

- 1 *To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth, A Psalm of David. Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my meditation.*
- 2 *Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray.*
- 3 *My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.*
- 4 *For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee.*
(Psalm 5)

It may be observed that prayers may be divided into two kinds: Expressed and Unexpressed. In the unexpressed prayer, we have inward groanings, deep sorrow of heart that inwardly looks up to God imploring His help and mercy. We have silent meditations reflecting on the works and goodness of God. We wonder at His mighty works, His power and His wisdom, rejoice in the beauties of His glory. We have thoughts and considerations. We reflect on His word, meditate (masticate, ruminate) that truth which has been made know to us by the Holy Scriptures or other means of communicating God's truth. The thing that makes such thoughts, meditations, or sorrows *prayers*, is that they are always engaged in the context of God the Creator and Cause and Cure of all things. They differ from those of godless men, in that such men never consider God as they reflect upon these things. To them, man, fate or chance is the cause of all things, and there is no One to pray to.

Such prayers, though not spoken, are "heard." We may not even understand them enough to articulate them. We may not even know the question, let alone the answer. Deep sorrow sometimes so assails our heart that we find it impossible to ask God for anything, for we can think of nothing that would relieve our affliction. But God understands perfectly, and will hear and answer perfectly, if the prayer is from the heart.

Expressed prayers are spoken audibly. These are put into words. They are vocalized reasonings from the mind. Sometimes these are reasonings from the God-centered mind, and will be the right kind of words, because they come from the right kind of thoughts. At other times these come from the man-centered mind and will be the wrong kind of words because they come from a heart that is wrong toward God. Often prayers take the form of crying, plaintive pleas, urgent implorings, desperate cries, weeping and mourning. These are sometimes soft, sometimes loud; the volume matters not. What matters, is where the prayer is directed.

The psalmist directs his prayer to God, *his* God, the God with Whom he is acquainted. If you would pray, you must have a God with Whom you are on speaking terms, Whose law you obey, and in Whose power you trust. He must be your *only* source of hope and strength.

How shall we, wicked sinners that we are, get on such intimate terms with a holy and pure God? Is it not through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ His Son? Surely we can never be holy enough within ourselves to stand before Him, or our own works good enough to merit His help. Yet He graciously receives and hears all who come to Him by Christ Jesus.

-C.M.