Devotion #312

**God Wants to be Gracious**

**Isaiah 30:18 (NASB)** *“Therefore the LORD longs to be gracious to you, And therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For the LORD is a God of justice; How blessed are all those who long for Him.*”

Whenever the word, “therefore” is used in a verse, it is pointing backward to something that has just been brought up. In this case, the word is pointing to what Isaiah had been telling Judah and specifically King Hezikiah.

The Assyrians, a ruthless bunch, and the most powerful nation at the time, were threatening Judah with a takeover. But instead of turning to God for their help, King Hezikiah listened to his advisors who told him to call on Egypt for support - something God has said not to do. God was their help. He was all they needed to get them through whatever situation they were in. Eventually God did just that - after Hezikiah humbled himself.

What is fascinating and wonderful at the same time is what Isaiah says in the verse for today - God desires to be gracious to His people. What news could be more wonderful? Our God delights and desires to show grace to anyone who will turn to Him. That is a far different understanding of what the world will say and even Christians at times, depending on what is going on in their lives.

Too often even God’s people look to help from anyone or anything other than God to free them from their circumstances. Whether it is a financial disaster or a health need or something they are trying to do for their children. At least in our country, most people look to doctors and lawyers and teachers and counselors, etc. when life is most challenging, looking to God only as a last resort, if at all. We are greatly blessed to have these resources, but no person should be the first in line to help us. God should be.

God said through Isaiah that until they let Him do what He wanted to help them and be gracious to them, He would wait. Our problems are often not resolved quicker than they are because we are the problem, not God. I don’t know God’s mind and what He is doing in every situation, but there is something to take away from this verse and this situation that Israel was in years ago. We should always look to God for every need first not as a last resort. I get the sense that God is figuratively on the edge of His seat, waiting to be gracious to us. But at the same time, He delays at times because He is waiting on us.

Notice what God says in the verse to conclude this message. “How blessed are all those who long for Him.” This is the summary of it all. The people who are blessed the most are those who long for Him – those whose hearts are bent on looking to Him for everything and every help, both in the good times and the bad times.

So what do you say? Is it possible God is on the edge of His seat waiting for you before He lavishes you with grace? It’s a definite possibility. The best thing you and I can do is to wake up every morning and offer our hearts and our issues to God - to make sure we are not the problem or that He is having to wait on us. He is a loving, wonderful Father who delights to help us in our times of need, but we must look to Him as our source for victory in all things. When we do, He will bless us and supply our needs.