

## The Blessing of Yahuah's Righteousness

Time after time we talk about receiving a blessing. Believers and non-believers alike desire to be blessed. And why not? A blessing by definition implies some measure of prosperity as received from the Almighty. Prosperity by definition implies a successful, flourishing, or thriving condition. In today's climate, many people assess a person's blessings in light of their material possessions. However, the blessing that Yahuah bestows upon His people has little if anything to do with material prosperity. Yahuah's blessing is one that allows the recipient to have success, flourish, and thrive in the spiritual sphere of their existence. It is Yahuah's desire to bestow a blessing upon all of His creation. However, the receipt of this blessing is contingent upon the recipient meeting certain requirements. In the book of Tehillim (Psalms) chapter 24 verses 3-5, the psalmist asks a question - *"Who does go up into the mountain of Yahuah? And who does stand in His set-apart place? He who has innocent hands and a clean heart, who did not bring his life to naught, and did not swear deceitfully. He receives a blessing from Yahuah and righteousness from the Elohim of his deliverance."*

As I was studying this text a few weeks ago, I was intrigued by the psalmist's question. The question insinuates the inherent set-apart nature of Yahuah and His dwelling place. It also insinuates the necessity of the individual desiring to enter Yahuah's presence to meet that same standard of set-apartness that emanates from Yahuah. Well, the psalmist does not leave us without the answer to the question. We are explicitly told who will be able to enter into the dwelling place of Yahuah, and thus stand in His presence. The broader requirements are innocent hands and a clean heart. The more specific requirements are a life that has not been brought to naught and not swearing deceitfully.

The innocent hands simply represent actions that are *free* from unrighteousness. Hands that are not innocent indicate the perpetration of external acts of sin. These external acts of sin include the obvious unrighteous acts such as murder, covetousness, lying, fornication, stealing, etc,... However, there are some not so obvious acts of unrighteousness that our hands can be guilty of committing. For instance, bringing a reproach against a friend, not despising a reprobate and not esteeming those who fear Yahuah are all acts of unrighteousness that can make for hands that are not innocent; and, thus prevent us from standing in Yahuah's presence and ultimately receiving a blessing from Him (Tehillim 15). In the book of Yeshayahu (Isaiah) chapter 1 verses 15-17a, Yahuah declares *"And when you spread out your hands, I hide My eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I do not hear. Your hands have become filled with blood. Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Stop doing evil. Learn to do good!"* Our actions and our interactions must be righteous in every aspect. Our daily interactions with others must also be without anger and without contention. Shaul states in the book of Timotiyos Aleph (I Timothy) chapter 2 verse 8, *"So I resolve that the men pray everywhere, lifting up hands that are set-apart, without wrath and disputing."* When we lift up our hands in prayer and in worship, we should be able to lift them unashamed. Committing external acts of unrighteousness prevents our prayers from being answered, hinders any hope of spiritual success in our lives, and ultimately condemns us to eternal separation from Yahuah.

*"Change my heart, O Yahuah. Make it ever true. Change my heart, O Yahuah.*

Make it more like you.” This little chorus should be the sentiment of the heart of every believer. The heart is the entity in which rests our desires, motives, and thoughts. Inward set-apartness or the lack thereof, is predicated upon the condition of our heart. The innocence of our hands affirms the cleanness of our hearts. So without a clean heart you cannot expect to have innocent hands. The psalmist prays to Yahuah for a clean heart. *“Create in me a clean heart, O Elohim.”* (Tehillim 51:10a) We must recognize that the a clean heart is not an inherent feature of mankind. Scripture emphatically lets us know that the heart is “desperately wicked.” We must look to Yahuah for the renovation that must be done on our heart. Yahuah will take out the heart of stone and give us a heart of flesh - a heart that can be easily entreated by His Spirit. He will give us a heart to know His instruction - a heart that is new. However, once Yahuah has given us a clean heart, it is our responsibility to keep it clean. We do that by filling our heart with the things that will make for righteous execution. The Torah of Yahuah must be in our hearts to execute His righteousness. *“The Torah of Elohim is in his (the righteous person) heart; his steps do not slide.”* (Tehillim 37: 31) So for all those individuals who think that the Torah is not applicable today, you have no hope of executing righteousness without it. Consistent study of the word is also imperative if an individual desires to walk in righteousness. The psalmist said, *“I have treasured up Your word in my heart, that I might not sin against You.”* (Tehillim 119:11) We are the responsible party for the condition of our heart. *“Watch over your heart with all diligence, for out of it are the sources of life.”* (Mishle (Proverbs) 4:23) The lack of a clean heart in the life of the believer will ultimately result in Yahuah withdrawing Himself from that individual and/or casting that individual off from His presence. Yahusha said, *“The clean in heart shall see Elohim.”* (Matthiyahu 5:8)

A life brought to naught is a life that is lived without recognizing the importance of reconciliation with Yahuah. It is the life that places the earthly elements of life above the spiritual elements. It is the life lived as Esaw versus the life lived as Ya’aqob. Yitshaq entreated Yahuah on the behalf of Ribqah because she was barren. Ribqah eventually conceived twins. *“And Yahuah said to her, “Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples shall be separated from your body. And one people shall be stronger than the other, and the older serve the younger.”* (Bereshith 25: 23) Esaw represents the carnal man and Ya’aqob the spiritual man. Esaw did not value his birthright. He did not recognize its importance. He placed his human desire for food over the birthright. Esaw’s desire for food was a temporal desire. I’m sure that Esaw would have survived beyond his encounter with Ya’aqob and been able to obtain nourishment. His birthright would benefit him beyond the moment, but Esaw despised the birthright. How many of us are living as Esaw, despising the birthright? How many of us are catering to the fleshly man instead of building up the spiritual man. If we are living as Esaw Yahuah will not welcome us into His presence. Yahuah has declared, *“And I have loved Ya’aqob, but I have hated Esaw...”* If we desire the blessing of a spiritual life that is flourishing then we must live as Ya’aqob. We must be Yisra’el in that we overcome the elder, our flesh, and live as the successful spiritual entity Yahuah requires us to be.

To swear deceptively is to give the impression of righteous character with no action. It is to affirm a position on something under certain circumstances, but then when those circumstances change the affirmed position also changes. For the individual that swears deceptively, their position changes if taking the position disadvantages them

in some way. This individual is unreliable and never follows through with what they commit to with their mouth. Furthermore, these individuals also affirm a certain position if they know that they will be held in a positive light by the individual with whom they are interacting. The affirmed position is not something these individuals hold in their own heart. It is simply the means by which they will be esteemed by others in that particular moment. It is to give the appearance of righteousness, knowing that the heart is far from Yahuah. It is to honor Yahuah in the presence of others, but to dishonor him with our private execution. It is only a matter of time before these individuals are exposed as workers of unrighteousness.

If we truly desire the blessing of spiritual success we must daily meet the requirements. We cannot ascend into the mountain of Yahuah with unclean hands and an unclean heart. We cannot dwell in His set-apart place if we live our lives to satisfy our flesh or if we are not honest in our communication and actions. It is up to us to make sure we have prepared ourselves for entrance into Yahuah's presence. That is where the blessing is - in His presence. For in His presence is where we receive His righteousness. This is the ultimate blessing for the children of Yahuah. *“Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him praise, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife prepared herself.” And to her it was given to be dressed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteousness of the set-apart ones.*” (Hazon (Revelation) 19:7-8)

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