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La P 812Sermon preached by Mr J. K. Popham, at Galeed
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PSALM 66.verse 6.

He turned the sea into dry land: They went through the flood on foot: There did we rejoice in Him.

The saints in this Psalm are called upon to make a joyful noise, for when it is said all ye lands, or all the earth, it is intended that the people of God should praise the Lord. Make a joyful noise unto God, He has done many things; has manifested Himself gloriously, has spoken graciously, has been favourable to His people, not allowing the enemy to overcome them, and delivering them mightily. Therefore, let them make a joyful noise unto Him. If they hold their peace always the stones will cry out against them. Grace teaches them sometimes to praise God in affliction and sometimes they praise Him for mercies past. Mercies past sometimes stand up and stand out, like outstanding mountains, declaring what God has done and calling upon the subjects of such kindness to praise and to make a joyful noise. Sometimes it may seem to you as if singing would be altogether out of place seeing you are what you are, barren, unfruitful, untender, ungracious, very prayerless, possessing but little faith, often wondering if you have any. It seems as if it would be much out of place for such people to sing and make a joyful noise to the Lord, and yet again and again, the Holy Ghost brings past mercies up and they stand up as if only just done by God and then the feeling is that you must thank Him, and that in the midst of present dispensations of trouble you must thank Him for His exceeding kindness and the surprising mercies which He has granted and the deliverances which He has commanded for you and the prospect of still better days that is set before you. Sing forth the honour of His name. Make His praise glorious. Say unto God how terrible art Thou in Thy works and when you have gone through some terrible things, when you have had experience of all shakeable and moveable things being shaken and some of them moved, during which and in which you have found your hearts deeply affected, and your faith called into exercise, and while your sins some particular sins perhaps, have been brought to your remembrance, the blood of Christ has been set before you very gloriously, so that your hopes have been raised and victory has been given and you have found yourself praising God for these terrible things. Terrible convictions of your uttermost depravity, and heavy fears of what God might be about to do with you, for your

sins. A sense of His greatness in His dealings with you. A sense of His awfulness in His great names and wondrous works. You have been constrained to say to Him how terrible Thou art. And this is setting forth His honour. Sing forth the honour of His Name, make His praise glorious. God is not only honoured when you thank Him for His comforts but also when you acknowledge Him in His terrible doings toward you. Through the greatness of Thy power shall Thy enemies submit themselves unto Thee. Feignedly many do it, feignedly, lyingly, some do submit themselves unto God and All the earth shall worship Thee and shall sing unto Thee. They shall sing to Thy Name." "Come and see the works of God: He is terrible in His doings toward the children of men." Some of God's dealings have had a two-fold aspect, as in the case of the deliverance of Israel, there was a two-fold aspect. One of mercy and goodness and wonders of power toward Israel. They had some experience of God's terribleness, for all their afflictions in Egypt were not by chance. They were according to divine purpose, and the furnace of iron burnt into their souls, and there was something terrible in God's dealings with them. Then, when the day appointed for their deliverance came, what a wonder it was, and a terrible thing too. A lamb was slain. Its blood was shed. It was sprinkled on the door posts and lintels of the doors, and the angel of death, passed through that defeated land, and entered into every Egyptian house, but into the house of an Israelite, sheltered by that blood, typical blood, that angel entered not. Then came the going forth in great haste. Then followed the Egyptians, and you know how the divine history reads. The Egyptians had their hearts hardened. The appearance of a possible victory, hardened their hearts against the people they were pursuing. It is said, - the Lord hardened their hearts. He withheld all sense of danger from them for the moment, withheld all feeling that possibly they might be ensnared and overcome, and so, He hardened their hearts. It needed no direct influence from God, upon their hearts, but just a withholding of that which even nature, working alone, might have suggested to the Egyptians, would prove dangerous, and so they pursued, and Israel again found something very terrible before them. The sea before them, the pursuing enemy behind them. The enemy strong, the enemy armed, possessing prowess, themselves weak, unaccustomed to war. O what a condition, what a prospect, and they cried to the Lord, and they murmured at Moses, and blamed him for all that had come upon them. Why did you bring us out of Egypt? Why did not you let us alone? We told you before, as you remember they did in dangers, and under temptations and mighty dealings, that they had better be left alone. Why did you bring us here and why did the Lord bring us to slay us. And then the Lord spoke to Moses - Speak unto the people that they go forward. A word contrary to all nature. We should have

thought first of all, the Lord would have made the way plain and then said to them - now go. No, "speak unto the people that they go forward," with the danger before them, with no appearance of deliverance, with no promise except an ancient one, which they appear to have forgotten, of a deliverance - let them go on. They have started, let them proceed, and then the Lord wrought. Moses was told what to do. The Lord caused a strong wind from the east, to go and blow back the waters. The waters were divided and became as a mighty wall on either hand and the bottom of the sea was made dry land for them and they passed over. How great, but what terribleness of power and judgment the Lord put into all this, His conduct to this people, and to the Egyptians. So we are to say to God - How terrible art Thou. Has He not been terrible to some here in His holy wise providence, moving moveable things, crying weakness upon our strength, emptying us of that which we had and which we wished to retain. Killing some things that we would have liked to have kept alive. There has been a terribleness in some of God's dealings, and true faith regards this. It is presumption, it is despising, not to notice God's hand when it is lifted up. "My son despise not thou the chastening of the Lord" In Israel at the moment, it was fainting when they said - would that we had died in Egypt: "Nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him" Say unto God, how terrible art Thou in Thy works. Terrible in this house, and terrible in that. Terrible in that business that fails us. Terrible in all the blight that came on some endeavours. Terrible in the conscience, terrible in convictions, terrible in His words, which seemed to come one after another, passage after passage, in rebukes, but little or no encouragement. All this has a certain terror in it to a living soul, to the children of the Most High. But still more so was it with Egypt. God hardened the heart of Pharaoh and they pursued and went to their own death and their enemies they regarded, Israel, escaped. And so here it is said - 'He turned the sea into dry land.' They went through the flood on foot. That which threatened to be their grave, was made a plain and dry path for them. This is true in spiritual experience. When there has been a flood of sin, and a flood of conviction and a child of God has been threatened with death, therein, and there has been no way of escape apparent, not given by the Lord for the moment, He will have faith obey Him, and so He hides some purposes and deliverance for the moment, and says "Go forward". They go and that which enables them to go, is the grace of faith, which is wrought in them and stands, both as to its being and all its acting in the power of God. You know what I mean. This faith, though damped by the sight of evil, by a flowing, roaring sea and flood, will never be overcome. Then when this faith has cried unto the Lord,

and entreated for deliverance, He has made the flood dry land. Now the Apostle Paul tells us, that we walk by faith and not by sight. It is faith first of all in the Lamb of God, whose slain, precious Person, whose invaluable blood appears to faith as the strong argument, the only argument, that can prevail with God, and that argument is used, and when that is the case, the flood becomes dry land. The flood of sin that has threatened to be your everlasting grave and woe, God has dried up. The blood of Christ, that precious blood, cleanses from all sin, doubt it not, and reconciles the soul to God from every folly, every fault. And the sinner has found that, that which he greatly feared, which raised in his heart a tumult of fear, which made him say at times, I shall never, never see God, that which has made him greatly look with most awful apprehension for his end, God has taken away. They went through the flood on that foot of faith. Where they saw no way God made one. Now some here know what I mean. You take the flood of fear when it comes upon you, and no-one knows but the people of God, what it is to be inundated and perhaps even suddenly fear, fear as to your standing, fear about the reality of your religion, fear about the future, lest you should fall and bring an open reproach on the Holy Name that is named upon you. Fear as to providence - what this means, what that is intended for. Fear with regard to the rod, lest it should be indeed a sword to cut you off, instead of a rod of correction for you. These fears, they are just like a flood, carrying all your hope nearly away, making every sort of resistance that you might offer to it, but a straw, and you, like one being carried down the stream, the mighty stream. Then God has given faith, precious faith, and the death that you have feared is averted, the watery grave you expected, you do not find. "They went through the flood on foot." God divided the waters, and made a straight and plain and wonderful way of escape. It is a wonderful thing to find this when trouble comes - a power in your soul to cry to God. It is one of the best evidences that a troubled person can ever have, while in his trouble, that he is not to be overcome, when faith has a strong cry and power to send that cry to heaven, that God would appear and work a mighty deliverance. He, by His Spirit, puts such energy into faith at times, as that it lays hold of God. Take Jacob's case as an instance. He is told to go home, to leave Laban, and return to his father's house. He starts with that promise. It is good to start in anything with a promise. It is good to have God telling you what to do. He starts with that promise and then there comes a death. There comes a danger. There comes an apparent evil, destruction that is to say, and what does Jacob do? Puts things in order. Uses all natural prudence, and then has that one only course left to him, and he takes it. He cries unto God. He is not like these wonderful people of to-day, these

mighty christians who never see any trouble but only joy and have no strong confessions and cries and tears, but only rejoicing, and who would afflict every saint of God they might come across, by reproving them for their want of happiness. But he was a man, who, realising his position, is crying to God, saying I am afraid, though you say you ought not to be afraid, you have God's promise to be with you. But then there was present danger and very likely in his heart Jacob found such strong convictions of past sins, such a powerful memory of his deceit, that there would be a hiding for the moment of every other thing, every good thing. Do not you know this, you who fear the Lord? And then, what course was he led to take? Why, to cry to God. Lord, he said, I am afraid of Esau. But he was his brother, only Jacob had injured him. I am afraid of Esau, lest he should slay the mother. And what did the Lord do? He made him pass through that flood on foot, for He brought Esau with a smile, such a face as made Jacob say to Esau - "I have seen thy face as it had been the face of God." What a deliverance it was. With four hundred men and probably as many swords. Every sword put up into its sheath, and Esau, captain and head, kissing his brother. What a wonder. Now this is what God does. He makes floods dry up. Yes He makes them dry completely up. You go through a flood of temptation, sore, strong temptation, the dragon casts floods out of his mouth. He knows what to do when permitted; he seeks to destroy the young child's life, the life of grace in the soul. It is not given to everyone to enter fully into this, but some poor sinners know how, that with their faces stedfastly set to go to Jerusalem above, there come floods upon them of the most horrible, unutterable temptations. I am glad I have not to speak of some particulars. You have never thought perhaps, how I have shaken literally from head to foot in this pulpit, when the most awful blasphemies have been hurled into my mind. Well, and what has God done with the floods that have been brought to you, cast out of the mouth of the dragon, the terrible temptation not about your own state only, (I have sometimes said that that seems little to the devil) but he comes and casts a flood against Christ, the ground of your hope, your hope in God, your prospect of heaven, your peace on earth, your strength to run the race, and to fight the good fight of faith. The enemy casts floods of temptation against this person. Ah, it shakes a man to pieces nearly, when he gets such floods, such fearful temptations. Say, could the tempter try to shake a tree so good, so green, good God defend the dry. Well may we pray that, with our favoured hymn writer, Hart, "good God defend the dry." 'They went through the flood on foot.' He turned the sea into dry land. The strong

cry of faith has gone out - Lord save or I perish. The looking to Him against whom temptations have been, looking to that power that has been denied, to that word whose virtue has been questioned. Looking to Him, and the cry of faith, these have brought deliverance. God hath dried up the flood and you have been left alone with your God, left alone with the dear Redeemer, whom the enemy sought to make you blaspheme, and we hope, some of us, that one flood or more has again and again been dried up for us. The flood of affliction in providence, and He who has wrought such mighty wonders has been very terrible. There is a sort of terribleness in every providence that has an affliction in it, to the children of God. We do need that exhortation "My son despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him." You greatly need it. He whose faith is never affected by anything, would do well to ask himself the question, whether his faith is true faith. An untried faith is not dependable. No man can properly depend upon an untried faith. But a trial of faith is a very solemn matter. The trial of faith is like fire. Though it be tried by fire. A fire tries wood, hay, stubble. It tries gold and precious stones. It burns up the former, it proves the latter. But it is a solemn thing to have your faith tried. When the Lord touches He means us to feel it. The lash that touched, yea, that was laid on the back and the foot on the Israelite by the Egyptian, was a sore thing, and when God in His providence deals with you, shaking/^{this} and removing that, you will find it is no easy matter, but faith will stand. True faith's the life of God, and it will stand, stand every storm and live at last. Every shaking providence, every flood of affliction that shall come, there will be in the heart, through the Spirit of God, a mighty cry - Lord save or I perish, and the salvation comes. We went through that flood on foot, we went through the other flood safely. We found that God intended good by sending the mighty floods. One more flood, let me name and I press on. The icy flood of Jordan, the thought of which, has chilled a good many of our hearts more than once. We must pass this and if we are honest, we do dread being put into a ferry-boat. If we are honest, if we are careful about our souls, if we are concerned about how we stand before God, how it will be with us when we come to die, and after death, then I say, we shall be concerned about reaching and passing that icy flood. One thing will divide Jordan's icy waves and land our souls with God, and the Lord will make that flood as dry land. Mr Fearing found the bottom good. It was as dry land to him as he passed over, and every saint shall know in his measure the same merciful truth. They went through the flood on foot. This is in prospect. We

have not gone through this, but if faith has ever laid hold of God in Christ, there have been, or there will be, moments when we shall say "Yes, I shall soon be landed on yonder shore of bliss".

There did we rejoice in Him. In the place where archers shot at and sorely grieved Joseph, in the place where you have had the most trouble, you will have the sweetest joy and comfort and confirmation. Trouble never hurts a child of God. Trial never removes anything worth keeping. The fire never burns anything worth having and when trouble has done its work, there, in that place, in that circumstance, altered perhaps altogether, or even remaining in some particulars, but with the bitterness and the death and the curse that was feared, all removed, there you will rejoice. I will allure her and bring her into the wilderness, and I will give her her vineyards from thence, and there she shall sing in the wilderness. The wilderness is to blossom and rejoice, and to rejoice exceedingly because of the excellency of the Lord, because of His fruit which is excellent, and comely for all that are escaped. There did we rejoice in the Redeemer. They sang after they were delivered. They sang. Miriam led them in song. "Glorious in holiness," they sang to the Lord, "fearful in praises, doing wonders." Now my dear friends, though, as I have said, it may sometimes have appeared to you as if singing must not be, would not be consistent, have you not been constrained at other times to sing - that the Lord is 'glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders' in you and for you. There did we rejoice in Him, when He dried up and removed the flood of guilt, when He made known His great salvation. When, in answer to strong cries, Christ came and manifested Himself in some measure to your souls. When, fearing death and eternal ruin, the blood of Christ appeared and was applied and all your guilt and fear and affliction and grief and sinking was taken away, and you were satisfied that the Lord was yours, that you belonged to Him. That is one way, one place, where we have rejoiced in Him. As the Lord does not forget His people in their following of Him, so neither will He let them always forget Him in His appearing to them. The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, "Yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee" This is how people come to sing in the place of the archers, the place where they were shot at, the place where floods came and threatened to be their grave. There shall they sing. In the wilderness they got their vineyards; there they sang. Every deliverance will become a song, and the trouble will be partly the matter of the song. Thou hast afflicted, Thou laidst affliction on our loins, we went through fire - the furnace of iron, through flood - the red sea, and Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place. There they sang, just where

God came to them. There they stood ; there they worshipped; there they sang to Him. Come to the flood of temptation and it is just the same, when the Lord has rebuked the enemy and the avenger and that is what He does. I will rebuke the enemy and the avenger. He takes his hand off, and his foul temptations cease and you are left alone. It is observable in Zechariah, that before Joshua got the change of raiment, the enemy got the rebuke. The Lord rebuke thee O Satan, even the Lord which hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee. And it would then be that the enemy would go off and the Lord and poor Joshua were left alone together. And you will find that, when the Lord does dry up the flood of temptation, and the Spirit of the Lord lifts up a standard against him, then you begin to sing at once - how hath the hammer of the earth been broken. How hath the oppressor ceased. 'There did we rejoice in Him,' and that in two or three particulars, which, let me, as helped, briefly name. There they rejoiced in the blessed Son of God, their Redeemer and their hope. Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say rejoice. No flesh is to glory in God's presence of itself or of what it has done. Christ will stand alone and to Him will be your praises. On Him you will put the crown of your rejoicing, and your salvation and to Him you will begin to sing. Of His Name, you will never be able to make enough. Well, that is one very particular thing that, as He is the deliverer, so will He be also your praise. In God will I rejoice. What a favour it is to know Jesus Christ as a deliverer, the Redeemer of the soul from eternal death, the Redeemer of the soul, from the flood of guilt and sin. Blessed be His Name, He is not a total stranger to some of us, nor are we strangers to Him. They rejoice in this, that He has justified them freely, from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. That He has brought to them a change of raiment, and commanded that it be put upon them, and they have rejoiced in Him, as the Lord their righteousness. There is wonderful peace, and then joy to one, and in one, to whom the righteousness of Christ is brought, and he wears it as in the sight of God. And they rejoice in His power, as it is manifested. Christ is the strength of Israel, and His power is exerted in removing sin, in breaking temptation, in sanctifying affliction and bringing out of it. He is their strength. He is made strength to them. Who of God is made unto you strength. The strength of Israel is Christ and so they sang to His power. Be Thou exalted in Thine own strength. So will we sing of Thy power. And this is what the people of God are all brought to, And they rejoiced in Him as their great High Priest. He has delivered them from their dreadful condition, reconciled them to God in the body of His flesh, through death and therefore, realising that, they do rejoice in

Him. They rejoice in His faithfulness. "The strength of Israel will not lie." "God is not a man that He should lie." It is not possible to Him. What He has said, He will do, and if He has made one word of promise of the gospel over to you, He will fulfil it. Though Esau may come with 400 men, though the devil may come with a legion of angels against you, though you may be tempted to presumption and despair, to blasphemy and to idolatry, and to all kinds of evil, this must be true - "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God." He wont forsake you. Ah, some may say, but we have forsaken Him and there is the trouble. Yes, my friends, and happy are you if it is a trouble to you. My people have forgotten Me days without number. What then? O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of Me. You will smart for forgetting Me. You will grieve for your little religion. You will be ashamed of your poor unprofitable profession. You will be ready to smite upon your breast as you grieve and follow the Lord, but this will come true - When He sees your affliction, then He will hear your cry. Nevertheless, for all that they did, when He saw their affliction, He heard their cry and then they sang and praised Him for His faithfulness and blessed Him that, though they forgot Him, He was mindful of them. Judah hath not been forgotten, nor forsaken of his God, though their land was full of sin. And the more mercy we have, the more sorry we are for being such sinners and the oftener a flood is dried up here and there, the more we have to rejoice in Him. He is so wonderful in His coming, in His deliverances and so marvellous in His love and in His faithfulness, that it can be no other with us than this, that we rejoice then in Him. May He be pleased to give us to wait on Him when floods come, and to cry mightily to Him in faith, when floods threaten us and see what He shall do, remembering what He said by Moses "Stand still and see the salvation of God" Stand thou still and thou shalt see wonders wrought and wrought for thee.