

58  
762  
1356 K  
La P812

Sermon preached by Mr J K Popham  
at Galeed Chapel Brighton  
on Sunday evening 31 August 1930

PROVERBS 30 v 4

"Who hath ascended up into heaven, or  
descended? who hath gathered the wind  
in His fists? who hath bound the  
waters in a garment? who hath established  
all the ends of the earth? what is His Name,  
and what is His Son's Name, if thou canst tell?"

You are all lost if you know not this God. What you need, what I need, is set forth in this wonderful verse. Are you indifferent about Him? Do you really need Him? Are you seeking Him? I wish we could say honestly, personally, one by one, We do need Him, and we are seeking Him. There is no good apart from Him. I want Him for myself, I want Him for my soul, and I want Him for my preaching, and I want Him for you, that He would bless you, and do you all that good that your souls need. It is an awful thing to be indifferent about God. Plenty of religion people may have, and yet be indifferent about God. Exercises people may have, as they call them, and yet not be after God, and yet He says to Martha this is the one thing needful, and we sometimes sing it

Jesus is the one thing needful  
I without Him perish must

Let me, by the Lord's help, draw your attention to this profound Scripture. It contains six questions - four of them have relation to manifestations of Himself in different ways.

- First - "Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended?"
- Second - "Who hath gathered the wind in His fists?"
- Third - "Who hath bound the waters in a garment?"

Fourth - "Who hath established all the ends of the earth?"

Fifth - "What is His Name?"

Sixth - "What is His Son's Name, if thou canst tell?"

A profound word, yet a knowledge of it is attainable. If there be two things in us, we shall get the knowledge of this Scripture. First, if there be hunger for it; that is, for God. And second, if there be faith to go with a lost soul, an empty soul, a needy soul, an ignorant soul, a defiled conscience. If we have these two things, we shall get the knowledge of this Scripture; a pleasant knowledge it will be to us. A powerful knowledge it will be in us. A saving knowledge it will be to us.

I made a few remarks on the first question this morning - "Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended?" Jesus, in the gospel according to John, said - "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven" (John 3 v 13) This is Christ, the same who is in heaven. Jesus is in heaven, and was then, as to His divine nature. One with the Father and with the Holy Ghost. His descent came actually when He became incarnate. He had often appeared to men, as we are told in the Old Testament, under different characters, in different dispensations, but now He actually came, was made of a woman, made under the law, and some poor sinners want to know if that was for them; if this great, and glorious Person, the Son of God, condescended to take their flesh, bear their sins, put away their sins by the sacrifice of Himself. It was a great, and a grand, and a glorious descent, though the world knew Him not. If ever we see the babe of Bethlehem; see the youth growing, subject to His parents; see the Man baptised when He became about thirty years old; see Him led of the Spirit into the wilderness after His baptism; see Him victorious there, meeting the devil, and overcoming him with the sword of the Spirit; see Him in Gethsemane's Garden, sweating blood at every pore because of sin, and the curse of the law just standing, so to speak, before Him; if we see Him dumb in the Judgement Hall because He stood in the place of people who had no right to speak for themselves; if we see Him in the most active part of His life on earth, even when He was hanging on the cross, there a Priest - being a

Priest He must needs have somewhat to offer, and having somewhat to offer, He could not, as a Priest, offer in the temple; therefore He must go without the gate, and offer on the cross - if, I say, we get a sight of Him in this, His descent, and the reasons for it, and that which He accomplished, surely we shall be able, in a small measure, to say - "We know that the Son of God is come". O sinner, do you want to know Him? Is it in your heart to say, Teach me; teach me the knowledge of Thyself. Union with Him must be if we are to go to heaven. Knowledge of Him there must be if we are to go to heaven. He descended into the grave. It is said of Him, He descended into hell, and that is true. Rightly understood, you can say He descended into hell. The important question is, What is hell? Two answers to that question can be given. First, hell is a state of punishment. A state of holy, just punishment. Jesus descended into that. We deserve hell. Says Hart - "He that hell endured". The second answer to the question is, hell is a place where lost angels, and men are, and shall be for ever. May you not be there. It is a place full of sin, but a place full of awful justice, holy justice, holy punishment. Who is He that descended so? The Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. And when He had finished on the cross that marvellous work, that wondrously active work of the Priest, He dismissed His spirit. He was buried. The Lord Jesus was buried. The Lord of glory was buried, because the law must take effect upon the whole person; the whole person of the sinner, and therefore, the whole Person of the Surety. He rose again; O, what a rising. "He died unto sin once". He liveth after the power of God, after the power of an endless life. Dear people, this is the Lord. This is the first answer to the question of the text - Who is He that ascended up into heaven, that descended? The same Person, and that is Jesus Christ, our Lord Jesus Christ, Emmanuel, God with us. Whenever a sinner pants for Him, cannot live without Him, cannot be happy without Him, cannot get rid of burdens without Him, cannot overcome sin without Him, cannot say - "My Lord and my God", without receiving Him in some degree first, then the answer will come, sweetly, powerfully, clearly, comforting the soul - "I have redeemed thee". But what a truth, O, what a profound subject is this. I stand, as it were, before it amazed. Amazed that the Son of God should condescend to become incarnate. Amazed that God should take the sins of sinners; that God, His Father, should punish Him with just strokes; that God, the Father, should be pleased to bruise Him. What

for? Why, that we, who, as we trust, are born again, a number that no man can number, shall be in glory for ever.

The second manifestation is in the question - "Who hath gathered the wind in His fists?" Sovereignty controlling winds. When Jesus was in the ship with His disciples He went to sleep, and a great storm arose, and the disciples were afraid of being wrecked, but He was fast asleep. And they went to Him and said - "Master carest Thou not that we perish? And He arose, and rebuked the wind", closed His fists, as it were, that they should no longer blow at that time on that ship, "and there was a great calm". "A great calm". "He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still". Winds of tribulation; winds blowing away what we would fain keep; winds bringing evil to us; winds of adversity; winds to prove our weakness; these come - not by chance, but because He opens His hand, as it were, and says to the wind, blow on that child of Mine; disturb His false peace; weaken him where he thinks he is strong, where he is too strong; bring trouble to him. He holds the wind in His fists. You are in trouble, you are blown about, you are carried hither and thither by some temptation, and do not know where you are going, what will be the issue of this trouble, or that dispensation. It disturbs you, distracts you, makes you wonder what God is going to do with you, and how you will come out. He has them all, these contrary winds, a great storm, even Euroclydon, all in His hand. Jesus Christ, He holds them in His hand. They cannot go from His fists till He permits them; can touch no sea to make a storm, and waves there, but as He permits them. He sitteth King on the waves; He ruleth the raging of the sea; the raging of the devil; the raging of the wind that came and took down the house in which were Job's sons and daughters, and slew them; the wind of temptation, and covetousness, that took the Chaldeans to Job's property, and the Sabeans, and so on; all winds in His fist. Do you believe it about yourself? You are affected. Are you graciously led to understand that God has this affliction, and that trouble, and that temptation in His Own hand? "Can there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" Who is this that hath the winds in His fists? Who is this that sovereignly rules providence, that has providence in His hand, that orders all the vicissitudes, and lets no evil come except it be for a wise purpose? Who is this? The disciples were afraid to speak again about it, and they wondered in themselves and

said - "What manner of Man is this, that even the wind and the waves obey Him?" May the Holy Spirit direct our hearts to this sovereign Lord. It is good in trouble to see Him, it is good to believe in Him. It is good to believe that evil cannot come but by divine permission; that affliction cannot overtake a child of God without the Lord saying to that affliction, Go to him, blow on him. It may be an east wind, a vehement east wind, that would dry up in a night, or in the morning, a gourd that has been pleasant to you. What then? O, an enemy has done it! No, No. When Job was bereaved of all he had no eye for the Sabeans or the Chaldeans, or the fire, or the wind. All he saw was this - "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the Name of the Lord." He saw where winds were, and who held them.

"Who hath bound the waters in a garment?" What a figure! As you bind up something in a garment, that it is there held, so God has the waters, all of them - seas, waters above the firmament, both alike - in His hand, or under His control. O, but some flood has come to me, one says, a flood of trouble has come, and flowed into my mind, into my circumstances. Who has sent it? Who has sent it? O, the devil, one says. O, so and so has afflicted me by opposing me, or taking away my character, or something of that kind. "Who hath bound the waters in a garment?" Faith will take you away from men, away from circumstances. It will take you to God. Does God smite you in some particular thing, touching you in your tenderest affections? Who hath done it? Faith says, God has done it, and faith comes forth sometimes, and says, He is wise in doing it, He is kind to do it; I needed it, I need it now. Here is a great God, and here is a wayward child whom He, in eternal love, predestinated to the adoption of a child, whom He bought with His blood, whom He has quickened by His Spirit, and yet that child forgets Him days without number, and so, in order to bring him back, bring him to his senses, and bring him to his knees, God, as it were, lets out of this garment waters that will flow to him and threaten to overcome him, and drown him. He seems to be just a subject of these waters, likely to be a victim, they are so angry. He cannot control them. O, but he is in the hands of a good God, but he needs faith to believe it. When he has faith in exercise then he can answer the question - Who has bound these waters up, and who has let them forth? Could the fountain of the great deep, could

the heavens, have given forth all their watery contents to drown the earth, without God? Who opened the fountains? Who sent the rain? Who caused the waters to prevail over the earth? God did. Who has troubled you? Who is troubling you? Who is rebuking you for your sins? Who sends some trouble to say to you, You have forgotten God, you have forgotten your Maker, you have forgotten your resting place. You have sought other gods. Poor child, you have gone wrong. Now a flood comes. What have I done? Where have I got to? Conscience says, you have gone astray. The trouble says, you have gone wrong, you have forgotten your God, and now you are to come back, and these very waters that threatened to destroy you, shall bear you on their troubled bosom, carry you to the throne of God's heavenly grace. Then you will say, I know why they did not utterly destroy me. A good God. But in some measure I know why He let them loose upon me.

"Who hath established all the ends of the earth?" blessing nations. When God divided to the nations, all the nations round about Israel, He did it according to all the number of the tribes of the children of Israel. He gave them what they needed, and gave the world the rest. He has established the ends of the earth. It was kind of God, was it not, to establish England, and to give the gospel to England, as He did at the Reformation, and continued for a long time. It will be just if He takes it away as I am afraid He is doing. O, what will become of this highly favoured nation if, in awful judgement, God should take away His gospel, His Spirit? He has established some churches. He has removed them. He established seven churches in Asia. He has removed them? Why? Because of their sins. He has established us here. He has done it. We have reason to praise and bless Him. But then may we hear His voice, may we hear His voice, saying this - "Hold fast that which thou already hast, that no man take thy crown", the crown of thy church state. Churches may lose their church state, though no child of God shall lose his soul. Who has done this? Who sent John Warburton to Trowbridge saying - "Abide here, for I have much people in this city" I have seen many of those people. I knew many of the people who were called by grace under that remarkably honoured servant of Christ. God has done it.

And now there are two questions remaining that are the deepest, the most profound, the most wonderful, and, to all nature,

unanswerable questions. "What is His Name?" Who has done all these things? "What is His Son's Name, if thou canst tell?" This relates to the Being of Jehovah. This relates to God, to His Being, and to the subsistence of the Trinity. When He would have Moses go to Israel in Egypt to be their deliverer, Moses said to Him, when I come to the children of Israel, and they ask me what is the Name of the God in whose Name you come to us, what shall I say to them when they ask me Thy Name? Say to the children of Israel "I AM" hath sent me. That is the Name of Jehovah. "I AM THAT I AM" hath sent me. If we, by the Holy Ghost, received a clear, and a powerful manifestation of this Being, it would strike an awe into our souls, it would send a light into our understandings, it would so affect, and rule our consciences, it would so touch our very hearts, and control our wills, as to bring us into the most solemn trembling before the Divine Majesty. My brethren, do you know this God? O, but is He knowable? Yes, yes, He makes Himself known. What is His Name? The Eternal God, the Maker of heaven, and earth, whose throne is heaven, whose footstool is the earth. Almighty. "I am the Almighty God, walk before Me and be thou perfect". This is the Name of God. We are not worthy to take it on our lips. I say the truth, as to my own judgement of myself, I am not worthy to preach to you. I am not worthy to name this awful, this blessed, this glorious Name, Jehovah. Yet I want Him, want Him to be my God, and my portion, and my Redeemer, my All and in All. You do, who fear His Name. When you are exercised, when you are lively, when you feel in your souls - O but we are lost in self - the only remedy is here. "Leave not my soul destitute". "What is His Name?" Never forget it - No, you wont if you get the knowledge of it by the Spirit - "I AM THAT I AM". What a poor little creature a man feels himself to be when this great Name is named upon him; a worm, a bit of dust, the small dust of the balance, less than nothing, and lighter than vanity. Nothing so crumbles, and, as it were, for the moment annihilates the pride of a man, as the presence of God. It is too high for us. "Whither shall I flee from Thy presence?" "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit?" God's omnipresence awed the Psalmist, and when finding wherever he thought of fleeing, wherever he thought of hiding himself, that he could not do so, he said - "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me: it is high, I cannot attain unto it" He is everywhere. "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" "Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? Do not I fill heaven and

earth?" O sinner, you cannot get away from Him. Says a child of God, I fain would never try. I would fain be at His footstool; be a worshipper of Him.

"And what is His Son's Name ....?" He has a Son. God has One only Son. What is His Name? It is the same as the Father's, "I AM". "Before Abraham was" said Christ, "I AM". This points to the eternity of the relationship of the Son of God to His Father. Rightly received, and understood by faith, this passage will ever be an indubitable proof of the eternity of Christ's Sonship, for He partakes of the incommunicable Name; it belongs to Him; equal with His Father. What is His Name? The Son of God; the only begotten Son of God. The Son of His love, the Son of Himself, proceeding from Him, begotten by Him, not made. Let the Socinian say that; let the Arian say that; let the men who deny the Sonship of Christ say that - "a made Son", inferior therefore to the Father. And in that case it is impossible that the Name "I AM" should belong to Him. Do you perceive this? O, the glory of this Name. What is His Name? "I AM". Incomprehensible, incommunicable, and yet this "I AM" took on Him flesh, and became Jesus. The children, whom He would have with Him through eternity, being partakers of flesh and blood, He also likewise took part of the same; that through death He might deliver them from him who had the power of death, the devil, and save them who were subject to bondage all their life.

"If thou canst tell" If thou hast had a manifestation of this. If the Spirit has given you to understand that, having seen the Son, you have seen the Father; having believed in the Father, you have believed in the Son of necessity, though you may not have realised that. Dear brethren, it is a feeble word that I have said, very feeble. You cannot be as conscious of it, as I, myself, am, but I believe I have spoken the truth, and if you can receive it, if it gets a place in your hearts, if it is lodged in your understanding, then you will say, "We know that the Son of God is come". "If thou canst tell" If, that is to say, thou hast seen Him by faith, embraced Him by faith. If thy heart has said to Him, and is saying, again, and again, O that I knew Him; O that He were mine; O that I had an interest in Him, and could feel He was interested in me. "If thou canst tell" by that way, then lift your heads up, your salvation draweth nigh.



Now may the Lord look upon us, and bless indeed, and, with us, the many of our friends who are absent from us, absent from home; keep us as a people. We do need keeping. We need that Scripture - "Kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation". And the Keeper is this God. The Keeper is Jehovah. The Keeper is the Son of God, Jehovah Jesus. The Keeper keeps by faith, and keeps by hunger, for He feeds the people, giving them hunger for Himself. He keeps by manifestations of Himself. This is the God I would declare unto you. This is the God I believe in. This is the God we are to follow, cleave to. This is the God in whom, if we die well, we shall die. May the Lord take His Own Word and put it in our hearts.

AMEN.