

Heavenly Resources

Genesis 21: 1-8; 1 Samuel 1: 19-24; Psalm 131; Isaiah 11: 1-10.

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I want to speak to you as those who have been taught not to draw anything from man's world, venturing to clothe the subject with Scriptures which speak of a weaned child, desiring that their moral import may not only challenge but encourage each one of us.

It has often been said that the first reference to a matter in Scripture gives us the full thought of God in relation to it, and hence there is great blessedness in seeing that this first reference to weaning describes a scene of holy mirth and joy. I have no doubt that it is the day which morally was in the heart of Abraham, to which the Lord Jesus refers when He said, "Abraham rejoiced to see My day; he saw it, and was glad" — when the habitation of Abraham, through the exercise of weaning, was filled not with the laughter of irony or unbelief which had previously marked it, but the laughter of holy mirth. It is a laugh which is contagious, and having a place in our own hearts will spread to others, as Sarah said, "all that hear will laugh with me." What a blessed thing, dear brethren, to be so filled with the holy mirth which the incoming of Christ gives to the soul, that others are affected by its joy.

In Samuel we touch upon a very difficult and crucial moment in the history of the people of God. In the book of Judges we read of a state of spiritual anarchy, "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes." That, beloved brethren, is anarchy. Then we get the book of Ruth which shews how God works in such conditions to bring about the choicest thoughts of His own heart. The key to the book of Ruth is in the last word — David. God is moving in a day when there is no observance of authority, when men are marked by anarchy. He moves to the bringing in of the man into whose hands He can commit the rights of His throne. Typically, He is bringing in Christ. That is the great objective of the book of Ruth; the bringing in of Christ as seen in David. God, having reached His objective, now begins in the book of Samuel to work that out subjectively in the hearts of His people. Hannah is the one who is representative of the work of God. She lives at Ramathaim-zophim, "the heights of watching." She is watching for what **God** will do, and her exercises are commensurate with her vision. I am convinced of this, beloved brethren, that if our vision looked on more definitely to the day of Christ, our exercises would be pleasurable to God, and God will always answer such exercises. We may have to wait; we may have to pass through reproach and misunderstandings; suffering and maybe persecution as Hannah did, but depend upon it, if our exercises are in accordance with the light which God has given to us in relation to His purpose, He will answer those exercises. He answers Hannah — she bears a son. She learns through nearness to God that this child can only be serviceable to God if weaned from human resources. I want to press upon you that **our** service can be carried out in power only if we are weaned from the resources of this world. Why was it the service of Christ in this world was so perfect? Because He drew nothing from this world, He grew up as a tender plant, as a root out of a dry ground. Never for one moment, even when according to Psalm 22 he lay in His mother's bosom, did He draw from this world; His resources were in His God. From the moment of His coming into this scene, this blessed glorious Person in the uniqueness of His Manhood drew all from God.

Hannah waited until Samuel was weaned. How blessed to bring into the house of God affections which are weaned from the resources of this world. Look at the fullness of what is brought in, "three bullocks, and one ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine" (v.24). I do not wonder that worship eventuates, whoever that **he** may refer to (v. 28). That is the highest service of all.

Now we turn to the Psalm. I touch these matters very briefly but I desire that the word may be prophetic, that we may get the present mind of God for us, and that we may not be conformed to this world, not drawing anything from it. This world is barren, Christless, Godless and unable to supply anything of help in the service of God. "LORD, my heart is not haughty." There is a man not lifting himself up in things which are too high for him, a man behaving like a weaned child. This man is not haughty — that is the spirit of this world — he acknowledged there were things too high for him. This world is characterised by its god who did lift up his heart to things too high for him. He sought the place of the Son and fell. If we are to be marked by a spirit which is contrary to the spirit of this world, it is imperative that we do not draw from it. The Psalmist is not drawing from human resources; he is drawing from God. Oh that we were concerned to appreciate communion with God more; to value more the preciousness of Christ, and the power of an ungrieved Holy Spirit, realising thus that there is an abundance in the realm in which Christ is pre-eminent. In Psalm 132, we see David deeply appreciating the ark, his heart set upon it, the very centre of his thoughts and desires. That will always be the mark of those not drawing from the resources of this world. They have a deepening appreciation of the preciousness of Christ. Drawing from this world will lead to lack of appreciation of Christ for it crucified Him, but if our hearts are weaned from it, God in His matchless grace and love will flood our souls constantly with precious impressions of His well-beloved Son. As David had the ark before him, we can have Christ before us, and the evidence of saints weaned from this world is, they appreciate the preciousness of God's beloved Son.

Then in Psalm 133 we see the brethren dwelling together in unity. Here is a scene filled with the fragrance of the ministry of the Spirit; marked by the absence of every feature of this world, with its self-seeking and strife, and so precious to God that He commands a blessing to fill it. Do not let us bring in any element of the world to spoil it. In 2 Kings 4, as the sons of the prophets gathered around the pot out of which all were feeding (suggesting fellowship), someone brought in a lapful of wild gourds and putting them in, poisoned the pot. How easy to go out into the world and bring in that which is uncultivated, uncontrolled; wild thoughts not subject to Christ as Lord. Whatever it is, if brought into the fellowship, unity will be spoiled and the fragrance impaired. A handful of meal, speaking of the preciousness of Christ, is obtained only through exercise and communion with God. As you bring that in amongst the saints, there is healing in the pot. Let us see to it that what we bring in amongst the saints is that which we have learned of the preciousness of Christ in communion with God.

There is a blessed point reached in Psalm 134. The saints stand in the sanctuary, praising and blessing God. An appreciation of Christ as suggested in Psalm 132; room made for the Spirit as in Psalm 133, eventuates in the holy worship of God. Is it worth while being weaned from this world, beloved brethren? Indeed it is. To have eyes opened to the intrinsic preciousness of God's Son; to make room for the power of the Holy Spirit; to stand in the presence of a holy God lifting up holy hands blessing and praising Him.

Lastly in Isa. 11. This chapter refers to what will obtain in the world to come, but I am convinced that some of these things can be experienced in the assembly today. What is the constitutional difference between this world and the world to come? A very simple one. In this world, man does what he likes. In the world to come, Christ does what **He** likes. Look at the blessedness of what accrues when Christ is doing what He likes. Evil is negated; conditions of safety are there. These beasts represent principles which are diametrically opposed to each other in any scene but this. Here they are restful together. Why is it? For this is not the eternal state, it is the world to come. What permeates the whole? The spirit of a little child. Pride, arrogance and such like will not be there but the spirit of a little child, and this enables one to put his hand on the asp and the viper. The enemy can do nothing in

the presence of the spirit of a little child.

May this simple word affect all our hearts and give us to see the great gain of not being conformed to this world, having our minds set in relation to that wonderful scene where all the preciousness of Christ in the power of the Spirit is available to us in order that we might have our present part in praising and honouring and worshipping God.