

November 11

"I rejoice in thy salvation." — 1 Samuel 2:1

These are the words of Hannah, a very pious and highly accomplished female, to whom the Jews were so much indebted for one of their finest public characters. For Samuel was given in answer to her prayers; he was trained and formed by her instructions, and he was early dedicated to God, at the expense of her self-denial. She also edified her own generation, and she continues to edify ours, by her composition: "Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the Lord, mine horn is exalted in the Lord; my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies, because I REJOICE IN THY SALVATION."

Let us notice this part of her song, and let us take the subject in the highest sense of which it is susceptible. There are many salvations which God accomplishes. But there is one that excelleth in glory, and to which the term is pre-eminently, if not exclusively applied in the Scripture. In this salvation every believer rejoices.

He rejoices in the discovery of it. He is pained indeed to think that as yet multitudes of his fellow-creatures have never heard of it; and he prays that his way may be made known on earth, his saving health among all nations. But he is grateful that to him is the word of this salvation sent. There was a time, indeed, when he treated it with indifference; but when he began to see and feel his perishing condition, and to exclaim with the jailer, What must I do to be saved? he received this intelligence as Hagar did the angel's kindness, when he opened her eyes, and showed her a well; or as the Grecians heard the Roman Consul's proclamation of liberty when they cried for hours, Soter, Soter — Saviour, Saviour!

He rejoices in the properties of this salvation. In the freeness of it: that it requires no qualifications, no conditions; and is without money, and without price. In the purity of it: that it not only contains pardoning mercy, but sanctifying grace; and is designed to save him from his sins, which he now feels to be his worst enemies. In the perpetuity of it: that he who begins a good work will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ; that he who believes hath everlasting life, and shall never come into condemnation. In the extensiveness of it: that Jesus gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time; and that this salvation is prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel.

He rejoices in the hope of it. This hope admits of various degrees, and the joy will be influenced by them. The lowest degree of it may serve to keep the mind from despair; as a weak bough will sustain a man drowning, till a firmer support comes to his relief. But there is a lively hope; there is an abounding in hope; there is the full assurance of hope: this will fill us with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. In other cases thousands rejoice in hope, who will never obtain possession of the object of it. But the hope of Christians maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them.

He rejoices in the experience of it. For he not only apprehends it as a desirable and future good, but he has a present actual participation of it. He feels the influence of it in his conscience, in his heart, in his life. And if a man be not saved on this side the grave, he will never be saved on the other. "We," says the apostle, "who have believed, do enter into rest." And "Blessed," says David, "is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance; in thy name shall they rejoice all the day, and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted."

He rejoices in the completion of it. For though now he is enlightened, yet it is with the illumination of the dawn, not of the day. Though now he is sanctified, he is renewed but in part. Though justified and adopted, he does not always know his condition, and never enjoys all the privileges of it. He has the earnest, but not the inheritance. He has a few of the grapes of Eshcol, but does not yet command the vineyards of Canaan. But when that which is perfect shall come, then that which is in part shall be done away. In pursuit of which, he can say, with David, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."

And yet the enemy of souls tells the young, that religion is an utter enemy to enjoyment. Yet the world supposes that Zion is the metropolis of gloom and sadness. But, "as well the singers as the players on instruments are there." And they who have made the trial know that her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. And the God of truth has said, "Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart; but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit." Christians have a thousand things to rejoice in, but this is the chief, the salvation of God. And there is enough in this to inspire joy in the midst of every loss and trial. "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

Morning Exercises For Everyday In The Year
By Rev. William Jay