walks here and there with His medicine, His remedy. O what a medicine is the atonement, what a remedy is grace. What a healing is divine love made known by the Holy Spirit, when you believe this, when you say Lord I have believed the report of Christ, I have believed that Thou didst make iniquity to meet on Him, I have believed that He was wounded and bruised and chastised and had stripes laid on Him for sinners, and I have believed all that was for me. And some say I want to believe all that was for me. Now here is this poor woman's case, follow it. God help you and help me to follow this, do not give up. Says the devil, He wont notice you, you are such a dead thing. But faith will say, there was a widow burying her son and there was a Saviour. He saw the bier and He went and stopped it and said to the dead "Young man I say unto thee arise". Faith will talk about it to you perhaps and say you are a dead thing, a poor dead creature, with little or no faith, no prayer, no hope, no love at times, but there is one who can say - Live, live. Yea, there was a man hanged on the cross for theft, a dying thief, who saw the Lord. O what a sight to fall on that man's heart, what a report to reach that man's heart. Here, near to you, is hanging a man and that man is Almighty God, He is there, hanging, pouring out His soul unto death for sinners, pray to Him. And the Spirit was in that man and he prayed "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom" This is written for our encouragement. This blessed word of God contains these cases for our instruction, that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope. Do you see these things, that is, does the Holy Spirit show them to you? Is not it a bold faith? Have not the cases I have brought before you proved what I said, that faith is a bold grace? It wont be put out of countenance, it wont give up praying, for God strengthens it. It stands in the power of God. "Lord help me",

Mind the object of prayer. I would bring the object before you. A mere sentimental religion, without an object, is of no value to an immortal soul. Mind the object. Is Jesus the object, is Jesus and His blood the object? Is Jesus and His righteousness the object? Then you are well, you are well. You will feel well one day. You are well now in the right way, the narrow way. "Lord help me" I am a lost sinner, Lord save or I perish.

Now let us look for a little time at the help. She got hold of the right object, a good God. Now the help. In her case it was this, the rebuking and driving away from her tormented daughter, of the devil. That was the help she wanted, no other thing could have done her good in that case. She did not want the Lord to say, well I approve of you, did not want Him to say, I know where you live, nor any other thing of that kind, but the one thing she wanted was what she got, the driving of the devil away from that tormented child of hers. This is the key then, you have got a case, a sinful case, a case of hardness of heart, a case perhaps of grievous, tormenting fear, a case it may be of the uncertainty about your standing for eternity. It may be a case of doubt about the beginning of your religion, the nature of your religion, the ground of your hope and the hope itself. Something in your soul, in your mind, in your circumstances, in your feelings, something needing attention. A sickness, needing the Physician, a disease, a blot, a burden, a load of dead works. I should think I have caught some of you, that the cases are here. Now the help needed is this, that case touched, spoken to, that case dealt with by the Lord, that devil tormented soul blessed with peace and ease by the rebuking and driving away of the devil. That plaguing, that defiling, that confusing sin, unbelief, rebuked, and faith strengthened. This is the help, the case taken up. O said the nobleman to the Lord in an urgent case about his son "Sir, come down ere my child die" O you may sometimes view it like that, Lord if Thou dost not come I shall be overcome, I shall die and be lost. There is a real case. O said the widow to the judge "avenge me of my adversary" but he would not for a while. Now the Lord has given us that parable for our teaching and instruction, "men ought always to pray and not to faint". This poor widow, she plagued the judge, or would

have plagued him as he thought, and so, from that wretched, selfish motive he said he would avenge her. Now, listen to what the Lord says "and shall not God avenge His own elect which cry day and night unto Him though He bear long with them". You say, I have been crying many days. Now listen to another scripture, God drop it into your hearts. "Beloved be not ignorant of this one thing that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day". Try not to measure the Lord's time by your time. Your time is always ready. He knows best when to come. This is the help. The case must be taken up, but when? That is with Him. He has given you faith, blessed you with faith to press on, to follow after Him and the perplexities and the sins and the diseases and the difficulties that come, these standing in between the Lord and you will put your faith to a test. These are among the things that bring what Peter calls the trial of faith, precious trial of faith. Well now, poor sinner, the Lord has got a remedy for you, a remedy in His precious blood. That blood is the treasure that faith longs to lay hold of, that the soul may sing, with good Hart

My treasure is Thy precious blood;
Fix there my heart, and for the rest.
Under Thy forming hands, my God.
Give me that frame which Thou lik'st best.

The purging of the conscience from dead works. that is the thing.

Another case may be this, no certainty about your standing, no certainty as to your interest. Then what do you want? Why, this

Assure my conscience of her part
In the Redeemer's blood

Well that would do all that you need, that would bring everything into your heart that you stand in need of. So the help is the forgiveness of sins. Having forgiven you all trespasses, blotting out the hand writing of ordinances that was against us and contrary to us, taking it out of the way, nailing it to His

cross. O what a remedy is that, having forgiven you all trespasses. Well sinner you may say there are some trespasses, I do not see how they can be forgiven. That is your foolish, corrupt reason, working against Christ, setting a limit to Him. Now the remedy in this case would be "With the Lord there is mercy that He may be feared and with Him is plenteous redemption, therefore let Israel hope in the Lord." That would be a blessed remedy against your reasoning, and the next would be the removal of sin, all sin from your conscience. Blessed be God for a good religion beginning with regeneration and ending in heaven, but between these two states or points, how much there is to be lost, to be forgiven, to be helped through. May the Lord help us.

It may be a case of something in providence that you do not know how to touch, that nobody can touch for you. God knows what it is. You know what it is. You know your own plague in this and your own need and sorrow. Now if you have got faith in the Lamb, in the Lion, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, who prevailed to open the book and to loose the seals thereof, and who has given unto Him all power in heaven and in earth, you will be enabled to take that case to Him. He may keep you waiting, but remember what has been well said, a delay is not a denial.

Did ever trouble yet befall,
And He refuse to hear thy call?
And has He not His promise passed,
That thou shalt overcome at last?

Faith's province is to wait, to argue, to plead, to urge upon God's notice the case that you have, whatever it is, and faith's object is sufficient for every case, no matter how big, how important it may be. Faith's object is God, a full God, a God who has filled a river of pleasure at His right-hand for ever more, a God who has put a supply into His dear Son, Jesus Christ, for every need, every case. Well now, the Lord help us to believe this, this good report of our Lord Jesus Christ, this good report of His intention and love and mercy for His poor people. Oh faith is a great grace; it owes its birth to the Spirit; it owes its motions to the Spirit; it owes its

increases to the Spirit; it owes its victory to the Spirit. And remember what John says in his first Epistle, "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God". May the Lord help us to hold this object fast. None but Jesus is a proper object for faith. God is in Him. None but Jesus can meet a bad case, a sick case, an evil case, a tormented sinner. None but the Lion of the tribe of Judah can bruise Satan under His feet and under the feet of the one he torments and this trampling under foot of Satan is in the first promise of the gospel. Said God to Satan - My son shall bruise your head. "The seed of the woman shall bruise thy head". Yes, and it will be a bruising when the sins of Satan, when the guilt of all his tormenting of the saints shall be avenged, when God shall avenge Himself on this, His great enemy. O it will be a trampling under foot and a bruising and when that takes place there wont be a tempted sinner under Satan's influence, there wont be a sick soul, groaning under the blows of this tempter. No there will be a perfect deliverance. May we, though we be tempted and bruised and injured and deceived by this devil, bring our cases to Him who alone is able to take them up, and to say "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Ah, there is a very high encomium to be passed on every sinner who believes and perseveres in believing by the power of the Holy Ghost. "O woman, great is thy faith" O trembling believer, believing in and trembling at God's word, great is thy faith. O mistaken sinner, yet believing in Christ and cleaving to Him, great is thy faith and the end of it, the blessed end of it, will be a perfect healing, perfect soundness and presenting of us before the presence of His glory without spot or blameworthiness.

AMEN.