

The Victory of Christ and its Results.

1 Sam. 17: 58; 1 Sam. 18: 1-4, 6-8; Gen. 41: 44, 45, 50-52; Gen. 48: 12-14.

F. A. Hughes.

OCT 1959

I felt impressed as the ministry came before us this evening to seek help to close these meetings with what I pray may be a prophetic word and one which will find a place in all our affections.

I want to show, dear brethren, how the victory of Christ in all that it has effectuated would increase the atmosphere of worship and thanksgiving in our hearts, so that it might find increased expression in what we speak of as our morning meetings. I also wish to speak of the wonderful exaltation of Christ, and of the vessel given to Him in His exaltation. The way, too, in which that vessel is capacitated in dignity and in intelligence as the greatness of His holy worth fills her heart, so that she is able to contribute livingly and preciously to the praise of Divine Persons.

I am seeking help from the Lord as I speak that I may in nowise strain the Scriptures; that the thoughts I have in mind are in them I have not the slightest doubt. The 17th chapter of 1 Samuel is a marvellous chapter, it is one of the most important chapters in the whole of the Old Testament. A good deal of detail is gone into which at first sight would appear to be extraneous, but it is all moving to a point upon which our attention is to be focused, and that is the conflict. In a typical sense it runs alongside the four gospels, which give to us accurately and fully the precious details of the life of Jesus. But all is to focus our attention upon the magnitude of the conflict of the Cross. It says in verse 48 that David hastened and ran to meet the Philistine; and there was a moment when the blessed Lord said, "That thou doest, do quickly." The conflict was on, there was to be no delay. The conflict in all that it meant pressed upon Him and, beloved brethren, He went through in triumph.

How blessed it is as gathered together, to contemplate what Christ has done, and one would desire that the preciousness of the holy work of Jesus in all its blessedness, and all that has accrued from it for God and for us, might ever be in our hearts.

At the end of 1 Samuel 17 another point is revealed. Who is this blessed Person? It is not now a question of what He has done; it is a question of Who He is. What He has done is marvellous, but what shall we say as to Who He is? What has He done? Eternity will give the answer. Who is He in His Person? Eternity will be filled with the blessedness of it. Who is He? He is the Son.

How blessed to take account of Him here on the earth, lifting up His eyes and saying "Father." When speaking in relation to the world in that chapter (John 17) He says "Righteous Father." Speaking in relation to the saints He says, "Holy Father." But in the intimacy that existed between Himself and the Father eternally, He says, "And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me" (verse 5); and again, "Father . . . thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world," (verse 24). One would desire earnestly that the atmosphere of **Who He is** might permeate our meetings more and more; not only what He has done, blessed as that is, but Who He is in the glory of His Person, the Beloved of God, the Son of God. The One Who eternally abode in the bosom of God is seen here in this world taking up the reproach of God.

David-surely a type of Christ in this chapter-could say, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine" (verse 26), he who had brought reproach upon the armies of the Living God. The Living God is surrounding Himself with living persons in order that the living might praise Him, as thank God we do this day.

As they spoke of who David was, "the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David." And, beloved brethren, that surely is one of the features which we would all desire to be marked by as we assemble together to remember the Lord, a sense in every heart of enjoyed intimacy with, and devotion to, Christ. The words "soul" and "life" are often almost indistinguishable in the Scriptures, and here is one, Jonathan, whose very life was knitted with the life of David. As in the enjoyment of what He has done, may our hearts also be filled with the knowledge of Who He is, and thus may each one of us, each brother and sister assemble as having known through the week the blessedness of our lives being bound up with the life of our blessed Lord.

But then there is the collective thought-the women come up from all the cities of Israel. It is the subjective thought, it is what has been wrought out in the affections of the saints. As they moved **together** they "answered one another." Each affection, so to speak, is responsive to other affections, every affection having its part in this united tribute of praise. An unspoken desire in a heart is **answered** by another's praise, as pre-eminence is given to the true David. How blessed thus to be found **personally** devoted to the Lord, and **collectively** giving to Him the supreme place. The day of His public supremacy is assured. God has decreed it, but we delight now, **as together**, each heart knowing the sweetness of His personal love, to give Him the supreme place in our midst.

One other point, Saul looked at David and said, "What can he have more but the kingdom?" It is blessedly true that a few saints meeting together, the two's and three's breaking bread together in a locality is the evidence, the indisputable evidence of the fact that the whole scene is yet to be in the hands of Christ. Apart from the Person of Christ what has been more attacked in Christendom than the supper? Men have added ritual to it; some have completely discarded it; they have added this and taken away that. It is the enemy's attack against that which is a precursor of the fact that the whole scene will witness the pre-eminence of Christ. In 1 Corinthians 10 we read, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," and the evidence is seen in the securing now of those in whose hearts He already has the pre-eminence. Thus we see the wonderful results of the victory of Christ, each heart **personally** attached to Himself; in fellowship **together** in our praise of Him, and holding the ground for Him until He comes, (1 Corinthians 11: 26).

Just a very short word on Genesis. All are familiar with the story of Joseph; loved of his father, unique in the father's affections, as evidenced in the coat he gave him; but hated of his brethren and put into a pit. (Every type must come short of the anti-type; there was no water in the pit. Our blessed Lord went down beneath all the waves and all the billows). Taken out of the pit, falsely accused, and put into prison; but brought out of prison and given a place of exaltation. In that place of exaltation a wife is given to him, to share his position of glory. We are assured that she was chosen as being morally suitable to so great a person as the exalted Joseph, named by Pharaoh as Zaphnath-paneah. Two sons are born, and the meaning of their names, as given to us in the text, is indeed striking-the sorrow and toil forgotten, the double fruitfulness secured. In Genesis 48 Jacob claims them in relation to his own name, putting Ephraim-the second, before Nansseh-the first. How blessedly all this is seen in relation to Christ. Refused, hated, scorned, falsely accused, and eventually crucified; then given the highest place of glory and honour. What dignity, beloved brethren, attaches to the Church as associated with that exalted Man; a vessel capacitated to yield joy through Him to His God and Father. As, by the Spirit, we appreciate increasingly the place that divine love has given to us, may our hearts respond in reciprocal affection to Himself and to Him Who is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.