

Devotion 17:

Our Father Rewards Those Who Seek Him

II Chronicles 1—36

“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.” Heb. 11:6

In my mind, the passage above is a perfect summary of II Chronicles. In this book God keeps His covenant with David and equips Solomon to build His temple in Jerusalem. It is in this book where we read more often than not that a king *“did what was right in the eyes of the Lord.”* (14:2; 24:2; 26:4; 29:2; 34:2) It is interesting to note that all of those kings were from the southern kingdom of Judah. And time and time again, when they would seek the Lord earnestly, He would reward them with victory, often against overwhelming odds.

This theme begins in II Chronicles 7:14, where God appears to Solomon after the dedication of the temple:

“If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

It continues in the following places:

“But in their distress they turned to the Lord, the God of Israel, and sought him, and he was found by them.” 15:4

“They sought God eagerly, and he was found by them. So the Lord gave them rest on every side.” 15:15

“Were not the Cushites and Libyans a mighty army with great numbers of chariots and horsemen? Yet when you relied on the Lord, he delivered them into your hand. For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.” 16:8-9a

“The people of Judah came together to seek help from the Lord; indeed, they came from every town in Judah to seek him.” 20:4

“(Hezekiah) sought his God and worked wholeheartedly. And so he prospered.” 31:21

In a most amazing instance, King Hezekiah of Judah invites all Israelites from both kingdoms to come to Jerusalem and celebrate the Passover. Bear in mind, that both kingdoms had waged war with each other over the years and that the northern kingdom had particularly gone astray in worshipping other gods. Nevertheless, Hezekiah prays for these children when they come to worship in the temple when they are unclean:

“But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, ‘May the Lord, who is good, pardon everyone who sets his heart on seeking God—the Lord, the God of his fathers—even if he is not clean according to the rules of the sanctuary.’ And the Lord heard Hezekiah and healed the people.”
30:18-20

There are times today when we children do not want to seek our Father’s face. Perhaps pride takes hold of us and we disagree with how He is running our little part of the universe when we don’t get our way. So we sit and pout. Or perhaps we have sinned and we shame-facedly, like Adam, hide from Him and stop praying or worshipping or reading. But II Chronicles says we have hope, even in these instances.

King Hezekiah was a pretty faithful king most of his life who did what was right in the Lord’s eyes, but just before he died, look at what happened:

“In those days Hezekiah became ill and was at the point of death. He prayed to the Lord, who answered him and gave him a miraculous sign. But Hezekiah’s heart was proud and he did not respond to the kindness shown him; therefore the Lord’s wrath was on him and on Judah and Jerusalem. Then Hezekiah repented of the pride of his heart, as did the people of Jerusalem; therefore the Lord’s wrath did not come upon them during the days of Hezekiah.” 32:24-26

And, as if one example were not enough for us, listen to what happened to Hezekiah’s son:

“The Lord spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they paid no attention. So the Lord brought against them the army commanders of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh prisoner, put a hook in his nose, bound him with bronze shackles and took him to Babylon. In his distress he sought the favor of the Lord his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers. And when he prayed to him, the Lord was moved by his entreaty and listened to his plea; so he brought him back to Jerusalem and to his kingdom.” 33:19-13

Psalm 34:10 tells us that *“those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.”* Psalm 105:4 tells us *“Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always.”* As I write this devotion, I am mindful of my oldest son with whom I have been estranged for several years. I am eager for him to seek me sometime. I want to do good for him and put aside the past and move forward. It dawns on me that if I, a human with sinful flesh, wants to

do that, then how much more does our holy Father in heaven who is purely good and whose mercy and love endure forever, want to do that for His children?

Where are you today with our Father? Are you hiding? Are you running away? He created you and determined the exact times and places where you live so that you would seek Him and find Him. (Acts 17:26-27) If this is what He wants, then you and I need not fear returning to Him, even after we have sinned. “*Our Father is good, and His love endures forever.*” (II Chron. 7:3; 20:21)