

***"I rejoice at thy word,
as one that findeth great spoil."***

Psalm 119:162

The *awe* in which we should *stand of God's word*, so far from hindering our delight in it, is, as we have just hinted, the most suitable preparation for its most happy enjoyment. (Ps. cxii. 1. Acts, ix. 31.) In receiving every word of it as the condescending message from him, before whom angels veil their faces, we shall *rejoice at it, as one that findeth great spoil*. Often had David found *great spoil* in his many wars;¹ but never had his greatest victories brought him such rich *spoil*, as he had now discovered in the word of God. The *joy* in this treasure (like that of the church at the advent of Christ (Isa. ix. 3), described by this figure) evidently implied no common delight. If then the saints of old could so largely enrich their souls from their scanty portion of the word; must not we, who are favoured with the entire revelation of God, acknowledge--"The lines are fallen unto us in pleasant places; yea, we have a goodly heritage?" (Ps. xvi. 6.)

This expressive image may remind us, that the *spoils of this precious word* are not to be gained without conflict: Here "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence." Our natural taste and temper revolt from *the word*. Our indolence indisposes for the necessary habitual effort of prayer, self-denial, and faith. But still "the violent *do take* the kingdom by force." (Matt. xi. 12.) No pains are lost--no struggle is ineffectual. What *great spoil* is divided as the fruit of the conflict! What abundant recompense is in reserve for the "good soldier of Jesus Christ," who is determined, in Divine strength, to "endure hardness" (2 Tim. ii. 3), until he overcomes the reluctance of his heart for the spiritual duty? It is not a sudden flash, or impression upon the imagination; but the conqueror's joy in spoiling the field of conflict--solid and enriching. Sometimes indeed (as in the Syrian camp, 2 Kings, vii. 8), we *find the spoil* unexpectedly. Sometimes we see the treasure long before we can make it our own. And when we gird ourselves to the conflict, paralyzed by the weakness of our spiritual perceptions and the power of unbelief; many a prayer, and many a sigh, is sent up for Divine aid, before we are crowned with victory, and as the fruit of our conquest, joyfully appropriate the word to our present distress.

But from a cursory, superficial reading of the word of God, no such fruit can be anticipated. When therefore the flesh or the world have deadened our delight, and taken from us this *great spoil*, should we not arm ourselves for repossession of it? Should we be unaffected by our loss? Oh, then, since there are such treasures found and enjoyed in this field of conflict, let us not lose our interest in them by the indulgence of presumption, heartlessness, or despondency. Before we attempt to read, let us cry to the Lord, under the sense of utter helplessness to perform one spiritual act, for his powerful help and Almighty teaching. Then we shall persevere with unconquerable and unwearied vigour, and not fail to share in the blessed spoil of victory, views of a Saviour's dying love--an interest in the precious blessings of the cross--*great spoil*--"unsearchable riches." (Eph. iii. 8.)

1 At Ziklag--1 Sam. xxx. 19, 26-31. From the children of Ammon--2 Sam. xii. 30.