Psalms - Commentaries by Alexander Hume Rule

Selected Ministry of A. H. Rule Volume 2, Discerning the Lord's Mind

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My dear

... As to going to—, or—, I have nothing to advise and only desire that you may have the Lord’s mind. And I do not doubt you will get that, if the eye is single; that is, if His glory is the motive.

As to discerning the Lord’s mind, it is largely a question of the state of soul. “The secret of the LORD is with them that fear Him.” Is the eye single? Do I desire only His will? Am I not blinded through sell-interest or sell-will in some way? Do I refer all to the Lord, and wait on Him, to know His will? If so, He will guide. We do not expect any revelation, or anything extraordinary, but He, by laying on the mind what is pleasing to Him, or by some providential way, will indicate His will. This may be so distinct that it virtually amounts to a certainty in the mind, though we may not be able to prove it to another. The great thing is nearness to the Lord, and a subject mind, with the desire, “Show me Thy way.” He sets before us an open door, with something to indicate that we may enter. We see His hand in it, recognize it, and act accordingly.

This is something we have to learn experimentally. It is not easy to teach it to another, because it is not a mere mental or intellectual operation. Some 27 or 28 years ago I passed through a great exercise of soul as to how I could know the Lord’s will to go here or go there. I spoke of it to J.N.D. once when I met him at Alton, Illinois. The answer I got was, “The secret of the LORD is with them that fear Him.” I never forgot it. And I have found since that when I could get no light, there was some cause — something in my state or something that hindered full communion. Often there has been more or less misgiving as to whether I had His mind; but generally I have found that when any step was taken in His fear, sooner or later it became manifest that He had guided. Sometimes it is “bit and bridle” — some restraint — some hindrance — but this is where mere nature is working, or will, and the eye is not clear. And it is a mercy to be restrained rather than to have our own way.

The simple, normal thing is, “I will guide thee with Mine eye.” Psalm 32. God’s Word gives us the great principles. God’s Spirit forms our hearts in these principles; and the little details fall into line with them. We exercise our judgment; but it is the judgment of a “sound mind”; that is, a mind formed in its workings by the Word of God. Then “I have set the LORD always before Me.” This Object forms and governs the motives. It is akin to “the fear of the LORD.” He gets His rightful place in the soul, and He forms our thoughts and desires, and we act for Him....