**Jehovah: The God of Lovingkindness**

A prophet by the name of Hanani once told Asa, king of Judah, “The eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His” (2 Chronicles 16:9). The prophet wasn’t suggesting that God was on a temporary mission to find someone to bless. He was describing one of the eternal attributes of Jehovah that is just as true today as it was 2,900 years ago.

For most of his reign, Asa was one of those whose heart belonged completely to God. Years earlier, his kingdom was threatened by an Ethiopian army twice the size of his and much better equipped. Asa turned to God for help and God strongly supported him. He made it possible for Asa’s army to route the Ethiopian forces and eliminated the threat. In more recent years however, Baasha king of Israel had set up a blockade of Jerusalem and, instead of turning to God for help, Asa made an alliance with Ben-hadad, in Damascus. Needless to say, God was not pleased. Asa had begun to place his trust in men instead of the LORD who was anxious to help.

There are some important lessons we all should learn from the words of Hanani.

**God knows what is going on.** “There is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do” (Hebrews 4:13). God is aware, not only of the things I do but the condition of my heart. If I am sincerely trying to please Him and live according to His precepts, His awareness of me is a blessing. If, on the other hand, I am intent on living according to my own wants and wishes, His scrutiny is terrifying. You see the Hebrew writer is saying that each of us will one day have to give an account of our lives to our Creator and He will have all the facts before Him.

**God is actively looking for folks to bless.** Within the Psalms, the lovingkindness of God is mentioned 122 times! Of course Jehovah is a righteous and just God who will hold the wicked accountable, but what He really wants is to bless us! But it is such a comfort to think that the God we serve is aware of our efforts and is pleased to care for us, to answer our prayers, to forgive our shortcomings and to grant us the peace of mind that accompanies our hope of eternal salvation! All of this was made possible because He loved us enough to send His Son to pay the price for our sins and make our reconciliation with Him possible!

**This promise is only for those with single-minded devotion.** In a sense, God blesses everyone (Matthew 5:45; Acts 17:25). But every spiritual blessing is in Christ (Ephesians 1:3). Those who have been baptized into Christ have been clothed with Him (Galatians 3:27), but true discipleship goes much deeper than getting wet. Jesus said that we cannot be His disciple unless we love Him more than even our families and ourselves (Luke 14:26). If we want the blessings of a benevolent God, we must all strive to share in the attitude of the apostle Paul: “This one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

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