



REFLECTIONS

June 15, 2014

The Lord said to Job: "Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct him? Let him who accuses God answer him!"

Job 40:1-2

Focused on God

Hannah's anger erupted. She could hold it back no longer. Her rival had provoked her, poked fun at her, and belittled her because she had no children. But her anger was not directed toward her rival. Hannah directed her anger toward God! He had made her barren and she pleaded for him to make her whole. "Look at your servant's misery and remember me," she bitterly cried out to God.

Most of us have walked in those shoes at some time in our life. There may have been times when we felt God had turned away and did not do us right. We wonder why he made us the way we are, with the imperfections we live with. We wonder why he would allow us to experience such pain, suffer the conditions we endure, or why relationships were broken. Many others have asked those same questions over the years.

Job winced in agony after he lost his family, his riches, and his health. His friends turned on him and badgered him to take responsibility for his condition. They accused him of provoking punishment from God for unrighteous acts. But Job held fast to his innocence and defended God. "Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him," he proclaimed. (Job 13:15) He knew God was at work in his life so there must have been an unseen motive behind it.

And then there was Joseph. His brothers despised him enough to throw him into a pit and leave him there to die. Then they chose to sell him as a slave. Later he was sent to prison for a crime he did not commit and he was forgotten there. Surely, Joseph must have wondered whether God was with him or against him, but he never lost hope.

Given a choice, all of them would have likely selected a different plan for their lives just as each of us would make a few changes to ours. But who are we to question God's plan? We can't see what God sees. His plan reaches further and wider. Today we know that Hannah's prayers were answered. "Not yet," God said before Samuel was born to become God's instrument to anoint kings. And Job? Well he was chosen to teach Satan a lesson and give us a lesson in courage too. And could Joseph have imagined that he would rise to lead a nation and provide food for the brothers who betrayed him?

God has a plan and all of us are a part of it. His plan is greater than our ability to understand and it often imposes disappointment, hardship and pain. Hannah, Job, and Joseph had it right. They might have focused solely on their own misery. Instead they stayed focused on God.

And their prayers were answered.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

www.reflectingthesavior.org