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Sermon preached by Mr J K Popham
at Galeed Chapel Brighton
on Sunday morning 15 January 1922

MATTHEW 6 v 10

"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as
it is in heaven"

In this chapter Christ forbids the doing of certain things in the manner in which they were done by the scribes and Pharisees. hypocrites. We are to be charitable, do our alms-giving, but only in a certain way. "Let not your left hand know what your right hand doeth." Do not pray in such a way as to let everyone passing by see and hear you, but when you pray enter into your closet - go aside into some convenient place - shut your door about you and then pray. When men pray to be seen and heard of men, then they get their reward, the praise of men, but they get no answer, no honour from God. May we remember this, and remember that "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation", that it is within. And Christ says to His people when you pray "pray after this manner" - here is a pattern for the prayer of the children of God - "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name" It is a solemn and dreadful thing to take the Name of God in vain, to use His Name flippantly, to use vain repetitions, to say the thing over and over again, as if by doing so you will get the ear of God and an answer. It is not a vain repetition to ask for 40 years for the same blessing, labouring on till you get it, but it is uttering vain repetition when, without a heart in the matter, you just chatter before God. It is as Solomon says, "Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom seeing that he hath no heart in it", had no mind in the business. Or, as James says, a double minded man gets nothing at all. How can he? "Our Father which art in heaven" - seeing all things and all thoughts - "hallowed be Thy Name" Reverenced be Thy Name. There is an awe due to God, a fear, filial fear, due to God. "Holy and reverend is His Name", and good it is when that reverence is felt. Then come the words of the text: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven". There is a kingdom which is to continue for ever; only one. Other kingdoms are doomed, they are all for a time. We read that in the vision that Nebuchadnezzar had he saw

the great image, till also he saw a great stone cut out of the mountain, without hands, which fell on the image robbing kingdoms and grinding them all to powder; it filled the earth. This represents the kingdom of Christ. He is that stone cut out of the brass of God's decree without hands. Coming without man, incarnate, born in that way that the Scripture tells us of. His kingdom is different from all other kingdoms. Other kingdoms are of this world; His is not of this world, but from heaven. The kingdom is represented in the Revelation as Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. By Ezekiel it is represented as a great city and the same also in the Revelation. It comes from heaven; it has its own constitution, its own laws. Its laws are diverse from the laws of all earthly kingdoms. Its subjects are the subjects of the great King, and they are to obey, and do obey, His laws. That does not make them at all disloyal to the kingdom of which they may be subjects upon earth. They are the best citizens, who fear God. They are the best neighbours and they are the best in all their earthly relationships on earth. They are separated from the world but while in it they are told to pray for the peace of the city in which they live, for in the peace thereof they shall have peace. They are to build houses and live as men and women in the world, but in them there is a kingdom and they do constitute a kingdom that shall never end, and the King of it is Christ, of the increase of whose kingdom there shall be no end. This is the kingdom of the gospel, this is the kingdom that Christ came and preached when He said: "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He Himself, the great King, bringing the kingdom, that is His all conquering grace, to sinners, by which conquering grace they repent toward God and have faith toward Himself, even Jesus Christ. And Christ's instruction in the prayer is "Thy kingdom come"; pray for that. Pray after this manner: "Thy kingdom come". The great offence of Christ was, when He came to His own, when He did not come as a king to deliver them from the hateful and hated yoke of the Romans. His offence was that He did not answer the carnal expectations of the Jews. That offence continues today, not with the Jews only, but with us also who are Gentiles, until He Himself conquers by grace divine. Now this kingdom, being different from all other kingdoms, does effectually work by the Spirit so as to bring glory to its King, glory to Christ. And if the Lord will help for a little time this morning, I shall speak of what this kingdom does,

what it is. It is within you, says the Lord; it cometh not with observation. And an illustration of what it is, in the power, and the glory, and the effects of it, we have in the case of the Apostle Paul's conversion, as we were reading just now. Here is a man with a kingdom in him, a Jewish kingdom, a Jew in every fibre of his being. A Jew disappointed about Christ, full of enmity against Him. A Jew who, full of religion, observed the law of Moses, and in it was blameless as to its external observations, but he hated Christ with an intensity that was exhibited by his conduct. He kept the clothes of those who stoned Christ's first martyr. They laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. His enmity grew. He did much evil to the saints at Jerusalem. He then, with all this in his heart, went armed with authority to Damascus to hail whoever he found, men or women, and take them bound to Jerusalem, there to be punished. Here is a champion for the devil, here is a subject of the kingdom of Satan doing, as he verily thought, God's service. Now Christ comes to him and with one word shatters the kingdom of Satan and sets His Own kingdom up. "Who art Thou Lord?" "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest". Weapons - which the Apostle Paul must afterwards speak of being not carnal, but mighty through God - were used in his case, and he fell down flat. The kingdom was set up in that man's soul at that moment and all his prejudice, all the effects of His Jewish education, all his Jewish prejudice, all his pride, all his proud religion, all, all, Christ shattered in a moment. He was a new man. Himself said later, "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away and behold all things become new." Our being called by grace does not resemble that of the Apostle. We were not called as he in that remarkable manner; called as he was with that manifestation of special power and glory, but, if called, the same power was used in another manner and measure, and we became new creatures. "If any man be in Christ" - born again - "he is a new creature. Old things - that is old prejudice, ignorance, waywardness, vanity, enmity, everything of that kind - "old things are passed away" - as to their dominion; not their root, that wont be till death - "old things are passed away" - they are no longer your pleasure. They may be your temptation; they are no longer your life; they will be your death in feeling. They have passed away as to all their attraction, attraction so as to secure obedience, but they may be attractive as to temptation. They have passed away and new things have come. "All

things are become new". New views of God, new views of sin, new views of Christ, new views of the atonement, of hell, of heaven. "All things are become new". And the walk is new. They are called from living in sin to live unto God. They are called from the world to the church of the living God. This is the kingdom in a general word. This is the kingdom. "Thy kingdom come." Now it is called in the Scriptures the kingdom of the gospel. The kingdom of the law is the kingdom of duty. The kingdom of the law is the kingdom of curse where duty is not done. Sinner, think of it. What is your duty under the law? To obey God. What is your condition under the law when you do not obey Him? "Cursed is everyone". The kingdom of the gospel is different. That is a kingdom of forgiveness, a kingdom of justification, of sanctification, in which prayer, the prayer of faith, reigns. In which is liberty sooner or later to be enjoyed. In which is the knowledge of God given by the Holy Spirit, the knowledge of God in Christ. That is the kingdom of the gospel. As soon as the kingdom of Christ was set up in Saul's soul, and the proclamation of forgiveness was made known to him, what did he begin to do? He began to preach Christ. That was the kingdom of the gospel. It came to his very heart, and God had intended him to be an eminent and remarkable minister and he began to preach Christ. The kingdom of the gospel was in Saul's heart and conscience and mouth for the rest of his days. Now we may not be called to preach, but if we have the gospel and the kingdom in our hearts, we have that blessed proclamation there which, received by faith, brings peace into the conscience. The gospel is the proclamation of good news, the declaration of God's love, of Christ's Person, Christ's work, Christ's redemption. This is the gospel, and this is that that brings the obedience of faith. There is no other kingdom will ever secure what this kingdom does secure. This kingdom secures what Paul speaks of in the Corinthians: Bringing into captivity every thought unto the obedience of Christ. Now let us come to our own cases. Have there not been moments when some of us, with sin and guilt and fear, have been led by the blessed power of the Holy Ghost to the throne of God's heavenly grace, and there all the prejudice, the enmity, the bitterness, the fear, the bondage, the grief that we have felt, have just been brought under, into captivity so to speak unto the atonement of Christ. When it has been as if the atonement spread out in the view of faith, spread out over all our sins, and wanderings, and the feeling of the heart was that we could

see in that work of Christ that which would cover all our unrighteousnesses, hide our transgressions from view, and make us "Accepted in the beloved." And this is a blessed captivity and issues in a wondrous liberty, when the sinner finds himself under the power of the gospel so that his very heart becomes like wax, wax melted and the seal just ready for it, and it ready for the seal to impress the very gospel and the very image of Him who is the fullness of the gospel, on the heart and soul. "Thy kingdom come". It comes into people's hearts.

In a kingdom there is authority, must be. No kingdom in the world can stand without authority. In this kingdom there is authority and there are moments when faith so receives Jesus Christ, as that, though there may be doubts about a personal interest in Him, there is a falling unto Him, a falling into His hands, a receiving of Him as King of kings and Lord of lords, and the one thing the soul wants at such a moment is to be able to say: "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine." Now this kingdom, with all this blessed authority, does not leave people to wander here and there as they like. They say, all of them, each to the other: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the house of the Lord, and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths." Let us go to that mountain whence the law proceeds. What is that law? The gospel. The gospel's the law of the Lamb, of forgiveness of sin, receiving sinners, eating with sinners, justifying sinners, comforting sinners, cleansing sinners, fitting them for heaven; that is the gospel. And this is the kingdom, the blessed kingdom of the gospel, wherein none is exalted but Christ. None is King but Christ. "Thy kingdom come" in this divine authority. O, you may set your sins up and say, these, what can remove them? You may look at your guilt and say, this, what can take it away? At your depravity and say, who can subdue it? If Christ, when you are speaking so to yourself, should appear, all your questions will be answered at once. But He is sufficient.

His blood can cleanse the blackest soul
And wash away all stain

Well, if you know this kingdom, you know a great deal.

Now in this kingdom, as it is experienced in the beginning and onward, there are two things to be said. About this blessed work of God there are two things I would say to you now. First there is a terribleness in it. O, you cannot have yourself broken to pieces, and shattered, to to speak, and your prejudice and your wickedness discovered without some terror. O, if the Lord opens your eyes to see what you are, how can you be other than terrified at the sight? Shocked at the sight, you will straight cry out, can ever God dwell here? Why, some of us can go back to the days when the work of grace was commenced in us, and we felt persuaded that where God was we should never be. He did not tell us so, but sin in us became so dreadful that we could not think that where a holy God is we could ever come. What a wilderness we then were. What a wilderness your heart was. How could you live? You may say, I did not know how to live, and I was not fit to die. Well, that is what every child of God in a measure, sooner or later comes to know. His very nature is a wilderness. Terrible, fiery serpents, enemies on every hand; a holy God, a cursing law, a depraved heart, wicked thoughts, bitter enmity, wishes for that which is taken away. What a wilderness creature he is. Do you wonder that one should say that he had eaten ashes like bread, and mingled his tears with his drink? Do you wonder that one should say his heart was faint in him? It was a wonder indeed that Moses set before the people of God when he said, "Whoever heard the voice of God out of heaven and lived, as you do this day?" It is all a wonder. There is a wilderness and the poor creature in this state wonders how he can live and expects that his wilderness must continue to grow worse and worse. That is one thing. It does not look like the kingdom of God does it? But there is a kingdom here. "I will rule over you", says the Lord, "with fury poured out". I will bring you into the wilderness and there I will rule over you. If any of you are in anything like this condition, if you are feeling that the very Word of God bends itself against you; as if rebukes come out of the Scripture; do not think - but of course you will think it - do not think it is writing eternal. It is writing that will lead to something else. Now the second thing I would say is this, that this wilderness is to blossom as the rose, to blossom abundantly and to rejoice with singing. This, dear friends, is the kingdom of God. "Behold I make all things new". A revelation of Jesus Christ will make the most barren wilderness rejoice and blossom. A sight of

Christ's excellency will make the poorest, the most mournful, depressed, wretched sinner, sing with joy of heart. It must be so; it cannot be otherwise. "For they shall see of the excellency of the Lord." That is the root secret of it all. "They shall see of the excellency of the Lord", whose fruit is comely and sweet and pleasant. O, He covers the unrighteousnesses of His people. He brings mercy, sweet mercy, mercy enough to melt every iceberg that may be felt by the poor sinner. Mercy that will bring every distant soul, to whom it reaches, nigh unto God. So that the blossoming of the wilderness is part of the gracious work and power of the dear King of Glory, King of saints, our blessed Lord Jesus Christ. "Thy kingdom come". Look for the rejoicing, you who have now the mourning; you who look at your wilderness state and say, can ever any good be here, can anything grow here, can anything glorify God here? He wont let anything grow there of your own planting, but He will plant His goodness, and His mercy, and His gospel, and that shall grow to your own peace and comfort and the glory of His great and holy Name.

This kingdom is to spread. It shall fill the whole earth. It has filled a good many parts of it. It filled Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost and 3000 souls were brought into it under one sermon. 3000 people were brought to the knowledge of Christ and made subjects of His blessed kingdom. It has come to this beloved land and at once, as it were, filled it. O what saints there used to be and what ministers there were, and it still is in the land. It comes to individuals, as to Saul of Tarsus, and to Timothy, and to Titus, and to all of whom we may read. Their personal cases show that the kingdom of Christ did come to them. "Thy kingdom come". That is, Thy pardon come, let that rule in my conscience. Thy righteousness come, let that clothe me and cover my unrighteousness. Thy mercy come, let that melt my heart. And Thy goodness come, let that lead me daily to repentance. O let Thy power come to subdue my sins, as the promise is: "He shall subdue our iniquities." So let me feel it and find it continually. This is the kingdom of God. Yes, and if you receive it you will understand what I have said to be true, and you will say that I did not half speak of it as I ought to have done, and I shall believe, I shall heartily agree with you. I wish I could speak of it better than I do, but here it is. "Thy kingdom" The kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God, the kingdom that has its rise in His goodness. The kingdom that is set up

in the heart by His power. The kingdom that grows by the love of Christ made known. "Thy kingdom come". Perhaps one may say, but I have no courage to pray such a prayer. You may say, if what you say is true it is an infinite gift of God, of love, of mercy, and I am not fit for such a gift. You may judge that of yourselves. The grace is free. May the Lord teach us to remember that; grace is free. O, but there never was one so vile as I. Well, but the Apostle Paul tells us something about himself, to which let me draw your attention. He says: "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." Paul was chief, and he says that he was set forth as a pattern to all them that should afterward believe. A pattern - not for you to imitate; that is not the intention at all there - a pattern of God's longsuffering, of God's mercy; that is the pattern. You try to cut yourself according to Paul and you will make a grievous mistake. But if the pattern of God's electing love, of Christ's work of redemption, of Christ's infinite goodness, infinite mercy, of the Spirit's infinite love to sinners, if this pattern should come and you should go to Paul, in your heart's thoughts, that is, and see him an enemy, a murderer, consenting to the martyrdom of Stephen; see him bitterly opposed to Christ, and Christ coming to him, well, your very heart, if you receive that testimony, will say, if free grace can do that, if that man did not repel the love of God, if his enmity to Christ did not keep Christ away from him, my poor soul may still hope and look for mercy; yes, that is true,

If free grace, why not for me?

If this grace set up the kingdom in Paul's soul, why not my soul? Well, that is a great thing. "Thy kingdom come." Come to a wretch, wicked in the extreme, come to a sinner.

Now in this kingdom there are blessed laws and one of these laws is this, the patient love of God, the forbearing love of God. It is a law with God, it is in Himself, and it comes from Himself into Zion. And there is a remarkable passage which I have often named to you, but it will bear naming again. It has been a great word to me for some time, at different times. "They say, if a man put away his wife, and she go from him and become another man's, shall he return unto her

again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? (Jeremiah 3 v 1); that is, that permits such a practice. Well, what now? O, says the Lord you have played the harlot, have gone after other lovers, yet return unto Me. Return to Me. This is one of Zion's wondrous laws, that the patient love of God comes to poor sinners to subdue them to a divinely ordained loyalty unto God. It shows itself like this, where the Lord says "My people have forgotten Me days without number" Then what? They shall never be forgotten of Me. Do you want such a kingdom, that you, forgetting God, shall never be forgotten of God? It works like this too: "Israel hath not been forgotten or forsaken of God though their land was full of sin." And this does not condone sin; it does not mean that God will love His people while they live in their sins and smile on them in their sins. It means He will save them from their sins. His Name expresses it. "Thou shalt call His Name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." Can you beg of God for this kingdom? It is diverse from yours, different altogether. Contrary to your nature, opposed to your will, opposed to your practices which are evil. It is opposed to them all. This is a part of the kingdom. If a man love father or mother, husband or wife, brother or sister, houses or land, more than Me, he cannot be My disciple. If you love the world, at present, whatever you may be in yourself, or think you are, you are not Christ's disciple. But if, through grace, you are brought out of the world, what then? This kingdom is set up and it is to grow. It shall spread and fill you as it is to spread and fill the whole earth. "Thy kingdom", the kingdom of God, the kingdom which comes from Him, which therefore is of a divine nature. The saints are said to be "partakers of the divine nature" and that thereby they "escape the corruption that is in the world through lust". So after this manner poor disciples are taught to pray. "Thy kingdom come" into my heart. The kingdom of love, the kingdom of forgiveness, the kingdom of the gospel, the kingdom of justification, the kingdom of sanctification, the kingdom of a godly walk, and conversation. "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven" May the Lord command His blessing to rest upon us.

AMEN.