# Psalms - Commentaries by John Thomas Mawson

Scripture Truth: Volume 1, "Who Will Show Us Any Good?"

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Arthur Cutting

“There be many that say, Who will show us any good?” (Psa. 4:6).

That is the complaint of thoroughly distressed and depressed souls. They are looking within, and they are disappointed: they are looking round, and they are distressed whichever way they look: whether within or without they see change and decay, failure and breakdown: evil seems to predominate; and then the cry is rung from their depressed and oppressed heart, “Who will show us any good?”

Now we know that discouragement does not come from God. God is the God of encouragement. It is the devil who brings in discouragement. He wants the hands of God’s people to hang down, and their knees to become enfeebled so that they may give up the good fight of faith, and grow weary of their pilgrim path.

The Old Testament is full of incidents that prove that God is against everything that brings about discouragement. When the children of Israel got to the border of the land of Canaan they sent forth spies, who came back with the report that there were cities walled to heaven, and giants in the country; and they said “We were in their sight as grasshoppers.” They said in effect, “We are no match for them, we cannot fight them;” and so they disheartened the people. But the men of faith, who are always the men for the crisis, said: “It shall be done, and the whole thing rests upon this, whether the Lord has pleasure in us: all hangs upon His good pleasure in us, not upon our prowess or our strength.”

When Gideon went to do battle with the Midianites, God gave instructions to him that every man that was a coward must go home. Why? Because cowardice is infectious: so Gideon put the test to them, and twenty-two thousand of them went home. Gideon was well rid of them, they would have spelled defeat for his whole army. “Have with your faith courage” (2 Pet. 1:5, lit.), Now turn to the Book of Job, chapter 22 verse 21. Here we get a beautiful answer to the question “Who will show us any good?” It says, “Acquaint now thyself with Him” that is, with God. The people who get the good, are they who bring God in. They get right with God. If we are to be helpers of each other’s faith in the great conflict in these closing days of the Church’s history, it will only be as we are able to minister encouragement to each other, and we can only do that as we bring God in.

Peace of heart and mind must follow true acquaintance with God, so the Scripture goes on to say, “And be at peace, thereby good shall come unto thee.... If thou return to the Almighty thou shalt be built up.... Then shalt thou lay up gold as (marg.” on”) dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks. “To me, that means you take the best you possess and put it down in the dust. All your own righteousness, all that you have prided yourself in, must go down into the place of death. And what then?” The Almighty shall be thy defense, and thou shalt have plenty of silver “(verse 25). The Almighty shall be your precious all. You drop your own self-righteousness, and you get the righteousness of God.

“Thou shalt make thy prayer unto Him, and He shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows “(verse 27). If we want deliverance from all that holds us in bondage, it is by bowing down in the dust as far as we ourselves are concerned, and finding all our help and strength in God, and deliverance comes in that way. Then, knowing the delivering power of God, we shall be able to help others, and to say to those who are cast down,” Cheer up “: for the Scripture proceeds, “When men are cast down, then thou shall say, There is lifting up, and he shall save the humble person.”

If we find ourselves under the chastening rod of God because of failure, we must not lose sight of the hand that uses the rod. Remember that when the husbandman uses his knife on the tree, it is never nearer, or of greater interest to him, than at that moment.

“The Father’s hand will never cause His child a needless tear.” But He would have us to partake of His holiness, hence the chastening; and it is a good thing to become acquainted with the loving thoughts of His heart in regard to this. Then we shall strengthen the feeble knees, and lift up the hands that hang down, and make straight the paths for our feet, in consideration for others, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way. What consideration it begets for others if we get right with God ourselves!

May the Lord help us to be helpers of one another’s joy, and not to be a source of discouragement one to the other.

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Symphony

Our Lord taught a great lesson in Matthew 18:19. He said: “If two of you shall agree on earth (symphonize) as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven.” The agreement referred to is not that of a mere human covenant, or even of sympathy: it is symphony. Symphony is agreement of sounds in a musical chord, and depends upon fixed laws of harmony. It cannot be secured by any arbitrary arrangement. One cannot lay his fingers accidentally or carelessly upon the keys of a musical instrument and produce symphony of sounds. Such touch may evoke only intolerable discord, unless regulated by a knowledge of the principles of harmony. Nay, there is even a deeper necessity — namely, that the keys touched shall themselves be in tune with the whole instrument.

Two conditions then are needful: first, that a skilful hand shall put the whole instrument in tune; and then that an equally skilful hand shall touch keys which are capable of producing together what is called “a true chord.”

It is inconceivable that our Lord used such a word as this by any accident. This language evinces divine design. He is teaching a great lesson on the mystery of prayer, which likewise demands two conditions: first, that the praying soul shall be in harmony with God Himself, and then that those who unite in prayer shall, because of such unity with Him, be in harmony with each other.

There must be, therefore, back of all prevailing supplication and intercession, One who, with infinite skill, tunes the keys into accord with His own ear, and then touches them like a master musician, so that they respond together to His will and give forth the chord which is in His mind.

Revival of Prayer. A. T. Pierson.

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The Style of Scripture

The difference between the Scripture style and the style of human writings is the same as between the work of God in creation and a work of man in art. It is the difference between a rose out of a garden and a rose made of wax — the work of art may be more perfect and faultless than the living flower, in which there may be some irregularity and flaw. Yet when we see the real rose, we exclaim, “How beautiful! How fragrant!” When we see the artist’s work we say, “How clever!”

A. Saphir.

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