

A Lord's Day Snippet!

Biblical and Southern Studies

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The earth forever is the Lord's,
With Adam's num'rous race;
He raised its arches o'er the floods,
And built it on the seas.

But who among the sons of men
May visit thine abode?
He that has hands from mischief clean,
Whose heart is right with God.

This is the man may rise and take
The blessings of his grace;
This is the lot of those that seek
The God of Jacob's face.

Now let our souls' immortal powers
To meet the Lord prepare,
Lift up their everlasting doors,
The King of glory's near.

The King of glory! who can tell
The wonders of his might?
He rules the nations; but to dwell
With saints is his delight.

Isaac Watts (1674-1748)

The Majesty of God's Lordship

"The earth is the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."

Psalm 24:1

The Spirit of God leads the Psalmist to begin this psalm with a powerful ascription of the majesty of God's Lordship over all creation. The realm of divine Lordship is universal. Our text reminds one of the first verse in the Bible. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). This verse marks the boundary between time and eternity. This verse reminds us that the first named subject of the Bible is "God," who is central to all power, position, promises, and persons. Before there ever was anything else,

“in the beginning God.” God always was and He created heaven and earth from nothing. “The earth” is His object says our text. The word “earth” is used in its widest sense which includes the habitable and uninhabitable regions including what is on it, over it, in it, under it. Every bit of it is God’s in its fulness. The place of your dwelling, the ground upon which you walk, the spot upon which you labor, the plot for your burial is His! He is the great and majestic landlord of the universe. And “the fulness thereof” is His, yea all the things that fill the earth along with the provision of all things as well as all its moveable objects. Yes, the cattle, the birds, the wild critters, and the hills upon which they reside are His (Ps. 50:11, 12). This includes the human inhabitants that “dwell therein.” They were made in the image of God and are to be for His glory.

All is Jehovah’s because of ownership and origin and omnipotence. Yes, He is the majesty, the might, and the maker. “Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power (might), and the glory and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all (which shows His Lordship); and in thine hand is power and might (which shows His power of authority for His Lordship); and thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all (which shows His actions of Lordship)” (1 Chron. 29:11-12). He is in total control. All originated from Him, for Him, and through Him. “For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen” (Rom. 11:36). This Lord really possesses all things by right and therefore can do with it as He will with His infinite wisdom and His omnipotent power.

Obviously, God has priority rights over everything for He purposed, produced and providentially preserves creation, and without question He is its Lord! “Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the LORD’s thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is” (Deut. 10:14). “*The earth is the Lords, and the fulness thereof;*” the Lord made it, and it is His. He was not called, nor set at work to build this great House for another; but He made it, as by His own power, so for His own pleasure; all the inhabitants of the earth are His tenants; and not only the earth, but the whole flock and furniture of it is His. For as the Lord made the earth, so all that the earth is stored with.... The Lord, who is possessor of the earth, can give His people what earthly portions, or possessions of the earth He pleases. And let us remember, what earthly portions soever we have in this world, we have no reason to boast; seeking all is the Lords, and we are but His stewards and tenants at will.... They who acknowledge, what they have is His, or that they have and hold all they have of Him; will honor Him with what they have, *even with their substance, and with the first fruits of all their increase* (Prov. 3:9)” [Joseph Caryl].

Basil the Great (329-379), who was an arch opponent of the heresy of Arianism, was threatened with exile by the Emperor Valens. The reason was his resistance to the ruler’s

tyranny. His reply to the emperor was that he had nothing to fear. Possessions he had none, except a few books and his cloak; an exile was no exile for him, *since the whole earth was the Lord's*; and if tortured, his feeble body would yield to the first blows, and death would bring him nearer to his God, for whom he longed. When condemned to banishment for the truth, he merely bade one of his attendants take up his writing tablets and follow him.

Then contemplate Chrysostom (347-407) who suffered under Empress Eudoxia. He told his friend Cyriacus that he armed himself beforehand: "I thought, will she banish me? *'The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.'* If she take away my goods? *'Naked came I into the world, and naked must I return.'* Will she stone me? I remembered Stephen. Behead me? John Baptist came into my mind, etc."

Charles H. Spurgeon commented, "All creation belongs unto the Lord, and the whole universe is His domain; but there is an abode of special glory where He more fully reveals Himself to those whom He regards as peculiarly His own. The psalmist asks who these can be, and how it is that they are qualified to climb the hill whereon the divine palace is built. He describes their character and their leader.... None can enter but the altogether pure in life and motive, the faithful and the upright. Jesus alone of our race perfectly answers to this description, and therefore He it is who leads the way and open heaven's gate for those whom He has made meet to enter."