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Sermon preached by Mr J K Popham
at Galeed Chapel Brighton
on Sunday evening 12 September 1920

PSALM 62 v 7

"In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock
of my strength, and my refuge, is in God"

As the Lord may be pleased to help me I shall, first of all, show the necessity of the salvation here boasted of, and in the next place, show what that salvation is. And these two great subjects will be the song of God's people in the house of their pilgrimage and they will both be mentioned in heaven: "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His Own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father. Unto Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." The necessity of salvation lies in two things, first in the condition we have brought ourselves into by our sins. We are ruined, absolutely ruined. Our nature is spoken of as dead, dead to God, to every right principle; dead in trespasses and sins, alienated from the life of God through ignorance that is in us and wicked works. This is our condition. O sinner, if you leave the world as you came into it, there is no escape from hell for you. God is angry with the wicked every day, and will drive him, with all the nations which forget God, into hell. We must speak of hell; The Scripture does speak of it; the Scripture sets it forth. Jesus mentions it, yea, drives sinners into it. "Depart from Me" is His solemn word to those who are called goats at His left-hand. "Depart from Me ye workers of iniquity." Depart into the hell prepared for the devil and his angels. If it offends your ears you are in a woeful case. What if you are swallowed up of it through eternity? My friends, sin is an awful reality, a filthy thing, the only wrong thing in creation. God hates it, the law condemns it, the curse of God is on all who are in it and who die in it. It has rendered men absolutely helpless. There is no health, there is no life, in us. It has brought us into a condition of hopelessness, without God and without hope in the world. It has made us abominable creatures; man that is abominable. It has made us obnoxious to the wrath of God, as fuel for the fire of divine anger. It has warped and deformed us and made us without shape, except that

shape and image which God must despise. "Thou wilt despise their image", the image of sin, the image of the earthy. And this image we all bear; we brought it with us into this world, and it can only be removed by the creative work and grace of the eternal Spirit. I said just now the law condemns it and it condemns us. Its unequivocal language is "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them". And two things make men, rightly convinced of sin, to tremble. The first is some sense of the awful justice and majesty of God and the second is a sight and a sense of their own deformity and wickedness and pollution. May those of us who are convinced of sin bless God who has given us the conviction and given us counsel to flee from the wrath to come. This is a necessity for salvation; if we are to escape the wrath to come. But God does not owe salvation to any one. Did you ever believe that? Did you ever think it? The Almighty owes no mercy to a creature who has sinned; He owes no blessing to a rebel. All God owes to us - O terrible thought, O, divine truth; a principle never to be moved - all God owes to us is what He owes to Himself, namely the infliction of a just sentence; that is all. If we believe this, it will most effectually stop our mouths. "That every mouth might be stopped and all the world become guilty before God". What says conscience in you, my hearers? Does it declare God is just? Does it clear Him when He speaks against you? Does it justify Him when He judges you? Does it make you say, if He were to inflict on me the punishment I deserve, He would be holy, holy, holy, and good? Now I think this is a good experience, though I know, experimentally I know, it is exceedingly bitter. Why, I remember walking about with this in my conscience when I was a youth convinced of sin and, though it is considerably more than 50 years ago, the recollection of it is vivid. Well, this is our case; we are sinners; we deserve hell. God owes nothing to us. Our life is borrowed, so to speak, lengthened out by forbearance. Then if we can ask nothing from God of right, if He owes us nothing of goodness, the necessity of salvation comes in on another ground entirely, namely on the ground of sovereign love, of a sovereign purpose in God Himself. Yes, and that purpose He declared, on the very back, so to speak, of sin entering into the world, for He came to Eden defiled, and He said the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head; He promised the Saviour; He promised Jesus Christ. What a wonderful promise. So salvation is

necessary because the Almighty has decreed it, because His love, so communicative, would communicate itself; because His mercy would flow; because He would give His only begotten Son out of His bosom. O may we honour and bless God for this, His great love. Salvation is necessary. Helpless in our ruin, black in our sin, guilty in our rebellion, weak through our sin, and without any claim on God, God has come and said, I will save; My Son shall come; He shall represent Me; He shall be the brightness of My glory and the express image of My Person. Well, dear friends, if we believe these things, happy are we. I know they are old, out of date today, trampled under foot, but as long as God allows me to speak by His mercy I will maintain them in your midst. "Salvation is of the Lord". In the very inception and the conception and the purpose of it, and the glory of it, 'tis wholly of the Lord. Now the Psalmist professes that his salvation is in God and this leads us to speak of the primary acts of God. In the first place salvation is in God the Father. We read in the epistle of Jude that the people of God are sanctified by God the Father, and the word "sanctification" means, set apart, and this was not done as an after thought and purpose following upon the fall, but was the eternal purpose of the Father in His beloved Son; a primary act, an act in God Himself; the communication, in a divine decree, of eternal life, eternal sanctification, eternal redemption. And the Spirit inspired the Apostle Paul to write to the Ephesians concerning this, in these words: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world". Chosen, that we should be before Him in love, and chosen us to the adoption of children unto Himself by Jesus Christ. Ah, some may at once say, if we only believed and felt that we had an interest in that declaration, we should long to fly away and rest in the bosom of eternal goodness, and God says to such sinners: "Ho, every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters". Come and drink the water of eternal love manifested in an act, sovereign and great and gracious and eternal, of election. Come and drink the waters that God causes to issue from beneath His throne and the throne of the Lamb. Come and drink the waters of salvation in this blessed One; God the Father purposing it, bestowing it, giving it; giving it first to His Son, for He gave grace to Christ before the world began, as Paul teaches in another place, saying, "Who has saved us and called us with a holy

calling, not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. It is not a little bold in man to deny a doctrine so distinctly revealed, so constantly reiterated in the Holy Scriptures, but what will not man do in opposition to God, if left to himself. This salvation in God the Father means the adoption of the sanctified ones to Himself, the adoption of them, as children, to Himself. It means their being given to Christ to be members of His body, to be His very body, bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, and members of His body in particular. It takes salvation out of the meddling, meddlesome hand of men and puts it entirely where it ought to be and where it must be to be a salvation - in the hands of God. Beloved friends, God is exalted to have mercy and He has mercy in His Son; shows mercy there; gives it to Him that He may give it to His children. In God the Father. Well, the Apostle Paul speaks of the love of God, thus - it is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. And this I dare affirm, that whenever that love is shed abroad in the heart of a sinner, it dissolves that sinner into the sweetest repentance, in the most wonderful contrition. O, it brings him to love God and hate himself. It comforts him against his grief for sin; it assures him that his state is good, that he is encircled by love, covered by love, sustained by love, guided by love, chastened by love, afflicted by love, and brought by love to the heaven in Christ before the world began. O, loved of God, how happy is a sinner when he knows it. It is to his heart like the sun has been to our earth and to our bodies today, making all things glad in its own light and warmth. The love of God is like that to a sinner when shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost. He is in it, yea he is in it, and love is in him. Why, love is on all trouble that the Lord's people suffer, on all chastening, and griefs. Self-procured troubles we may see our troubles are, and yet love has to do with them. In God is my salvation, in God is my support, in God is all goodness; in God all gracious movements are. It was not a matter of choice, of dispute, or debate, with Israel, where and when and for how long he should pitch his tent. That was decided by the moving or the abiding cloud. A man's goings are of the Lord. "Commit thy way unto the Lord". O, it is a great thing for the love of God to be about you, to be a convoy to you as that cloud was to Israel by day and that pillar of fire by night. Love is in all. One sings

'Tis my happiness below
Not to live without the cross

and we may say still, as God is with us we shall say it; we may not escape the rod, but to see love inscribed upon everything we suffer, this is happiness. David had much trouble; enemies sought to weaken him and cast him down. Absalom, Ahithophel, Saul, and Saul's advisers; hypocrites who spake friendly to David, only to betray him. These all sought his downfall, but God was about him. Sin and Satan and some men may aim at your overthrow, but O, if your salvation is in God, happy and safe are you. In God the Father, in His eternal love, in His great kindness, His watchful care, His mercy. "In God is my salvation".

Secondly, in God the Son, is my salvation. God the Son is Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God incarnate, full of grace and truth. "And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth". And where? When He was here below. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us". His sojourn was love, His sojourn was salvation. He did no sin, but this is said of Him, that His Father "made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." The most wonderful exchange the world has known, that even can know, the sins of sinners imputed to Him who had no sin of His own, and the righteousness of the sinless One imputed to men who are sinners. This is marvellous. Jesus is not said to be the greatest sinner that ever was, but it is said of Him that His Father "made Him to be sin". It is an extravagant language and wild to say that Jesus was the greatest sinner that ever was, but it is a truth divine, in which the Church shall glory for ever and ever, that His Father "made Him to be sin". Now, beloved friends, have you got a hope that the Father took your sins and laid them on His spotless Son? If you have this will be one effect. You will be singing sometimes

My faith would lay her hand
On that dear head of Thine
While like a penitent I stand
And there confess my sin

The most wonderful sight that can ever glad our eyes here below is that with which the Galatians were favoured, namely to have Jesus Christ evidently set forth before us, crucified among us. In Jesus Christ is salvation.

And it is in these particulars that I name them, first in respect of the removal of all sin. The sin of a land is removed, was removed, in one day

That day when Christ was crucified
The Mighty God, Jehovah died
An ignominious death

and then it was that the whole of the sins of the church of God were taken away, removed, cast behind God's back into the depths of the sea. Nothing more wonderfully breaks the heart, purifies the conscience, and brings the sinner into peace with God, than the manifestation of Christ made sin and removing sin by offering Himself to God without spot on Calvary's cross. O beloved friends, the death of Christ swallows up all griefs, removes all sorrows, takes away all hardness, purifies the conscience from dead works; brings a sinner into the sweetest repentance and most grateful contrition for sin and brings him to hate himself and lose his own life. The death of Christ is the comfort of a sinner, the relief of his mind, the support of his soul, the sanctification of all his troubles. "Jesus, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate". And that sanctification enters into their very soul, their consciences, their affections, their wills, their understandings, and their troubles and difficulties. It enters into everything. "In God is my salvation". In God the Son is my salvation in that particular. And in the next particular, in God is my salvation in respect of righteousness. This, I mentioned this morning, but allow me to mention it again. I hope never to be tired of speaking of Christ's righteousness, and I wish you may never tire of hearing about it. I know this, by the Scripture, that you must sink into perdition without it. I know you will never be right if you are not righteous. A man must be righteous before he goes to heaven and, as he can never do righteously of himself, and never can spotlessly obey and please God, he must have a righteousness given to him, imputed to

him, made his own, and that is the righteousness of Jesus Christ. "Surely shall one say in the Lord have I righteousness and strength." In God is my salvation in respect of holiness. Thy people shall be all holy; all of them. And that, not by irradiation of their own sins, but by the holiness of Jesus given to them. In God is my salvation in respect of likeness to God. We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of His dear Son. In these things, in Jesus Christ, is the salvation of the Lord's people.

And thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost is salvation. In the Holy Ghost is my salvation we may say. The Apostle, writing to the Romans, the Roman Christians, called to be saints, says: "But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit". The Apostle Jude, speaking of prayer, says in his epistle, "Praying in the Holy Ghost". There is salvation in none other. The Three One God is interested in salvation; salvation is in Him. And, by the powerful communications of grace by the Holy Ghost, God's people are saved. Now I shall begin at the very beginning here. I shall begin by saying that this salvation in the Holy Ghost starts with the new birth. This, some of us experienced many years ago. This, I pray that those of you who have not, as yet experienced it, may come to experience it. "Ye must be born again". That is Christ's word. May you hear it here; may you receive it; the new birth. You can never end well if you do not begin well and no man can begin well without the new birth; the communication of a new life, different from the life of the flesh, so different as that when these two dwell in the same person there is a conflict. The new birth, if it be derided by men, may it be experienced by us. May we be the happy subjects of that operation of the Holy Ghost. It is so absolutely different from the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, as that it is called in another place, a new creation. "Created in righteousness and true holiness". O, and this makes men new creatures in Christ. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away, and behold all things are become new." Old views of self are passed away, old views of creature goodness and ability and wisdom are passed away, and new views of sin and of self, and new views of God and of justice and of heaven and of hell are brought into the conscience. If you are a new creature you are saved, saved in the Holy Ghost and by Him. Ye are in the Spirit if born again and "If we live in the Spirit let us walk in the Spirit"

says the Holy Ghost by Paul. And, that being the beginning, may we be brought now and here to examine into this. "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith or no". And in this, I do not say you must know the day when this took place. In many it is so gradually done, that is to say the work of grace is so imperceptible, as that, of the moment of the communication of this new life and this new creation, there is no knowledge. But if you are born again and your examination is carried on in the light of the Holy Spirit's teaching, you will find that there was a time when you halted in the ways of sin, when, like the prodigal, you began to be in want, felt there was something wrong with you; what you scarcely knew, but something wrong, and you wanted something which old things, old pleasures, old courses, old companions, old reading, old books, could not supply. All the pleasures of the world that you indulged in became a pain to you, and the refreshment you got from the world was poison to you. I do not speak out of fancy; I know ever step of this way. What a great thing it is to be in want. Ask a poor sinner born again, and yet full of confusion, what he wants. He may say he hardly knows sometimes. But put before him Jesus Christ, speak of atonement, speak of forgiveness, of justification, of acceptance in the Beloved, of the mercy of God given to a poor sinner, and his heart will say, why, these are the very things I want; I want Jesus Christ. I want His mercy, His love, His blood, His righteousness, His salvation. This is how the Holy Ghost carries on the new creation. And further, we read of praying in the Holy Ghost, and this is praying as the Holy Ghost indites, and teaches and leads. There is the throne of grace; He points it out and then says to a sinner, in His merciful operations, blessed operations, go to that throne of grace. Fly to the throne of grace; your case admits no stay. Go to the Lord Jesus, plead His precious blood, submit to His way of saving sinners. The Spirit thus teaches and thus speaks in the hearts of sinners and leads them to pray. They pray with sighs and groans that cannot be uttered. They pray out of a feeling need, a feeling of ruin. They pray out of a sense of being guilty, utterly guilty, and so undone. But they pray with faith in the Name of Christ, and so they are conformed to that: "If ye shall ask anything in My Name I will give it you." This is another step. The Spirit takes them further. He brings them to the Lord as inviting them near: "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden". He gives the word of invitation some efficacy, some power,

some persuading power. He persuades Jephthah and the invitation is obeyed, the sinner comes. "Lo glad I come"; O, it is a glad movement of the soul when he comes to Christ as invited. And then more, his sins are forgiven him and he walks in the atonement. Having received the atonement he walks in it, and here his peace with God is brought; his joy rises here; his comforts rise here; his strength rises here; his hopes are built here. The atonement becomes his life. The death of Jesus Christ is his life. The condemnation of sin in the flesh of Jesus Christ is now the sinner's justification and the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the sinner who thus is blessed. In God is this salvation. The salvation from all troubles is here also in this blessed God. In affliction the Spirit works submission to the will of God. "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good." Under burdens the Spirit gives power to walk. In the midst of perplexities the Spirit gives wisdom to walk. It is a great thing not to dispose of yourselves and a great thing to have a cross made for you; not made for yourselves and by yourselves. It would be a light thing we should have if we made our own cross, but God makes the cross, and when He lays it on He gives power and submission. "In God is my salvation".

In God is my salvation in respect of perseverance. "The righteous shall hold on his way and he that hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger." But do the righteous hold on their way in a consciousness of being strong? No! They hold on their way in conscious weakness. "When I am weak then am I strong". "My son be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus". There are two things which conduce to perseverance in a day of trouble and to the very end of mortality. One is a perception of what the will of God is, and the will of God is revealed in two ways. In the Scriptures; do look at the Scriptures; search the Scriptures; the will of God is revealed there. How you should walk; how comport yourselves; how you should bear your troubles; how you should wait on God; how you should be separate from the world. The will of God is revealed here. No man of God is to be a rule to himself. He who would make himself his own rule is a proud man and no Christian. But a true child of God comes, at times, by the Spirit's teaching to see the will of God in the Bible respecting himself. It is His will you should walk in tribulation. "In the world ye shall have tribulation". It is His will that you

should come out of the world and be separate. "What concord hath Christ with Belial?" "What fellowship hath light with darkness?" "Be not unequally yoked together". It is the will of God that you should be sanctified, that is clean, in your walk. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification..... That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour". (1 Thessalonians 4 v 3/4) This is God's holy will revealed in this Book. O, it is terrible to deny the Scriptures. A man who would fain go safely through the wilderness must have a map. The will of God is revealed in providence in many cases. It is God's will that some of His people should have a cross, a permanent cross; some affliction sent which they may not lose; some burden laid on them which they may not be rid of. And when any of you perceive such a thing in your own case, it will be wonderful also to have grace to say: "The will of the Lord be done in me as it is in heaven. And by these things, God's people in weakness, persevere. The very things which make them say we shall never get through, as they are under the power of unbelief, are the things by which they hold on their way. And the crooked things, the trying, provoking providences, which seem to threaten to turn them out of the way, are the very means God uses to heal the lame that he be not turned out of the way. "In God is my salvation and my glory". No flesh shall glory in the presence of the Lord. Sinners in Christ shall glory in Him. "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." And, rather than that you should glory in yourself, God will take you and plunge you into Job's ditch again and again, that, ashamed of yourself and of your evil ways, and, forgiven and purified by the blood and Spirit of Christ, you may say, "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord. The humble shall hear thereof and be glad." "The rock of my strength and my refuge is in God". One says

I stand upon His merit
I know no other stand
Not e'en where glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land

Rock of Ages, O, blessed standing this, on the very Person and the work of the dear Son of God, Jesus Christ. "And my refuge" when danger comes; my refuge against indwelling sin; my refuge from the

enemy, "is in God". And, being there, how safe is the sinner. May the Lord give us to enter experimentally and more and more deeply and clearly into this great matter of salvation in the Triune God. Salvation in the Father in His love; salvation in the Son in His redeeming work; and salvation in the Spirit in His gracious operations.

AMEN.