

A Lord's Day Snippet!

Biblical And Southern Studies

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504

1 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and salvation!
Come, all who hear; now to his temple draw near,
join me in glad adoration.

2 Praise to the Lord, above all things so wondrously reigning;
sheltering you under his wings, and so gently sustaining!
Have you not seen all that is needful has been
sent by his gracious ordaining?

3 Praise to the Lord, who will prosper your work and defend you;
surely his goodness and mercy shall daily attend you.
Ponder anew what the Almighty can do,
if with his love he befriends you.

4 Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!
All that has life and breath, come now with praises before him.
Let the Amen sound from his people again;
gladly forever adore him.

Joachim Neander (1650-1680)

Our God is Almighty

"Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out."

Job 37:23

The word "touching" is supplied by the translators. The sense is, when you enter the discussion of the Almighty you cannot find Him out. That is, God is Almighty (*Shaddai*). Almightyness is the Divine power to carry out His will according to His Divine nature and eternal purpose.

Although "power" is used later in our text, yet "the Almighty" as a title refers to God's power to bring about His holy will. For God to be Almighty He must be able to work out His own desire and purpose to the fullest degree. As the Almighty when He desires to save anyone, it is impossible to stop Him. "He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself" (Phil. 3:21). Everything shall be brought into subjection to Him. Isaiah put it this way, "Howl ye; for the day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty" (Isa. 13:6). And how is this power demonstrated? "Therefore shall all hands be faint, and everyman's heart shall melt: And they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames. Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel

both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it” (Isa. 13:7-9). What does the day of the LORD say? “Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall come” (Joel 1:15). Joel answered that question.

The name “Almighty” in the Hebrew is *Shaddai* which principally in its root means “breasted.” “Breasted” or “Pourer-forth,” came to mean “Almighty.” The basic picture is of a baby crying out in great hunger with the loss of its life very eminent and it cannot yet take adult food. So, the mother by her breast has a mighty power over the child to sustain its life by meeting its needs. There is a story taken from Greek Mythology which pictures a mother who lays her babe down near a cliff while she is busy with her herd. The baby, unknown to her, crawls to the edge of the cliff. When the mother notices what has happened, she is afraid to take a step lest the child should move closer to the edge and fall to its death, but she uncovers her breast, and so drew her babe back to her. It is this picture which God Himself has chosen in using this name “Almighty” (*Shaddai*).

What does this aspect of His Almightyness say? “Don’t trouble yourself, as my child you are under my care, for I shall nourish you for I am Almighty. I am the All-nourishing God.” “He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.... Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite” (Ps. 147: 3, 5).

This Divine Almightyness is pictured by the breast which presents His bountifulness, self-sacrificial giving, loving nature, and the pouring out of Himself for others. Thus, our Almighty God can quiet those who are restless as the breast quiets the babe; He nourishes and strengthens His own as the mother’s breast nourishes her babe. He says, I am ... the Almighty. “... in the midst of the seven candlesticks one *like* the Son of man ... girt about the paps with a golden girdle” (Rev. 1:13). Here is pictured a likeness of feminine attire and breasts. His Almightyness is availed to us in our helplessness with this grand touch of tenderness. When Jacob was blessing Joseph he declared that he would be a fruitful bough and he would be blessed, “Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb” (Gen. 49:25). So, we see the extended meaning of Almightyness.

For those who are estranged from the Almighty, the question that should be asked is, “what can the Almighty do for them” (Job 22:17)? Of course, the answer is what can He not do. “If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles” (v. 23). Repentance of sin and a turning unto the Almighty brings with it consolation, “Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defence, and thou shalt have plenty of silver. For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and shalt lift up thy face unto God” (vv. 25-26). Those who have returned to the Lord “delight in the

Almighty.” Delight signifies contentment in the Almighty. This delight implies the soul’s satisfaction in the Lord, and a delight in the provisions the Almighty supplies.

Spurgeon noted, “Further, he that delights in God delights not only in God as He is, but in all that God does, and this is a higher attainment than some have reached. ‘It is the Lord,’ said one of old, ‘let Him do what seems Him good.’ Too many would call God to their bar, and hold a trial upon what He does with men in this life, and with the wicked in the world to come. Far other was the spirit of the apostle when he said, ‘No, but, O man, who are you that replies against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why have You made me thus?’ Concerning any event we simply ask—Has God done it? Then we bow before His decree, and say no more, for what He has done must be right and wise. When the Lord afflicts us, and hides the reason from our eyes, let us not contend with Him, but if we cannot go further, let us be silent before Him, even as was the afflicted man of God of whom we read, ‘Aaron held his peace.’ Better still will it be if we can complete our confidence, and say with Job: ‘The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord.’ He that delights in the Almighty will delight in Him even though he smarts beneath His hand, and will bless Him even when His dispensations are killing ones, as said the patriarch of Uz, ‘Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.’” Yes, Job delighted in the Almighty, do you?

Joseph Caryl noted, “He deals with us, but as a tender nurse, or mother in all His chastening. The mother strikes the child a little blow with one hand, and gives it the breast with the other.... Consider your chastening, they are the chastening of *Shaddai*, who, as a tender mother, has a breast ready to nourish, and a spoon to feed, while He chides or chastens. And if by greater afflictions, He wounds or makes you very sore, you shall not want careful dressing and assured healing.”