

Beware of the Caltrops

David, the “sweet psalmist of Israel” (2 Samuel 23:1), asked the questions, “Jehovah, who shall sojourn in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, And speaketh truth in his heart; He that slandereth not with his tongue, Nor doeth evil to his friend, Nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor; In whose eyes a reprobate is despised, But who honoreth them that fear Jehovah; He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not; He that putteth not out his money to interest, Nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved” (Psalms 15).

Most people desire to obtain the favor of Jehovah: favor being friendly regard, approval. The Apostle Paul spoke of his work as one of reconciling men to God, when he said, “We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God” (2 Corinthians 5:20).

This reconciliation is necessary because man is dead through trespasses and sins, “wherein ye once walked according to the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience” (Ephesians 2:1-2).

Thus, the consequences of sin are expressly stated by Isaiah, saying, “Behold, Jehovah's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God,” (Isaiah 59:1-2). The apostle Paul indicated that, as a result of sin, man is “weak,” (Romans 5:6) i.e., without strength, ability, power, or means to come to God. While “we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly” (Ibid.). Thus, while man was in this state of weakness, “God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). Therefore, if you have a desire to obtain favor from Jehovah you must understand that it is not provided apart from His Son. Nevertheless, there are certain qualities of character that one must possess in order to dwell in Jehovah's favor, as David purposed in the fifteenth Psalm.

The tabernacle and the holy hill of Zion were places from which the Divine presence and favor of Jehovah was made known. The fifteenth Psalm begins with the question, “who shall sojourn in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?” The remainder of the Psalm answers these questions.

It is the first that we want to consider for the remainder of the reading, i.e., “He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteous-ness, and speaketh truth in his heart.”

Walking uprightly requires guidance. Jeremiah said, “it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps” (10:23). Thus, heed the Psalms, saying, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path” (119:105), that you can avoid the caltrops. ret