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Sermon preached by Mr J K Popham
at Galeed Chapel Brighton
on Sunday morning 21 August 1932

MATTHEW 6 v 10

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

These words form part of that prayer which was to be the manner - and is to be the manner - of prayer to the end of time. Deprecating the formality, and hypocrisy of the heathen, and others, and their vain repetitions, Christ says - "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven....." An ascription, a glorious relationship revealed in these words. Adam was the son of God, and we, his children, are the sons of God by creation. Adam fell, and we fell in him, and now we are aliens, alienated from the life of God through ignorance and wicked works. Nothing better can be said of us than that. Happy is he who is taught by the Holy Ghost to believe, to feel, that he is an alien, a stranger, having no hope, no ground of hope, in himself. Just a practical atheist, having no God. If this be the case with any of us when we come to die, we shall know that God is not our Father, that He is an enemy. We shall know the awfulness, the unutterable awfulness, of that Scripture - "I am against that man". If God be against any of you who can be for you? But to His people God is a Father, and though, until they receive the Spirit of Adoption, they greatly fear using this word expressing the tender, the intimate, and ever blessed relationship, still that relationship is theirs. Ignorance of that does not deprive a child of God of the sweetness, and the greatness, and the glory, of this relationship.

And the first petition is - "Hallowed be Thy Name". The flippant religion of this day is condemned by this word - "Hallowed be Thy Name". Is there any Name under heaven so wondrous, so full of glory? No. Reverenced be Thy Name. Separated from all other names be Thy Name. Empty of all sufficiency for good, all other names. Hallowed be this full Name, full of grace, and truth. It enters into every time of real access to God. When you get near Him then you hallow His

holy Name. We may, sometimes we do, some of us particularly perhaps, speak lightly about religion, about the Scriptures, about providence, but when, by the Holy Ghost, we draw near to God through Jesus Christ, then this takes place in some measure - "Hallowed be Thy Name". Hushed be all powers; all circumstances, so to speak, be quiet; earth, and seas, and moving mountains, and shaking earth, be still. You know what that is. Every child of God knows something about that when he draws near God's heavenly throne. God save all of us from a flippant religion.

And the second word is - "Thy kingdom come". Do you realise what this means? What it is to have the kingdom of self broken, as was the kingdom that was represented by the great image seen by Nebuchadnezzar; gold, silver, brass, iron, clay, all smashed. If God's kingdom comes into our hearts, our own will be broken. No room for the creature as working, standing, in God's kingdom. "Thy kingdom". What is this, but the kingdom of the gospel, the kingdom of the Lord Jesus, the kingdom of grace, that grace that says in the heart when it is spoken - "Sin" - your plague - "Sin" - formerly having dominion - "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace." What does it mean? - "Ye are not your own". My brethren, it is a great word - "Ye are not your own". And when God speaks it then the sinner says, Lord do not let me act and live as if I were my own. I have got a will, put it straight with Thine. The Lord will never destroy a human will - if He did He would destroy manhood - but when His kingdom comes He takes that will and so supplees it, bends, and treats it, that it lies straight with His will. Much of the kingdom is here. "Thy kingdom come".

In providence "Thy kingdom come". O, but this circumstance interfered with me; a consumption decreed upon my business has taken away my sufficiency. What if it has taken away my friends. So may some of us be saying. Whose servant is providence? your's, or God's? It is God's. "Ye are not your own". O when the King comes and sheds His goodness abroad, and enlightens the understanding with His Own pure light, and moves the soul with His Own sweet, eternal life, and gathers the affections to Himself by His Own eternal beauty, then His kingdom has come. Ah, says the sinner, Lord I am Thine; at least I would be. How long is this kingdom to continue? A man's self

continues while he lives, and when God takes him into eternity it is either to be His guest in glory for ever, or to be under holy, just punishment in hell for ever. This kingdom shall have no end. Think of it - a kingdom of love, a kingdom of grace, a kingdom of life, and power; a kingdom where His beauty is seen. - "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty" - God manifest in the flesh. O what were it for us if God had not made Himself known to us in and through the incarnation of His dear Son - the second Person in the Trinity? Well my friends, are you His subjects? for a kingdom always implies that; there must be subjects where there is a kingdom. What sort of subjects? Willing subjects. - "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power". Each one killed by the law working in him to hope, and help, in himself, comes and prostrates himself before this King and asks that he may be made a subject of King Jesus. The question is not, whether a man will be a Christian, but whether God will make him one, for no man deserves to be. True Christianity is not human choice, but divine gift and work. Well the subject puts himself under the protection of his King, of the kingly laws of the King, and you have the kingdom, and the King, and His laws in Isaiah, and in Micah - "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it." And then there shall be this; each shall say - "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths" "For all people will walk in the name of his god, and we" - humble, dependant, depending souls - "will walk in the Name of the LORD our God, for ever and ever." How many of us could humbly, without presumption, say to Him, We are willing subjects; if we may only be in Thy kingdom. God, the searcher of hearts, knows what your inmost answer is.

"Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven". God's holy will rules the universe. Heaven, earth, hell; nothing exists without this will regarded in some particular, and He has revealed this. And if you were to carefully read the Bible in respect of passages that declare the will of God, you might be astonished at the number of times in which He declares His will. The will of God is nothing less than God willing this must be done; that is to say, fulfilled. It

cannot be thwarted; overcome. "Who hath resisted His will?" Ah, loving ourselves, we say - "We will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain", whereas we "ought to say, If the Lord will....." "For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away". You know this wonderfully strict, strong similitude - A vapour that vanisheth away. And all such free-will is sin. Boasted self-dependent, self-directing, self-supporting. You look at your own cases my dear hearers. You have got wills - I have a will - and ordinarily the will of man through sin is contrary to the will of God, and many, and many a time, a child of God finds that his will is crossed. He cannot do what he wills to do, or obtain what he wills to obtain. And then what? If grace come not to subdue him, he frets, he rebels.

"Thy will". It is a holy will. And remember that striking Scripture that tells us where this will is with regard to the church - "The good-will of Him that dwelt in the bush". We have not to do with an absolute God. I have often mentioned to you Luther's prayer which I well remember 60 or 70 years ago taking fast hold of me. O Lord, said Luther, keep me from an absolute God from a God out of Christ. If you have to do with God out of Christ you wont know what that good-will is of Him that dwelt in the bush. O sinner, have you ever been afraid of God? Why should I?, says one lightly. I answer, why should you not? Think of His perfection, of His justice, of His holiness, of His majesty, of His faithfulness. Think of His claims on you. What ought you to be naturally? Just what God made you - perfect. What are you now, through sin? Huge, void, without shape or form. Or, if you have an image, a form, it is that of sin. Then to believe that, to feel that, will make you afraid. I well remember this fear arising from the discovery of God to me. O sinner, if you never fear God in this life it will be terrible for you to have lived. But the good-will of Him that dwelt in the bush is the good-will of Jesus Christ. "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich". He came with good-will in His heart. The law of God was there, "Thy will be done". It was done first by Jesus Christ. I want just to name that in passing. He did always the things which pleased His Father. "Thy law" said He to His Father "is within

My heart". "I delight to do Thy will O My God". What was that will respecting Christ? It was that Christ should lay down His life. God commanded Christ to lay down His life, and Christ obeyed. Now what is it for the will of God to be done in us, as it is done in heaven? I apprehend it is to be subject to God in His dealings with us; that, whatever He does in His holy providence with us. individually, or collectively, that should be so observed by us, so submitted to by us, as that His holy eye sees no rebellion. I know this standard is high, and that I cannot reach it, you cannot reach it, except it be with us as it was with Paul who, having asked that the thorn in the flesh might be taken away, was told that grace would be given him to bear it, and he then said that he gladly gloried in his infirmity that the power of Christ might rest upon him. And I apprehend that, in that case, at that time, the will of God was done in the Apostle's heart, as it is done by holy angels in heaven, and by the spirits of just men made perfect. Do you believe it? Have you received it into your hearts, that that is having the will of God done in earth? We know it is not done by men naturally. We know that this nation is not doing the will of God today. We know that profanity is prevailing. We know that the spirit of Pharaoh is prevailing today. "Who is the Lord, that I should obey Him?" Leave the world, come into this little chapel, and may each professor of religion put this question to himself - Is the will of God being done in my heart as it is in heaven? And to come near to ourselves in our present circumstances. God has afflicted us, He has greatly afflicted us. He has taken away a very godly man, a man who lived his religion; one who knew Christ for himself, and who often quoted to me that hymn in which occurs these words

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

as being one of his own words. We loved him as a people. Such was the grace given to him that when it was needful for us to have other deacons, he was unanimously chosen. Such was the grace and wisdom given to him that he fulfilled the office well, and gained, not only the respect, but the warm love of the church and congregation. I wont trust myself to speak more about myself than I have done in this

particular. A few weeks ago he was here on the Wednesday evening with his usual self-denial, for he was not fit to be out of his bed, but he came. He went to bed the next day; he has been there some weeks, suffering, not great pain, but most distressing languor, and the great heat we have been enduring the last week or so was too much for him. On Friday evening a heart attack came and after some suffering the pain left him. He quietly said "Jesus come and take me", and he breathed his last. He is "absent from the body, present with the Lord". When the news reached me early yesterday morning it was like as if one were stunned, but this word became a prayer - "Thy will be done". Who would wish him back? O may we sing that hymn in our hearts we opened this service with

Give me the wings of faith to rise

We are left below. The will of God in heaven is done without question. May it be done here with whatever questions may naturally arise, through the power of grace; that we may really from the heart say - "Thy will be done". The funeral will take place next Tuesday at 2 O'clock in the Brighton and Preston cemetery. May the Lord be with us. May we, as a church, now be drawn to the throne of God's heavenly grace, and drawn closer and closer together in true affection, and sympathy in the Spirit, and seek that God would very kindly look upon us. The loss of two deacons, not common ones either, in six months, besides, I forget how many, quite a number of members, from the beginning of the year, is a very serious thing for us to consider. I hope He wont remove His candlestick. I hope we may not be left to provoke Him to take away His candlestick. Of course, naturally, I have not much longer to live, according to the time of life, but while I do live, and am enabled to speak among you, I would like to be able to press this on your attention. "Thy kingdom come". Do not try to prop up your own kingdom. If you do you will provoke the Lord, for He is not mocked. He wont be mocked. "Thy kingdom come". God is real my friends. God is love. God's Name is Jealous. Remember He is jealous. I know it because He has gone out against my idols. God is jealous - think of it - but He is love. He does not willingly afflict nor grieve the children of men; and I do not want - O I would entreat Him not to allow me - to convey any impression of harshness or hardness to any mind, of His divine Majesty. He is a good Master. He

is a good God, and He is a sufficient God too. Being sufficient for Himself, how can there be insufficiency in Him for a creature? Look to Him. Wait on Him, and seek His face. Let us pray for our afflicted sister, that she may be still - as she is, up to this morning, at least - remarkably supported, and comforted. And to the family, that God would speak powerfully to them; the most affectionate, admirable family, highly esteemed. God bless them. God bless them and bless us all in His great mercy.

AMEN.