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Sermon preached by Mr J K Popham at  
Galeed Chapel, Brighton on Sunday Morning 27th  
January 1924

TEXT: Psalm 115 verse 12

"The Lord hath been mindful of us, He will bless  
us. He will bless the House of Israel, He will  
bless the House of Aaron".

The Psalm opens with an ascription of praise to God. "Not unto us O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake". It was no half-hearted expression; it is doubled to show the earnestness of the acknowledgement that the people of God would make and did make to the Lord for His mercy. They had two exoduses to remember and bless God for; their exodus from Egypt under the hand of Moses, and their Exodus from Babylon by Zerubbabel and those who were used and honoured of God to bring the people forth and it would seem that the recollection of God's mercy to them in these and other things was so lively at this moment in their hearts, as to call forth this expression of praise, ascribing everything that was good, every mercy, all enjoyment of mercy, every deliverance to Him, from whom every good gift and every perfect gift comes. May the exodus, the going forth of Israel from Egypt and from Babylon, not be typical? May it not be typical of the rising and going forth from the dead of the church of the living God, of the Lord's own people, held by sin's power and the law's authority, with the curse of the law hanging over them, and the power of the god of this world exercised in them, driving them violently here and there? These, born again and led of the Spirit, come out of Egypt and from Babylon where they have been sent as Jeremiah says, for their good, to be delivered. O it was a great thing for Israel to be delivered and it might perhaps be specially so with respect to their coming out of Babylon, where, according to the threatening of God upon them before they went, even when they were in their infancy as a nation under the rule of God, Moses said to them that if they turned away from God, He would scatter them to the ends of the earth and they should serve other gods,

gods of wood and of stone, and now, having had that most bitter experience, and having this wondrous deliverance and seeing again the omnipotence of God and His remembrance of His covenant with them and their fathers - Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, they had come forth and they saw the living God, and forsaking their idols and all vain things, they say "Lord it does not belong to us, we are not to be praised. There is no honour due to us for this." "To Thy Name." Thy Name expressing Thy perfections and Thy covenant, and Thy mercy; Thy Name must have all the honour, and we bring the honour to Thee in this our acknowledgement. "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory, for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake". Can you join with this? Can you say spiritually, God brought us out of Egypt, out of a land of darkness and death and of an iron furnace, and bitter bondage? Can you praise Him for salvation manifested to you in some measure and thank Him for His unspeakable goodness? And, if you have been in captivity for some sin, and backsliding, and have been brought back and forgiven, must not you say "Not unto us, not unto us?" Converting mercy is sweet; restoring mercy has an added sweetness. It is a double kind of mercy, an extreme of mercy, a great stretch of mercy, beyond the first stretch, and therefore the praise and honour of this must be the Lord's. But His people were not free from enemies; they were not far beyond the reach of the voice of enemies who would say "Where is their God"? Wherefore should they say it? Why is the voice in you saying in your hour of trouble "Where is your God?" Whence comes that voice? Not from the Spirit. Not from the Scripture. It comes from two sources, your own unbelief, and a tempting devil, the roaring lion who walketh about seeking whom he may devour. If we could, in time of trouble and affliction, carefully distinguish between the voices that are in our hearts, we should find the heathen voice, we should find the voice of truth, we should find the voice of the Spirit, We should find the heathen voice "Where

is your God", and that voice would turn you into yourself, to your sins, for the devil will try to convince of sin if he can, by so doing, drive us into despair. He will turn us into impossibilities, turn our eyes to natural impossibilities, but if we can distinguish the voice of truth from that, then this will be one effect. We shall say to the Lord "Remember Thy holy promise, remember the covenant, remember what Thou hast done - doubtless Thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, though Israel acknowledge us not; Thou art our Father." "Wilt not thou" says the Lord by Jeremiah "from this time cry Thou art my Father, the guide of my youth". If we were enabled more to regard the voice of Scripture as it bears upon cases, upon our cases, we should find the power of unbelief straightened and broken again and again, for the Spirit being in the word of truth gives efficacy to that word in the heart and mind and what reason has the enemy to taunt us? What reason has he to ask those questions "Where is now thy God?" and what right has he to do it? We do not belong to him. All born again are taken and snatched away from his authority, and rule. He has no right to ask the question, but he never regards that point. Right with the devil has no place. It is all sin with him. What reason has he? Appearances, present experience of darkness and confusion and distance from the Lord, as if the Lord were straightened, because circumstances are straightened, as if His power were circumscribed because we ourselves are weak, as if He could not bring out of a grave, one who is in a grave. His promise is "I will open your graves and bring you out of your graves". He has no real reason, as he has no real right to put such a question. Ah, but we say to the Lord, "Wilt Thou show wonders to the dead? Shall the dead praise God?" How far from Him we get; from Him in respect of feeling, in respect of all things that try us.

Then the god, or the false gods, the idols are described here, and well might the Lord say, by Jeremiah, they can do no good, they can do no harm. Fear them not. They are idols of silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not, they

cannot do anything of that. They can convey no message to you. Eyes have they, but they see not. They have ears, but they hear not. Noses have they, but they smell not. They have hands, but they handle not. Feet have they, but they walk not, neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them, so is everyone that trusteth in them. And then, Israel, having been delivered, is exhorted "O Israel, trust thou in the Lord, He is their help and their shield". O house of Aaron, you ministers of the Lord, you who stand and art to stand between the porch and the altar, and cry "Spare Thy people O Lord and give not Thine heritage to reproaches", trust in the Lord, He is their help and their shield. Ye that fear the Lord with a filial fear, fear offending Him, fear displeasing Him, fear walking contrary to Him, trust in Him, He is your help and your shield.

And then the text "The Lord hath been mindful of us" This is, as it were, a reason for the exhortation, added to the reason which their deliverance gave to them. "He hath been mindful of us, He will bless us" If the Lord will help me I will show you in some particulars, how the Lord has been mindful of us. It was astonishing to the Psalmist that the Lord should be mindful of men. He viewed the works of God in creation, the heavens, and the sun and the moon, and the stars. He saw all that God had done and then his eye as it were fell on poor, fallen, miserable, weak man, and he expresses his astonishment by saying "What is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou visitest him." It is a wonder. There is only one visit from God that we deserve, only one thing that He owes to us, as we are fallen, and that is the visit which He expresses concerning wickedness "I will go down and see if it is so" And what He owes to us, is justice. He owes that to Himself, and that means hell to all on whom justice falls but the Apostle by the Spirit, quoting that passage in the chapter which I read, brings in the Lord Jesus. What an amazing thing. Here is the man, poor, miserable, sinful man, and now the Lord Jesus comes in. God is mindful of His people and, being mindful

of them, He sends His Son to be like unto His brethren in all things, without sin. This then is the first thing I will name as being a manifestation of the mindfulness of God, His mindfulness of His people, that He sent His only begotten Son to be their Saviour. "He hath made Him a little lower than the angels". Lower, for a little time, debased by imputed sin; depressed by guilt into the lowest parts of the earth was the Saviour of sinners. Their names were written on His heart. They were on His shoulder. He bare them up and ever bears them up in His intercession. He was so mindful of His people as to take their precise place, their exact condition under the law, so as that He might redeem them and bring them to His Father and say ultimately "Behold I and the children which God hath given Me" This mindfulness extended to death. He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. It extended to the very gates and bowels of hell, as hell is punishment. It extended to the whole of God's holy law and to the consequences of imputed sin, sin laid on the Lord Jesus, and here, if we are enabled to even attempt to do justice to this mindfulness of God, this care, this remembrance of God of His people, we must bring in the Trinity. The Trinity; the great doctrine of the Trinity, in the glorious acts of it; in the love of the Father - "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son" He commends His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. This is the mindfulness of the Father. O my brethren, interested in this mindfulness of the Father, how happy we are; who can express the great love of God. "He commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" Every time we get a glimpse of this by faith, and a living hope in it, our hearts will rise to God in the spirit of the first verse in this Psalm "Not unto us O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy and Thy truth's sake." O it belongs to God; all the praise of our being quickened; all the praise of prayer in our hearts; all the praise of faith in exercise on the Lord Jesus; all the praise of perseverance in the way of life, all the praise of a real energy in your

spirit to seek the Lord and wait upon Him, all the praise of these gifts and these blessings the Lord must have. It belongs to Him and to Him alone. Give thanks unto God.

You are the sheep of His pasture, the work of His own hands. He hath made you His people and not you yourselves. Therefore the exhortation is "Give thanks unto Him, praise and bless His holy Name for all that He has done in sending his dearly beloved Son in our own nature, to redeem us from the curse of the law.

And, in the second place, we must bring in the Lord Jesus. "What is man that Thou art mindful of him" God gave man dominion over all creation and he lost it and became depressed in his nature into the very depths of corruption and in guilt. He is lost and dead. How can poor men rise again? Their dominion over natural creation has gone, irretrievably lost, but the Lord's people shall rise again and they shall rise in and by the death and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and they shall be raised out of the dust and taken off the dunghill and set with princes, even the princes of God's people, and made to inherit the throne of glory. This exaltation arises out of the mindfulness of the Lord Jesus. He came, and every soul knowing this by the Spirit's teaching, will sing with Mary "My soul doth magnify the Lord" Why? He remembered me in my lost estate, remembered me when I had no thought of Him, quickened me when I was dead, called me when I did not want Him, made me a partaker of the heavenly calling when I was walking after the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. The rising out of the grave of spiritual death is by the death of Christ. The raising to a living hope in the soul, a hope in God, is by the resurrection of Christ. The rising from guilt unto justification, from pollution unto sanctification, is by the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. He was raised for our justification after having been delivered for our offences. O was Christ mindful of us when He was born? Was He mindful of us when He said to His parents "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business"? Was it the Father's business that His Son should come and die for sinners sitting this morning in this

chapel? Was He mindful of us when in the wilderness of temptation He overcame the devil? Mindful of us when, in Gethsemane's garden, He said "Not as I will but as Thou wilt;" when in the judgment hall, He suffered His judgment to be taken away in the day of His humiliation, because He must needs sink to the lowest level of death and condemnation into which His people had sunk. Was He mindful of us when He submitted in humble, holy obedience to the death of the cross? Well may we sing, if it has been revealed to us, that the Lord was mindful of us in these direful circumstances and sorrows, well may we sing "Not unto us, not unto us is the glory of our hope; not unto us the glory of our ascension, but unto Thy Name it belongs."

And now not unto us, but unto the Holy Ghost, give glory for our new heavenly birth. How mindful He was of us when we sported with death, when our eyes were on the world, when our hearts were at enmity with God, when we were walking in the course of this world, pleased with it, according to the power of the prince of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, but the appointed time rolled on apace, not to propose, but call by grace, to change the heart, renew the will, and turn the feet to Zion's hill. O what a day was the day of a person's new birth; what a day was the day of spiritual conviction entering the conscience; what a day that was when you said I am in the way to hell and I cannot deliver myself. What a day that was when you turned aside and said "God be merciful to me a sinner" and have been saying it ever since. Not to you, but to God the Holy Ghost, to God the Son, and God the Father, belong the praise of that change. I will give them a new heart; I will put my Spirit within them; they shall keep my commandments; they shall call upon My great name; they shall believe in My beloved Son. They shall see eternal things in the light of truth, in the light of the Spirit's teaching. They shall see time, and its things, as short; for a moment. Death and the deserving of death, they shall see and believe in themselves. Then they shall see Christ in whom I am well pleased and they shall

come to me for acceptance and I will accept them in Him.  
I will accept them in the sweet savour of His sacrifice.  
I will accept them in the prevalence of His mediation, I will  
accept them in His name and they shall be to Me as He is. I  
will see them as I see Him; love them as I love Him; help  
them as I helped Him in His sorrows and troubles.  
I will bring them forth from death as I brought Him forth  
and so the gospel tells us that God has been mindful of  
us. The Lord has been mindful of us in these things.  
Why do I insist on these things before I say anything else, why  
because if a person is born again and dies the next minute, he  
goes straight to heaven. "This day shalt thou be with me in  
paradise." Therefore, the most important, and, by comparison,  
the only important thing, is to be redeemed, to be loved, to  
be purchased, to be born again. What a wonderful thing; if  
you just think for a moment about it rightly, it will  
appear to you to be a wonderful thing, that the Eternal  
Trinity should have had a thought of you, a mind to do  
you good. Looking on you, in your ruined, sinful  
condemned state, this great God cast His eye on you, as  
it is written in Ezekiel and passed by you in His purpose, passed  
by you in the Person and death of Christ, and passed by you  
in the day of regeneration, cast His skirt over you and said  
"Live" Brethren, there is nothing important compared with  
this. Seeing in the light of divine teaching, we shall  
certainly realise somewhat of the greatness of Paul's  
word "Our light affliction is but for a moment" Think of it,  
and it "worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal  
weight of glory" Why? "While we look not at the things  
which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the  
things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are  
not seen are eternal." What is eternity to you? What are  
its things to you? What place have they in your minds and  
thoughts and judgment and affections? Do they put out the  
things of time sometimes? Do they make them for a  
moment, ... light? Do they tell you that the only thing worth  
having is an interest in God? The only one worth  
knowing is God, as He is knowable in Christ? Then see  
this morning if you can bless God for giving you a new



heart, and a right spirit and say Not unto me O lord, not unto me, but unto Thy name give glory for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake, and if these remarks should be the means of leading any of you to contemplate the Holy Trinity in the work of salvation and lead you to see somewhat of the greatness of the love of God the Father, the Son and the Eternal Spirit, you will have reason to thank Him that you were here and I shall feel honoured in being an instrument of leading any of you to contemplate this great matter.

Now in the next place, not unto us, but unto the mindfulness of God must we say praises be, because He has watched over us; He has watched over us. Was the Lord indifferent to Israel in Egypt? Did He never cast a look on them in that land? Was He indifferent to the length of time that they were there? No, for we are told that He told Abraham that his seed should multiply and be afflicted for four hundred years. He was mindful of them and so we may carry this to Israel after the Spirit and to ourselves as some of us believe. Was He mindful of us when we were born?

"Parents, native place and time  
All appointed were by Him."

Was He mindful of us when we were dead in sin? Yes; is it not true as one says and we sing sometimes

"Determined to save, He watched o'er  
my path  
While Satan's blind slave, I sported  
with death"

O, the observance of God, the providence of God, casting your lot here and there. The providence of God leading you, some of you, to a place where you heard the word of life, and it entered into your heart. The providence of God over others who were differently placed and not so well placed in respect to this point and yet a time came, the appointed time rolled on, came, when the Lord said Thy time was a time of love and I passed by thee when thou wast in thy blood, when thou wast dead, thy time was a time of love, and I said unto thee live, and thou becamest Mine. What mindfulness was this

And when we were under condemnation, when perhaps some of us felt and said inwardly "No man careth for my soul" was the Lord not mindful? Who sent us the spirit of prayer? Who taught us to say "God be merciful to me a sinner?" Who gave a view of the atonement and its infinite worth? Who gave a sinner to feel persuaded in his heart that the blood of Christ was more than all his sins? Who set the heart on knowing Christ? Who set the heart on stedfastly seeking the forgiveness of sins? Who kept eternal things well before the heart and mind? God hath been mindful of us. There was the devil; he was ready to destroy us. The dragon, ready every minute to pour out a flood of blasphemy and destruction out of his mouth to swallow us up. There was the unbelief of our own hearts. There were the corruptions of our nature. There was the condemning law that had siezed us and was telling us we were ruined for ever and ever. Who gave a spirit to pray against all these enemies? The Lord hath been mindful of us is the answer. When Nathanael knew not the Lord Jesus and asked if any good thing could come out of Nazareth, what said the Lord Jesus to him as he came "Behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile; when thou wast under the fig tree I saw thee". Poor sinner, when thou art prostrate in sorrow, when thou art dumb in guilt, when thou art fearful of ruin, when the corruptions of thy nature open up and threaten to destroy thee in a moment, who is it that sees thee? Who draws , who helps, who breathes prayer, who gives a little faith, who drops some hints into your heart? There is mercy with the Lord that He may be feared and with Him is plenteous redemption. Take hold, if you can, of these points; they may be a help to you as you meditate upon them and you may say "The Lord hath been mindful of me. He did not leave me. I was near to destruction, but He laid hold of me. I thought hell would swallow me up. I felt the pit was ready to shut her mouth upon me, but I found a cry come into my heart, and I found myself sustained." Who, when you were ready to die, came and held you up? The Lord hath been mindful of us, that is the point. He sent deliverance to His people. He sent Moses before them to bring them out of Egypt. He stirred up Ezra and Nehemiah and Zerubbabel. He stirred up Zechariah and Haggai, all these blessed men to be leaders and preachers and teachers to His people to show how mindful He was of them.

Providence and grace frequently unite to bring poor people on their way to heaven. So the providence of God put it into the heart of Nehemiah and into the heart of these men whom I have just named and into the mouth of Zechariah and Haggai to prophesy so as that the Jews prospered through their prophesying. All this showed the mindfulness of God and it issued in the restoring and rebuilding of Jerusalem, but, there is one point that took place and preceded above all the rest, it preceded all other things, namely the altar was set up and worship established again. I think that in experience this is a wonderful thing; it shows the care of God for a sinner who wont let him wander everywhere about the earth. He says "I will be a little sanctuary unto thee in the wilderness, thou shalt worship Me." Notice this point in your own souls, that whenever the Lord will do you good, He will show His mindfulness of you by bringing you to worship Him, to bring before Him the one offering of the Lord Jesus - "When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand" and then shall come to pass the fulfilling in the experience of that word of Christ - "The hour is come, when neither in this mountain nor at Jerusalem shall men worship. God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth," and to have this set up in your hearts and maintained by the Holy Ghost is one of the sweetest evidences that God cares for you that you can get, one of the best signs of life in your soul, one of the clearest teachings of the Eternal Spirit, that a sinner who does not know which way to take is led by the Holy Ghost to the Lord Jesus, and there he worships. God has been mindful of us. He is jealous of these sinners' hearts' love. The eternal lover, Jesus, will have the eternally loved ones at His footstool to worship Him and all worship, true worship, you will find in this, namely, that God, being a Spirit, and that Holy One dwelling in human nature, Jesus Christ, you have to worship Christ and this is no idolatry. You worship the Man Christ Jesus who is true Almighty God. Look at the ignorance and superstition of the world for generations, of which the Apostle says - God winked at, but now having sent His Son and the Son having obeyed Him, even

unto death and being raised again and ascended on high, now God commandeth men everywhere to repent and He brings them to this sweet repentance, and they worship His Son, worship Him in the Son, worship the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. How the Lord winks at idolatry now, how He winks at wickedness now, lets men go on unreproved in their consciences, but there is a poor sinner, his heart is as bad as others and one day he turns aside from God and he goes to some vanity and what does the Lord see? Why, He sees one of whom, and whose love, He is jealous, turning aside from Him and He sends His Spirit to reprove and rebuke him. Why should He do this? Because He will have that sinner at His own footstool. You do not reprove a strange child, but you reprove your own, and the Lord does this to His dear children. He reproves them because He will have them worship Him and trust Him and look to Him and derive life and mercy and peace from Him. May this be established in our minds - that God is jealous, and His jealousy makes Him watchful and at every turn, when His people turn away from Him, He brings them back. He sends affliction to drive them home to anchor on His grace, and He sends conviction that God alone is to be adored and worshipped and trusted and this brings them in their spirits to this great point - The Lord hath been mindful of us. O, if I may say so, were not their eyes sore in Babylon when they saw gods of wood and of stone and served them and as the day of deliverance drew near, were they not worn down with trouble and sorrow and their eyes inly turned to Jerusalem to which they were to come again in God's own time? Now if this be brought into a spiritual experience in us, we shall find just the same. The idolatries of our nature will get wearisome and bitter and the living and true God will be attractive to us, and we shall want to worship Him.

Worship God then in His Son  
There He's love, and there alone  
Think not that He will, or may  
Pardon any other way

Then there are providential things innumerable. I can only just hint at a few of them. Singular turns in providence. When, perhaps, you have been ready to give up hope about matters, strange things have taken place in your circumstances.

A word spoken has been a guidance and you have found that God ordered that. Providence has opened ways of escape or bound and shut you up for a time and the end will prove He has been mindful of you. Lest you should settle on your lees He stirs you up by some adversity. Lest you should trust in yourselves, He proves to you in various ways your weakness. Lest you should think that you can keep your own things, He will take some of them away. O the ways of God in providence. Truly we may say "His way is in the sea, His path in the mighty waters, and His footsteps are not known." What is it all for? Look into the Hebrews; see where it is said "If ye endure chastening God dealeth with you as with sons, for what son is He whom the Father chasteneth not" and then it will be written right across your trouble "The Lord hath been mindful of us". It will be written right across and the writing will be so legible that you will say I know He has done it. The Lord has been mindful of me. Mindful. Because He loved me, He sent that trouble, He sent that loss. He sent that cross to put that yoke on me because He was mindful of my eternal salvation and would have my poor heart and my poor love. Let us then, as we can, praise Him for all the tokens of His care and mindfulness of us and say in heart and song "Not unto us O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory, for Thy mercy and Thy truth's sake.

Amen.