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God's Loving Touch

I was a premature baby. I was born at seven months and showed up early at five pounds. My parents were on vacation, so it was quite a shock to them. My mother says that my father had to travel back and forth from home to their vacation place for two months as the hospital kept me for safety reasons. My momma stayed with me at the hospital while my father had to head home for work. It was a twelve-hour drive each way, and he told her that one day, I was going to owe him for all the extra effort I cost him. They say it actually saved my life to be born early because the umbilical cord was wrapped around my neck three times. Praise God, it all worked out for me!

I've read stories of other premature babies being placed in an incubator immediately after birth for their safety. They are taken directly from their parent and placed in a safe and secure environment with no germs. It's a clear tent where you can see your child but not touch them. The doctor warns the parents that the baby cannot be in contact with the outside world, so it's okay to look but do not touch the baby.

Many of the mothers cannot take that advice. They can only think, "my baby needs to feel my love and my touch." They see the little infant that was just birthed into this cold world trapped inside of a sterile tent, alone and lost. The moms cannot stand to wait for the doctor's permission, so when the nurse isn't looking, she slips her hand under the clear tent and places her finger inside of the little hand of the baby. Just to say "you are not alone; your momma is here with you. I will never leave you baby; your momma loves you".

This is the exact same image of how our Heavenly Father treated the human race until the moment that Jesus showed up and was crucified. Until that point, God's personal presence was withheld from the Jewish people and the world. Many people misinterpret His intentions as Him being hard, but in reality, it was always about Love. I've heard it preached that the God of the Old Testament is hard, and the God of the New Testament is gentle. The truth is that God never changes. He is always love, always!

Understand that God is so holy, that death was the result of exposure to Him. There is a history of men dying just by touching the Ark of the Covenant and dying in His holy presence, but that was not Him being hard. Let's read of God's holiness in Isaiah 6:1-5.

"In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!" And the posts of the door

were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke. So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King".

In the Old Testament, there was such a vast difference between Him and us, that God had to withdraw His personal presence from men. He is omnipresent, which means He is all places at the same time, but His intimate glory He had to hold back to save us from certain death. It was like a doctor telling my mother to leave me alone safe inside of a germ-free tent. Yet, God was also like my momma, where He couldn't stand not letting us feel Him and knowing He was with us. So just as a mother would reach her finger into her newborn's little hand to reassure him that she was there, God did a similar thing by establishing the Holy of Holies as a way to still touch us until redemption had come.

It was at the cross that the very thing that separated God from man was conquered. Sin was finally defeated by Jesus, and God was now free to fellowship with us without harming us. Jesus made a way for us to truly become children of God. Hebrews 9:26 reads, *"He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."* At the death of Jesus, the price of Adam's sin was paid in full, and the very thing that caused separation from us was removed. He was now free to do what He has desired to do with us more than anything, fellowship with Him.

Look at what God did at the very moment that it was possible. *"And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split,"* Matthew 27:50-51. The veil that separated God's personal presence from us was ripped in half, and God stepped out free to fellowship with us as He always wanted. It's like the doctor removing the tent from the baby and allowing the momma to grab and hold her child close to her heart for the first time.

Has the enemy tried to tell you that you are unworthy of God's love or His fellowship? Does the devil bring up your past and failures as reasons for you to stand at a distance from your Heavenly Father? Then just remind him that He's too late, and your Father has already removed anything that could stop you from running into His presence. Yes, He loves you that much!

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