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Sermon preached by Mr J K Popham
at Galeed Chapel Brighton
on Wednesday evening 23 April 1930

MATTHEW 6 v 10

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

This is a heavy prayer, heavy to the church of God, for every individual member of the church of God. When, and wherever it is answered, there is destruction, and this, if it be in our view when we pray, thus pray, we shall realise that it is a heavy prayer. Emphatically it is a prayer against self. Christ will brook no rival, and there is no rival in this world worse, more to be dreaded, more subtle, more persistent in opposition to Christ in some form, than self. By Daniel, as we were reading now, we are instructed in this great, this serious, this solemn fact. Our own kingdom must, by the falling upon it of the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, be broken to pieces, and become like the chaff which is blown away by the wind. No easy thing this. How many of us, when reading this prayer at any time, have had before us the great truth that when this kingdom comes, as it comes, in whatsoever measure it comes, some destruction takes place. The kingdoms of this world - Christ's kingdom is not of this world - the kingdoms of this world must give place to His kingdom. This kingdom however, generally speaking, grows slowly. It is observable that any Bible history, the history of the world in its early days, shows that the kings and the dukes, and the kingdoms of this world, grew and multiplied quickly, whereas, though it is not so indeed, it appears almost that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are mentioned incidentally, as if very little significance attached to them, while all the other kings, and dukes, and peoples flourished and spread themselves abroad. And I am disposed to say that I do not think that that is without significance. It tells us that the world will grow, that the kingdoms of the world grow exceedingly, and that the kingdom of Christ is just like a stone cut out of a mountain without hands; small, comparatively, and apparently of very little weight, authority, or that which is for eternity. So, when Christ answered the desire of His disciples to teach them to pray, and He

put this petition into their mouth, and their heart, it was very solemn. It is a remarkable prayer. When you pray, pray after this manner - "Our Father which art in heaven". "We have had fathers after the flesh which corrected us and we gave them reverence. Shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of Spirits and live". "Our Father". Is He your Father? Did He ever make Himself known to you as your heavenly Father? It is no ordinary grace; it is an especial blessing, spoken of by the Apostle Paul to the Galatians - "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts crying Abba, Father". (Galatians 4 v 6). And that word teaches this, that the Spirit of Adoption is not a natural growth. It comes directly, distinctly from the Holy Ghost. He makes this, gives this, cry in the heart. "Crying Abba, Father". He manifests this relationship so clearly, and sweetly, at the moment, as that it is, if one may use such a word, an involuntary cry, and yet, O, it is indeed a cry of the will, and of the heart, and of love, and of judgement. "Abba, Father". My Father, my Father. When you can say this in faith, then you can, and you do, commit everything to Him. Body, soul, circumstances of every sort, and kind, and your heart is broken to pieces with the grace of God, and filled with wonder that He could be so good to such a sinner. The adoption into the family of heaven is an everlasting act of God, and when it is an act of the Spirit in time in any heart, then takes place this great word, the Spirit of Adoption cries in the heart "Abba, Father". In the Romans, the Holy Ghost by Paul, treats of this. He said, you are children. And how do you know it? By the witness of the Spirit. A distinct and direct witness of the Holy Ghost in the heart of one who has known, does know, and feel his natural - that is, his native - sinful alienation from God; that he, even he, notwithstanding, is a child of God. And if a child, then an heir, an heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ. And no man, with that living in him for the moment, can wish his position in this world to be better than it is. If he be poor, he does not want to be rich. "Hearken, my brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom".

"After this manner pray". O dear people of God, may the Holy Ghost enable us to pray after this manner. "Abba, Father" "Our Father which art in heaven" - to look after His children; all wisdom, and all power, and all fullness, and all grace He possesses -

"hallowed be Thy Name" - He is to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him. Holiness becometh His house for ever. The familiar freedom of a religious professor is an abomination - the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination - but the familiarity of faith is ever attended with a proportionate reverence. If your faith is strong, so is your reverence, so is your worship, so is your confidence in Him. "Hallowed be Thy Name". And this makes out the truth of Dr Goodwin's word that I have more than once named to you - it will make it out to you - Jesus Christ is most glorified in secret. And when you realise that your adoption is by Him, that God is your Father in Him, then you hallow the Name of God. True religion is a solemn thing. It is a matter between God and the soul. It is not a thing to flaunt before men. Where there is most grace, speaking generally, there will be the fewest words about it. Where you have most knowledge of God, you will have most quiet, humble worship in secret, and you will hallow God. The greatness of God is bearable in Christ. It is not bearable elsewhere, for He dwelleth in the light that no man can approach unto. Then "Thy kingdom come" This is the work of the Holy Spirit in a sinner. It is the manifestation of the power of God in the soul; it is according to Scripture - "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10 v 5). Now in speaking to you a little of this, I must first of all bring in the kingdoms which must give place to this kingdom, prayed for, if we are to be saved. There is first the kingdom of the law, the law of our creation. Adam transgressed that law, and so with all his posterity was bound to it. Only the kingdom of grace can set us free. Legality is in our nature; God's law written in our heart; there is no escaping it whether we will or no. We are God's subjects; we are under the law to God. And just as we English people have no authority, no right - even if we wish it - no right to dissolve the union between ourselves and English law, we cannot absolve ourselves from the duty of obedience. So, by the law written in every man's heart, whether Jew or Gentile, we are under law to God. Very solemn, and the solemnity of it is greatly increased in awfulness when we consider that we have broken that law; that we have gone astray speaking lies ever since we were born, and that God has said that He

is against the man who will add drunkenness to thirst and go on in the waywardness of his own heart. Now there is this great truth, a kingdom, a law. God in that law; God, the giver of that law. And what are we to do? What are we to do? Only God can answer this question. This legal kingdom fills the earth. It belongs to every man, and every woman, and every man, and every woman is under it, in it. It has authority, it reigns. Now there is a kingdom that will break this, but the breaking of it must be noticed very particularly. It is not a violent breaking. It is not a disregard of the claims of the law. It is not a putting it aside as if it were nothing. There is an awful recognition of the kingdom, of the legality, of the rightness, of the justice, of the binding nature of it. And God recognises it - and we shall have to do, if we have not done so - but He recognised it in an effectual way. If we recognise it, and recognise our sinfulness in this kingdom, then despair is an effect, despair of self. But when God recognised it He had a remedy. He gave His Only begotten Son; prepared a body for Him, and His only begotten Son took that body up into indissoluble union with Himself. And then God came, and, as it were, gathered up all this legality, and all the consequences of it, the sanction of it, the curse of it, all the duties of it, and He laid the whole on His Son, and of His Son He said - "I have laid help upon One that is mighty". And He put the law into the heart of His Son, Jesus, and Jesus knew that, and said to His Father, as you have it in the Psalms - "Thy law is within My heart". The type of that was the Ark with the tables of stone in it, put there by divine direction, and commandment. "Thy law is within My heart". "I delight to do Thy will O My God". What was that will which Christ delighted to do? It was to lay down His life. The commandment of the Father to His Son, Jesus, was that He should lay down His life, and that is how this kingdom is dealt with and taken out of the way. Every commandment, every precept, with all the sanction thereof, all the power, all the authority, the binding authority of this law, Jesus came into and dissolved, and removed out of the way the law of commandments. And when a sinner is born again, and his heart is directed to God, to pray "Thy kingdom come", this is in it. Lord, take this kingdom of the law away from me. It binds me and, as I have broken it, it curses me; take it away. "Thy kingdom come". Now there is an authority here. A sinner is led to pray this. No violation of law here; no trampling it under foot here. No seeking to break away from it. But O, let God do

it. May Jesus be my King instead of the law. May He reign in my conscience by His atonement. May He reign in my heart as King of kings. May He reign on my will and take it and make it wholly on His side. "Thy kingdom come". Do you pray this? O, slave to the law, do you pray this? Is it with you to make this supplication? Lord, let that divine kingdom of grace come. Kingdom of love, kingdom in which is the atonement, with all its everlasting efficacy, the kingdom of righteousness with all its perfection - let that kingdom come into my heart. Now God is honoured here; God is honoured here. The law is magnified and made honourable. It is a just thing in God to forgive sin. He is called - O, the wonder of it, the wisdom of it, the grace of it, the power of it, the glory of it - He is called "A just God and a Saviour". No injustice belongs to forgiveness. No breach of the law belongs to justification. The perfection of Deity in the salvation of a sinner is glorious. So pray this prayer. O, if any of you are under the law, if the law pursues you, if it threatens you, if it troubles you, if it brings up sins to you that you have done, if it rakes up iniquities that are long since past, so that you look at them, and feel ready to despair, pray this "Thy kingdom come" - the kingdom of God, the kingdom of sweet repentance, the kingdom of the gospel - "Thy kingdom come". Some men do see it because they are born again. If a man is not born again he cannot see this kingdom. There is no sight of it, no apprehension of it, no idea of it. But when one is born again, then he gets a sight of this kingdom, and seeing it, he says, "Thy kingdom come". Here is a poor heart, the law has reigned over me and reigns now, and sin therefore binds me and my transgressions are wreathed by it and have come up upon my neck. O, let the kingdom of grace, and the kingdom of forgiveness, and the kingdom of justification, and the kingdom of divine love; let this kingdom come. And there is - let me say it - there is no violation here, no sweeping away by a stroke of omnipotence, of this law, but an honourable, wondrously honourable, fulfilling of the law and making it honourable in the forgiveness of sins. I would like to keep this before you continually, that salvation is honourable to God. Nothing that is not righteous can come down from heaven, but listen to this my friends; God says - "Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness; let the earth open" - the garden enclosed, let that earth open - "and let them bring forth salvation" (Isaiah 45 v 8).

Now when this kingdom comes, the reign of the King of kings is a sweet thing. A poor heart goes out in loyal submission. We read of submitting to the righteousness of God, and O, the loyal affection that a sinner feels; it may not be for long at any one time, but it is there in the principle of it; a real, warm love to the King of kings and Lord of lords. His sway in the conscience by a powerful peace that passeth all understanding; His authority in the will whereby it is not smashed, but suppled and bent, and put straight, in unison with the will of God. His attractions to the affections; O, how wonderful that a man who, by nature, has been fixed in the world, loved the world, and wanted nothing better, now says - "As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, so panteth my soul after Thee". And this submission to the King is universal in the person; it is universal. I mean this - and you can answer it - Is there a thing in you, in your circumstances, in the world, that you have to do with, in your family, in your business, your health, your sickness, your life, a thing that you would withhold and keep back from submission? At the time you say, not a thing. The whole heart and all connected with it you are enabled humbly to submit to the will of God. "Thy kingdom come". The happiest position that a child of God, and a subject of grace, can occupy in his spirit from time to time is to be flat in submission to the Lord Jesus Christ. Bought with a price, the sinner says, Lord, I would not be my own. I would not be my own. David said of himself - "Once have I heard this, yea twice" - and some of us can say once, nay twice, from heaven, that word - "Ye are not your own". And when we have heard it, what have we said to Him? Lord, do not let us act as if we were our own. This is the kingdom. Bless God for submission to Jesus Christ, every thought brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. No thought of helping God to save. No thought of adding a beauty of your own righteousness - indeed you have none - to the righteousness of Christ, but the whole heart goes out to Him and everything that is His you are glad of and wish to have a part in. "Thy kingdom come".

There are kingdoms that have to be destroyed; not legal, usurped, wicked kingdoms. Usurped authority reigning, the god of this world, the prince of the power of the air that now worketh in the children of disobedience, and these are rivals. These must be

destroyed. And this will bring out what I said at the beginning, to pray this prayer is a heavy thing for whenever it is answered destruction takes place. The head of gold, the parts of silver, and of brass, and of iron with clay mixed with the toes of the feet, all, all have to be destroyed. A small beginning, a stone cut out of the mountain without hands, a small beginning. And referring again to what I said with respect to the small growth of God's people, do not be discouraged if the growth of the kingdom of God in you should be slow. Israel, when entering upon the land of Canaan had enemies to deal with, and there were some who would not be driven out. Some dwelt in the mountains, and some had chariots of iron, and Judah and all the other tribes could not dispossess them. So you may find when you enter the land of promise and King Jesus sways His benign and divine sceptre in your heart. You will find that there are enemies there. They have lived ever since you lived; claim a right to be there still; say, the land is theirs, what right has another king to turn them out and drive them away, and thus there is trouble. Take the rule of the prince of this world, the god of this world. He threatens, he tempts, he hurts, he wounds, he is the accuser of the brethren, accusing them night and day before God. He stirs up evil; his delight is in sin, and he wants to make the saints do the same. They did once and he is angry because they do it not now. But he tempts them. He discerns they have a measure of the Spirit of Christ by whom they are led, being sons of God by adoption; That Christ, the Son of God, might be a faithful and merciful High Priest able to succour as well as save His brethren, He Himself suffered being tempted - He was led of the Spirit into the wilderness there to be tempted. So His people are led there too that they may experience the sympathy of their Lord and Saviour and King, and have fellowship with Him in His sufferings. They are tempted of the devil in some wilderness, and it would seem, and does seem to them at times, as if the god of this world must overcome them. He is more or less incessant, insistent on his temptations, pressing them upon your attention, dangling bits of tinsel as if they were gold. What the god of this world will do to regain his lost position in a redeemed and regenerated person. But "Thy kingdom come" will bring down on him, as a maul on his head, the power of the Lord Jesus. Go to this King, my friends, who are afflicted, and tempted, and troubled; go to this King and cry to Him according to this heavenly direction - "Thy

kingdom come". Lord, I do not want to be the subject of the god of this world any longer, I do not want to be driven, or to be ruled, or to be guided by him. I want to be Thy subject. "Thy kingdom come". It is a great thing to have the eye fixed on the God of gods, King of kings, and Lord of lords. When Peter walked on the water with his eye on the Lord Jesus, then he went safely. When his eye and his sensitiveness were on the waves, and the wind, he began to sink. Is not that the case with all the saints of God? As long as their eye is on their King, as long as their hearts are after the kingdom, desiring to have it within them, so they are safe in their walk. When they view their enemies then they sink. There is a beautiful illustration of this in the case of Jehoshaphat. He went out to meet the enemy. He was told that God would help him. In answer to his prayer, he was told that God would help him. What did he do? He set singers before the army and they were to sing as they went; they were to sing praises to God. And faith will go before you with a song sometimes. "How say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?" "In the LORD put I my trust". (Psalm 11 v 1). "In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God". (Psalm 62 v 7). Faith will sing like that sometimes. We have it in our hymn book

O, I have seen the day, (says Cowper)
When, with a single word,
God helping me to say,
"My trust is in the Lord",
My soul has quelled a thousand foes,
Fearless of all that could oppose (338)

"Thy kingdom come" then with respect to the god of this world. What an end awaits him. Not only with respect to his rule in the world, but with respect to the pain, and trouble that he has inflicted on the saints when he has tempted them with horrible things, and they have had grace to resist him. Pained, they have been, but they have been enabled to resist him. The sin of that will come upon him. He sins in the world, he sins against the church; O, his sins against the church God knows and takes particular notice of. Go on praying, tempted people, as you can - "Thy kingdom come". When the enemy comes and says, you are my subjects, you have broken away from me, go on crying - "Thy kingdom come".

I must name one more thing ere I close. I did name it at the beginning - the kingdom of self. This self, this wicked self, this myself, as Rutherford says - "O that I had not a myself". Why, it is like a subtle gas; you cannot cork and close up every chink, and little place; it will insinuate itself through everything, and anything. Selfishness, independence, pride, rebellion, lust, and all sorts of things, and these rise, and they work, and they claim. They are insistent and they are persistent. And what is to be done? O, says a child of God sometimes, I am wearied out; my resistance is failing. It is always weak, it is failing. Well, to obey Jesus Christ in this prayer will bring you relief. Lord come and reign in me -

O dwell in me, fill all my soul
And all my powers by Thine control (1075)

And plead the promise, plead the promise - "Sin shall not have dominion over you for ye are not under the law but under grace". It is a mercy to realise that though sin is in you, you are not living in sin. If you are under grace, you are not under sin, and if you are under grace there is a sufficiency of grace in the Lord Jesus to save you from sin and it will do it. So when the Lord comes in some visit of His love, comes in some gracious word of truth, of promise of help, of guidance, of supply; when He comes in the beauty of holiness, and works a love for holiness in your heart, and you can say to Him honestly - I would be holy; O subdue these iniquities, take away the love of sinning, and be in my heart all that I need for life and godliness; the prayer will be answered - "Thy kingdom come". Self is destined to die; grace cannot die. The kingdom of self is destined to be broken to shivers, and blown away by the wind of God's dealing, as the chaff is blown away by the wind, but the kingdom which is cut out of the mountain without hands is never to cease. "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and Thy dominion throughout all generations." And when sin is ended with the saints, this kingdom then, in its fullness, and its glory, will be in them. Can you pray this prayer? I said when you pray this prayer you pray against self. Can you, do you, pray this prayer, against self, against indulgence of sin, against all hypocrisy, and all evil, pride, and every kind of sin? Do

you pray this prayer? "Thy kingdom come." If so, O what an answer awaits you - Be it unto you even as you will. May the Lord help us to pray this prayer honestly. Not to gabble it over as it is gabbled over by millions of people probably every week, but just, out of a feeling in your heart, I would be the Lord's subject; Lord, let Thy kingdom come.

AMEN.