

Who will show us some good?

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Date: 08 November 2015

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[0 : 00] Now with the Lord's help it is turn to consider words we have in the portion of scripture we read together. Particularly in Psalm number 4 and from verse 6 to the end of the Psalm.

Psalm number 4, there are many who say, who will show us some good? Lift up the light of your face upon us, O Lord. You have put more joy in my heart than they have when their grain and wine abound.

In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety. We read at the beginning of the third Psalm, Psalm number 3, that it was a Psalm of David when he fled from Absalom his son.

And some are of the view that, although there isn't a specific reference to that time in David's life at the beginning of the fourth Psalm, some believe that the fourth Psalm, it was penned around the same time and in the light of the same situation.

Although it's not clear from the Psalm itself, some are of the view that that is the case. And I'm going to assume that that is the case. So David fled from Absalom's son.

[1 : 42] You may remember the account we have in the scripture of that particular time, when Absalom, one of David's sons, built up quite a following of people around himself, made himself popular with them, threw them in their allegiance after himself and away from King David.

And when a certain time came, he was ready to take the throne of his father David. And when David saw the danger he was in himself, he had to leave Jerusalem and cross over to a place called Mahanaim, which is away across the wilderness.

And he wept and mourned as he left his throne. And these evil men who accompanied David's son, Absalom, they were counselling Absalom to such an extent that he was encouraged to go all the way, as it were, with his rebellion against his father.

And one of his counsellors, a man by the name of Ahithophel, had been David's counsellor for many, many years. David sought to be counsellor by him on many occasions.

So the word of Ahithophel went a long, long way with David as his counsellor. So Ahithophel, he was along with Absalom. And there is a word in the account we have in the scripture of what David said in relation to Ahithophel's counsel to Absalom.

[3 : 46] He says that the Lord would turn the counsel of Ahithophel to foolishness. And that's what happened in the Lord's way and in the Lord's time.

David saw that the throne was his again, Absalom having been put to death and David came back and took his throne.

but there were many tears and much heartache in relation to what we have written in the third psalm here. How many are my foes, he says.

Many are rising against me. Many are saying of my soul there is no salvation for him in God. But the Lord made known to David that he was with him.

And then in verse 5 he says I lay down and slept. I woke again for the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of many thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around.

[4 : 49] See, David's focus continued to be the Lord and he sought the Lord in his time of distress and the Lord drew near him and encouraged him and strengthened him so that he was able to sleep easy although there were so many seeking his life.

And so it is still in the many difficulties and triumphs that come our way in life if our mind and focus is upon the Lord and if our trust is in him many is the storm we will weather and many is the hard situation we will come through.

Well this is the way with David himself. Now in Psalm 4 and I'm assuming that it's around the same time and he says at the very beginning answer me when I call O God of my righteousness you have given me relief when I was in distress be gracious to me and hear my prayer O name how long shall my honour be turned into shame how long will you have vain words and seek after lies and so on.

He is talking about people who are his enemies and who despise him as king and who despise the Lord whom he follows and whom he serves but he counsels them in verse 4 be angry and do not sin ponder in your hearts on your beds and be silent he's asking them to take stock of where they are think of what you're doing think of where your life is do not sin like you're sinning and he says in verse 5 offer right sacrifices and put your trust in the Lord he commands the Lord to them as the helper of those who need help and who need salvation but coming particularly to the third the last three verses of Psalm 4 and first of all I want to say a few words about what many are seeing verse 6 there are many who say who you will show us some good that's the first point and the second point is what

David is praying and he prays in verse 6 the second part lift up the light of your face upon us oh Lord that's his prayer the thirdly what David is confessing and what is he confessing in verse 7 you have put more joy in my heart than they have when their grain and wine abound that says confession that says testimony that the Lord has been so good to him in the past and finally what's David's hope and anticipation in verse 8 in peace I will both lie down and sleep for you alone oh Lord oh Lord make me dwell in safety and at these four points I'd like to just touch on for a few moments together and with you this evening what many are saying what David is praying what David is confessing and what

[8 : 30] David is hoping for firstly then there are many who say something and what do they say the many they say who will show us some good I think this is the general inquiry of the many people in the world the many whose hearts are not dedicated to the Lord whose lives are not dedicated to serving the Lord but who nevertheless want something good out of life and it doesn't really matter it's not specified what they're looking for but they say who will show us some good now the good maybe is pointed to at the end of verse 7 in the grain and the wine that is a bumper harvest that these people were looking forward to it's as if they're looking for things not spiritual but things of the world things of time and sense and they're asking anybody and everybody who will show us some good it's as if they're opening their minds to the advice and the influence of any passerby who may come along doesn't matter who it is if this person or that person commands this or that or the other thing to them they're ready to grasp it and try it out to see if it pleases them to grasp it and see if it does them some kind of good in life something pleasing to the eyes something pleasing to the senses something physical something temporal something this worldly something that will give me a buzz of some kind maybe it's a better job maybe it's more money maybe it's more acceptance with my friends maybe it's this that or the other thing a better house and so on doesn't matter what it is maybe the number of things that please people is as numerous as the number of things that are available in the world at any one time but these people are open to try anything and everything in order to get some good for themselves who will show us some good or other some good well I think they betray their allegiance by what they say in other words they show which side they are on by what they say when they say some good something or other that will please me show it to me

I'll try it out whereas the man of God in the psalm we sang a few moments ago one thing I of the Lord desire and I'll seek to obtain that all days of my life I may within God's house remain that I the beauty of the Lord behold may and admire and that I in his holy place may reverently inquire you see the difference the man of God focused on the Lord seeking the things that are eternal the things that will do the soul good for eternity seeking the blessings of the gospel and these people here they're so shallow and anything you'll do to them any scrap that pleases their fallen nature they are ready to devour because they haven't got their focus on the Lord himself I hope that is not true of you that you have a real focus in your life not on your work not even on your family primarily although the family is important and we have to do everything in our power for our family and in the interest of their well-being and welfare nevertheless there is a higher object and a higher person to whom we seek to devote ourselves and the scripture says look unto me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth for I am God and there is none else there are many who say who will show us some good there are many religions in the world so called and people try this and try that and the other thing but nothing really will do them the ultimate good except to come to the feet of Jesus and commit themselves to him remember what the Lord said of

Mary who sat at the feet of Jesus and she listened to his words and Martha came rushing in and she tried to prepare the dinner for the disciples and the Lord and she was really overcome with burdens and she spoke out of lying to the Lord Jesus do you not care that Mary my sister isn't helping me Martha Martha he said there is one thing needful and Mary has chosen that good part that shall not be taken from her you see Martha failed at that point although she was a godly woman the scripture says that the Lord loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus but at that particular point in that situation she came short but Mary shone in that she dedicated herself to listening to the Lord's words and doing what the

Lord commanded her to do that's the first thing what the many say and secondly what David prays it's a real conquest isn't it he's saying something and he's asking for something but he's asking of the one who says ask of me and I will give you ask and it shall be given you seek and you will find knock the door and it will be opened unto you lift he says up the light of your face upon us oh Lord that's what he's asking for he's asking that the light of the Lord's face be lifted up upon what does that really mean what does it really mean well it means that the Lord would show him favour and love and bring his blessing into his heart and into his life it's as if the sunshine begins to shine into his mind you know in the new testament it describes what happens when the

Lord shines into the hearts of his people God commanded the light he says to shine out of the darkness that is at the creation because God said let there be light and there was light he who commanded the light at that point to shine out of the darkness he says has shined in our hearts giving the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ isn't that a different isn't that a world away from the request of the many who say who will show us some good and this man's focus is so wholesome and godly and real and he says lift up the light of your face upon us in the prophecy of Malachi the prophet there uses a very attractive picture of the

[17 : 22] Lord Jesus Christ coming into the world and he says the son of righteousness will rise with healing in his wings as a prophecy concerning the coming Messiah the coming Christ and he likens his coming into the world to the sunrise and of course the Lord Jesus himself said I am the light of the world I am the light of the world but those who don't believe in me will come in darkness but the prayer of David here he says lift up the light of your face upon us oh Lord we know we need it even if this time is allied to the experience of David at the time of Absalom's revolt he needed the light of God's favour to shine upon him he needed the darkness to be scattered he needed the warmth of God's love and

God's fellowship you see when the sun rises it scatters not only the darkness but it scatters the cold the heat comes the warmth comes when the sun rises and when the Lord draws near he warms your heart you warm to the scriptures you warm to the Lord himself you warm to the people of God to the things that belong to the Lord the Lord's day the Lord's word you warm to the act of and the activity of prayer it's as if you are drawn to these things because the light of his face has shone upon him David's prayer and then thirdly in verse seven it's as he's giving his testimony in a way he says you have put more joy in my heart than they have when their grain and their wine abound you have put more joy in my heart he says this may be thinking back to the very beginning of this Christian life maybe as a young lad tending the sheep but I believe he was a believer when he was quite young when he wrote psalm number eight some people say that he wrote that as he was looking up into the sky at night and came for the sheep when I look up into the heavens which is I own fingers framed and to the moon and to the stars which were by the ordained what is man of those who kind to him should be thinking back to the beginnings of his leanings to the

Lord maybe he was going aside to pray part of the time he was out there looking after the sheep maybe times the night was cold but he threw near to the Lord in prayer and he soon forgot the cold because the joy of the Lord filled his heart have you ever been in that situation when you have lost track of time and lost track of circumstances around you because the Lord has thrown near joy of salvation I was telling somebody recently what the day forever Dalit Mordom at Kimloch told me once in relation to a couple of lads who went to a communion season once long ago and on the

Sabbath evening they went to one of the outlying villages where there was a service and meeting hills was so full that only one of them could get inside the meeting house and the other man stayed half in and half out in the open door and the man who went inside he was given a seat sitting on one of the steps of the pulpit but you long to see days like that again when the churches would be packed out with people anyway when the service finished the two men met and the fellow near the pulpit said well I must say I didn't get much for my soul tonight at all he was sitting right there at the pulpit and the other man said well he said I've never been so blessed in my life never been so blessed in my life and his friend looked at his back and his back was soaking wet what had happened during the service was there was heavy rain and the water coming off the roof of the meeting house was going right down the back of his neck and this man didn't know anything about it because of the joy of the Lord in his heart have you ever known anything like that well that's what the

Lord has done with David you have put more joy in my heart than they have when their grain and wine found it was said in this saying that the time of harvest was a particularly joyous time for the people because they were gathering in the grain and the wine and everything was as it were gathered in with great gladness and thankfulness to the Lord the joy of harvest was a really high point in the life of the community in Israel the joy of harvest and we should be thankful for the harvest we ourselves enjoy although we're not tilling the ground the way we used to nevertheless the harvest that's been reaped somewhere else comes to us on such a regular regular basis and we should thank the Lord every day but you see this is what he is saying he is likening the joy of knowing the Lord in his own heart to the highest joy that people ordinarily know in the community and he says

[24 : 15] I have had far more than the highest expression and feelings of joy that they've had in the harvest time because the Lord has come and he has drawn me in me with his love and he has assured me by his word and spirit that I am his that my sins are forgiven that I am a child of God that my death will be a blessed death because the souls of believers at their death are made perfect in holiness and who immediately pass into glory however much they may suffer on their deathbed the point of release comes and is instantaneous glory for the soul have you had a moment of joy as you read the scriptures have you listened to a sermon has the sermon found you out and been the source and the means of assuring you that things are well between yourself and your

God what joy that means and on the other hand if you only were a shallow this worldly joy how poor you are if the things of God mean very little to you how poor you are if the Christ of the gospel the saviour of sinners is a stranger to you oh how poor you are but if the Christ of the gospel is your friend and saviour of which you are heirs of God and joint heirs of Christ the Lord is giving us the kingdom he is making us kings and priests in his kingdom what joy the people of God enjoy this world so this is

David's testimony so far as that's concerned you he says have put more joy in my heart than they have when their grain and wine abound and fourthly David looks ahead and he looks and he says in peace I will both lie down and sleep for you alone oh Lord make me dwell in safety natural sleep is a great blessing there are some people who can't sleep knew somebody who wasn't able to sleep until five in the morning and of course that has its own detrimental effect upon a person's body and mind but this man because all things are well between himself and his

God despite the fact that he feels surrounded by enemies of various kinds Absalom and those who are with him nevertheless he says I will both lie down and sleep it's as if he's saying all is well with the Lord and my soul and whatever happens it's in his hands and my soul is safe in his hands my destiny is sure I'm safe with him and I sleep easy I sleep easy I sleep easy what about when we are growing older I in peace he says

I will both lie down and sleep people who are getting older need less sleep and I knew an old lady down in the congregation when I was much younger she's had her eternal rest long ago and I remember her telling me once that she wasn't sleeping that much and I said well you must have opportunity then to pray and she said yes I do and you know she said the prayer I have is for the generation yet to come for children yet unborn that's my prayer and when you lie down to sleep if you're not able to sleep this is a wonderful privilege and opportunity to call upon you

[29 : 34] Lord in prayer ask him to bless yourself your family your loved ones ask him to remember you and the generation to come the Lord makes us to dwell in safety when we look forward to death I mean when we see it in the distance the Bible speaks of the death of the people of God as a sleep falling falling asleep falling asleep in

Jesus and that's what this man was looking forward to it's as if in the 23rd Psalm when you wait there it's when I walk in the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil why because I'm strong no because I'm famous because I'm the king not at all because you are with me your rod and your staff they comfort me the word of God comforts him the fellowship of Christ comforts him and as he goes into that dark valley that's so scary and such a terror in itself nevertheless he says you are with me you oh lord make me dwell in safety

I think I mentioned earlier the souls of believers at their death made perfect in holiness and do immediately pass into glory and their bodies being still united to Christ rest in their graves until the resurrection you make me to heaven's safety you know united to Christ is the dust of us people even in the heart of the earth earth what better keeper of my body's dust than the almighty god what better keeper to commit my soul to than him whose hands are mighty even almighty he who gave me being in the first place he is the one who is able to keep me safely in every substance of life even in death itself dwelling in safety in the lord's keeping oh what confidence this man had in relation to the lord's power to keep and preserve him you see the same kind of confidence in the apostle paul's declaration of his own faith in second timothy chapter four when he says i have fought a good fight i have kept the faith and he says from now on i am looking forward i'm looking forward to the place and to the time when the righteous judge will give me the crown of righteousness even at the judgment day he was looking forward with great anticipation and faith and through gospel hope because he knew death was in the end he had been saved from the mouth of the lion before he didn't know what was going to happen next but many of the lord's people were torn apart by the lions in the first century but they were nevertheless in safety because none can pluck his people out of the hands of

Christ he is mighty to save even to the uttermost and he is the one who is going to bring his people safely home into his nearer presence at last PAW We are angry this evening in relation to these few verses. Are we among the many who say who will show us some good? Are we happy with the leftovers of this world? Are we happy with the well-tried, the failings of this world?

People have tried these things that you are longing for down through the centuries and they haven't fully satisfied them. Their hearts are still empty and cold after having experienced all these carnal activities and worldly pastimes and employments. People really have been left empty, having tried them all.

[35 : 38] You should follow David's example and start praying. And the prayer is lifted up to the light of your face upon us, O Lord.

That the sun of righteousness will rise in your mind and in your heart and in your soul, spreading its warming and healing influence in your mind and in your heart of life.

So that you may be able to say, well, David, you have put more joy in my heart than they have when they're green and wine about it.

That you may be able to stand at a testimony meeting or tell people, this is what the Lord has done for me. I can see the difference. I can see the difference. I was for long enough chasing shadows, but now the reality has come.

And I'm able to testify that he's given me more joy and satisfaction in my heart and life than I could ever have expected to have.

[36 : 43] And that you follow David with confidence looking forward. Whatever may come and say, I will both lie down and sleep.

For you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety. May the Lord grant us that we have these experiences for ourselves.

And as we journey through life, that our focus will continue to be on the Lord Jesus. On him who is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto him in faith.

Let us pray. Lord, O God, help us to rejoice in the gospel this evening. A gospel so free and so satisfying that all of thy people who have tasted that the Lord is good.

They long to commend thee and thy gospel to others. We pray that times of renewal and refreshing, times of revival would come among us as a people.

[38 : 05] We thank thee that Jesus Christ sits enthroned in heaven. And we pray that thy spirit will present forth into our hearts and into our lives.

We may rejoice in thee with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Bless this congregation. Bless this congregation. We thank thee for all thy people here.

We pray for thy blessing to be upon the ministry and all the other ministers in the presence. And we pray for the young minister who was newly inducted last Friday evening in the High Free Church.

That he may be anointed from on high and given to preach the word of God without fear or favour. And extend the gospel invitation to all ensemble.

Go before us now, we pray and cleanse our sins. For Jesus' sake. Amen. That he may sweat and circulation.

[39 : 22] We will conclude our worship at this time from Sin Psalms and Psalm number 4. number 4, the psalm we have been speaking from in this series. Psalm number 4, verses 4 to 8. Sing psalms.

In anger do not break God's law. Consider and be still. Present a righteous sacrifice and wait upon his will. Oh, who can show us any good? I hear so many say. O Lord, shine on us with your light. Show us your face, I pray. You filled my heart with greater joy than others may have found, as they rejoiced at harvest time, when grain and wine abound.

I will lie down and sleep in peace. My heart will rest secure. For you alone, O gracious Lord, will keep me safe and sure. These dances of Psalm 4, from sing psalms, in anger do not break God's law. Stand to sing.

In anger do not break God's law. Consider and be still. He said the righteous sacrifice And wait upon his will. He said the righteous sacrifice and wait upon his will. Oh, who can show us an amazing brew? O Lord, shall all the blue ray

Show us your face I live. You filled my heart with greater joy.

[41 : 53] Van attitudes, and shining bright light.

The Bew immune system, what will I achieve?

I will lie down and sleep in peace.

My heart will bless you. For you alone will be safe and true.

Now be the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, rest upon and abide with you all, now and forevermore. Amen.