

A Lord's Day Snippet!

Biblical And Southern Studies

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1 Before the earth or seas were made,
Jesus was chosen as our Head,
The Father's first Elect;
In him the church was chosen too,
And he engaged to bring them through;
Nor will he them neglect.

2 He undertook the care and charge,
And promised they should walk at large,
And all his glory view.
Anon the Father's set time came,
Nor did the Saviour then disdain
The Father's will to do.

3 "Behold him now," the Father cries;
"Ye mourning souls, lift up your eyes
And view your Saviour dear.
In him my soul delighteth well;
My great commands he shall fulfil,
And banish all your fear.

William Gadsby (1773-1844)

The Majesty of God's Delight

"Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, to whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles."

Isaiah 42:1

This world apart from God is a sourpuss place and delight absent. Perhaps when you think of the attributes of God you do not contemplate His "delight." "Delight is the flowing of love and joy, the rest and complacency of the mind in a suitable, desirable good enjoined" [J. Owen]. God's "delights were with the sons of men." God takes delight in all His ways and with all that is His. This infinite God has a delight that is unmixed; it is not diluted. His is a pure delight. The Lord stepped into time by creating it and the world which is chronologically measured. Yes, in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. With His divine creation there was delight, "God saw that it was good" (Gen. 1:10, 12, 18, 25, 31). "Good" (*tob* the basic Hebrew word is the root of other Hebrew words for "good")

means desirable or pleasant or beautiful. When creation was finished “God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all His work which God created and made” (Gen. 2:3). Mankind was not to turn away from the sabbath and the doing of God’s pleasure, for He called “the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable” (Isa. 58:13). Jehovah’s obedient ones then shall delight themselves in Jehovah (Isa. 58:14). When God gave His perfect law He sanctified Mt. Sinai from the presence of His people, it was with perfect delight, and the godly man is to “delight in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night” (Ps. 1:2). The holy God delights in righteousness and requires it. Remember these words, “They that are of a froward heart are abomination to the LORD: but such as are upright in their way are his delight” (Prov. 11:20). God’s love is pure and therefore He can delight in it and does so. “Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day” (Deut. 10:15). Our Lord delights in obedience to His Word. “And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams” (1 Sam. 15:22). The Lord God was well pleased with His Son and delighted in Him. This is the basic theme we now pursue. [1] God the Father delighted in exalting His Son. [2] God the Father delighted in the counsels with His Son. [3] God the Father delighted in the works of His Son.

God the Father delighted in exalting His Son. “I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him” (Prov. 8:30). There is great respect in this delight concerning the counsels of God in ordaining salvation. This counsel of peace was pictured originally between Jehovah and The Branch, “Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both” (Zech. 6:12-13). Thus, Jehovah of hosts, the Father, is speaking of the Son becoming incarnate to establish peace between them and the Father. The Father shall purpose salvation, and His Son shall purchase salvation, and the Spirit shall regenerate those the Father purposed and the Son purchased. The Son was the Father’s delight and was foreordained to a definite work: redemption that He was to accomplish! How? “With the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you” (1 Pet. 1:19-20). The delighted Father foreordained it, and the obedient Son fulfilled it. Thus, the counsels of the Godhead were accomplished.

God the Father delighted in the counsels with His Son. “Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, to whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles,” (Isaiah 42:1). We have seen that the Father

purposed grace before the beginning of the world and now we see it prophesied in Isaiah. How glorious must be the counsels among the persons of the Godhead. The word “behold” is restricted to the observance of the Messiah. The Son in whom His soul (anthropomorphism) delights is His Servant. Yes, He is the Father’s Servant, or the Servant of Jehovah, which refers to Christ Jesus and His humanity. He is the representative of His people before the Father and has redeemed them from their sins in satisfying God’s justice. Full atonement was made. And the Father upholds Him or gives Him His full support in His humanity for angels were at his disposal. And He is elect or chosen of the Father as the substitute to make atonement. The Servant of Jehovah whom God has chosen is the One who is the fullness of the Father’s soul delights. And the Spirit of God is upon Him to assist Him.

God the Father delighted in the works of His Son. “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created” (Rev. 4:11). “The LORD hath made all things for himself” (Prov. 16:4). In order to interpret this physical world properly it must be seen as created for the glory and honor and power of God! Remember His delight in His creation which was pronounced “good” or a “delight” (Gen. 1:31). This is when “all the sons of God shouted for joy” (Job 38:7). Also, when God rested from His creation work, He had delight (Gen. 2:2). The primary delight of God was in the results of His eternal counsels. Why? Because all His delight in His works is truly the effect of His eternal counsels. The great result of the eternal counsels was the fulfillment of the Father’s purpose and of the Son’s substitutionary sacrifice. God infinitely delights in the eternal fruition of His wisdom, goodness, and love. In these results is seen God’s self-existence, self-sufficiency, and self-satisfaction.

John Owen wrote, “It was not a rest of weariness from the labour of His work—but a rest of ... delight in what He had wrought—that God entered into.”