

AN ALL-SEEING EYE

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One of the hymns that we sing together speaks of “an all-seeing eye watching you.” This is an important concept for us to remember, and it is good for us to teach and admonish one another in songs, hymns, and spiritual songs on this point. It is also good for us to study and meditate upon what God says in the scriptures about His eyes, what is good in His sight, what He sees, and how He judges.

What is right in the eyes of the Lord

Habakkuk 1:13 says of God, “*Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity.*” As we shall see below, this does not mean that God is somehow incapable of seeing or knowing the evil that men do, but this certainly does speak of the righteousness of God, and how much He hates evil. This also teaches us to make sure we are on the right side of the line in terms of what God defines as good in His sight. In Luke 16:15, Jesus Christ answered Jewish leaders who justified themselves before men, but reminded them that God knew their hearts. He also went on to say that “*that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.*” It is therefore our task to find what is good in God’s sight and to walk in that light. To His people Israel, the Lord said through Moses, “*And thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of the Lord: that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest go in and possess the good land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers*” (Deut 6:18). Similar encouragement to keep the Lord’s commandments and do “that which is right in the eyes of the Lord thy God” is also found in Deuteronomy 13:17-18 and many other Old Testament passages. David, a man after God’s own heart, made this plea of God in Psalms 19:14: “*Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.*” Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the New Testament, was one who did nothing of himself but always those things that pleased the Father (John 8:28-29). Doing what is pleasing in God’s sight will enable us to have our prayers heard (1 John 3:22). This is the endpoint of our spiritual growth as described in Hebrews 13:20-21: “*Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*”

God sees and knows all

It has been a characteristic of man from the beginning to deceive himself into thinking that the Creator is ignorant of his wicked ways. After committing the first sin, Adam and Eve tried to hide themselves from the Lord (Gen 3:8). The unrighteous do not like to retain God in their knowledge (Rom 1:28). Psalms 10:11 says that the wicked say in their hearts that “*God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it.*” As the wicked say, “The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it” (Psa 94:7), God replies, “Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? *he that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know? The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity*” (Psa 94:8-11). There is no hiding from God! Zechariah 4:10 speaks of the “*eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth.*” Psalms 66:7 says

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that “his eyes behold the nations.” Proverbs 15:3 says, “*The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.*” Job understood that God’s eyes are upon the ways of the wicked (Job 24:23). God’s eyes are also searching for those who are seeking Him (Psa 14:2-3; 53:2-3), and those who seek will find (Matt 7:7). “*For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him*” (2 Chr 16:9). Like David, our goal should be to have our every thought, word, and deed to be acceptable in God’s sight (see also Col 3:17).

The judgment of God

As men try to deceive themselves into thinking that there is no God beholding what they do, they also try to deceive themselves into thinking that they will not ultimately be judged by Him according to their works. In Malachi 2:17, the people of Israel had wearied God by saying, “*Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?*” The fallacy of this thinking is exposed in Psalms 9:19-20: “*Arise, O Lord; let not man prevail: let the heathen be judged in thy sight. Put them in fear, O Lord: that the nations may know themselves to be but men.*” Proverbs 5:21-22 says, “*For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings. His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.*” God saw the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 18:20-21), and turned them into ashes, “*making them an example unto those that after should live ungodly*” (2 Pet 2:6). God saw and punished the wickedness of His people Israel (Amos 9:8-10 and many other references). The bottom line is that no one will get away with anything in the end. God is not to be mocked in this way (Gal 6:7). Ecclesiastes 12:14 says, “*For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*” Christ said, “*For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known*” (Matt 10:26). Judgment Day is coming, when God “will render to every man according to his deeds” (Rom 2:6), and “shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ” according to the gospel (Rom 2:16). Indeed, the Lord has told us that his word will be the standard of judgment for us all in the last day (John 12:48). And that is a powerful standard of judgment! Hebrews 4:12-13 says, “*For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.*” Proverbs 20:8 describes one of the great characteristics of a righteous king: “*A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment scattereth away all evil with his eyes.*” The righteous judgment of God, our King of Kings, “*must begin at the house of God*” and the righteous will scarcely be saved (1 Pet 4:17-18). Yet, “*the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; to deliver their soul from death*” (Psa 33:18-19). “*For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil*” (1 Pet 3:12; Psa 34:15). If we do what is pleasing in those all-seeing eyes of God, those same eyes will be over us and deliver us in the end!