

OUR FATHER SEES

Hagar was mistreated by Abram's wife Sarai, so she ran away into the **desert**. It was near a spring that the angel of the Lord appeared to her and told her to go back to Sarai. He also gave her the word that she was going to have a son who she would call Ishamael, which means '**God hears.**' New hope arose in Hagar and she gave this name to the God who spoke to her.

'You are the God who **sees** me', for she said, I have now seen the One who **sees** me.' - Genesis 16:13

Abram would also have an encounter with God. God told him of his fruitful future and changed his name from Abram (exalted father), to Abraham (father of a multitude). However, this prophecy seemed in jeopardy when God told him to take his only son Isaac to Mount Moriah and sacrifice him. Nonetheless, Abraham obeyed and was just about to kill his beloved son, when an angel of the Lord called out to him to not lay a hand on the boy. Just at that moment he looked over to a thicket where he saw a ram caught by its horns. God had provided a lamb for the sacrifice. Abraham called that place 'Jehovah Jireh' which means 'The Lord who **sees**' or 'Jehovah's provision shall be **seen**'.

One quality of a great father is that he can see into the future and make plans to provide for his family. Who better displays this trait than our Heavenly Father? He had it all planned out. When Abraham went to sacrifice his son, God caused a ram to go there too and at just the right time, it would get its horns caught in the thicket and thus make enough noise to attract the attention of Abraham. God had provided. The word provide is a combination of two words:

PRO = Before VIDE = To See (from which we get the word video)

God is the ultimate planner. Before he created man, he fully furnished planet earth and its surrounding environment for man's survival, comfort and enjoyment. There was plenty of food, oxygen, water, sunshine, beauty etc. Climate alarmists over the past decades have warned of a global ice age, then changed it to global warming. Now they say that we have only one more decade to save the earth due to climate change. The earth is not as fragile as they surmise. God created this earth to withstand many changes and He has made a promise about its continuity.

As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease. - Genesis 8:22

All of history is like one big movie which God has already seen. He knows the end from the beginning. This present world will one day be burned up when God's final judgment takes place.

*..... the present heavens and earth are **reserved for fire**, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. The day will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be **destroyed by fire**, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed this way, what kind of people ought you*

*to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by **fire** and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. - 2 Peter 3:7, 10-13 NIV*

God's ultimate plans and redemptive purposes will be carried out, but this does not mean that everything in history that happens is his will. That is why we pray..... *thy kingdom come*. God seeks men and women who will be partners and participants in his divine purposes. We are meant to be God's co-workers and prayer agents on this earth - 1 Corinthians 3:9, Jeremiah 33:3.

Someone has once said: *Without God we cannot. Without man God will not.*

I had worked with a church in London, England for a few years and was returning back there to continue my mission work among Indians after a visit back to the USA. It was late afternoon when I arrived at Heathrow airport and took the 15 minute bus ride to the suburb of Southall, otherwise known as 'little India'. When I arrived at the church, I realized that I had not even made plans as to where I was going to live when I arrived! I grabbed my suitcase and went out on the sidewalk in front of the church. Soon after I did so, I heard a familiar voice call my name from across the street. It was Sandhu, an Indian friend of mine who was a Sikh by religion. I had spent many hours in his home in order to share the love and truth of Jesus through word and example.

As I stood on the sidewalk with my suitcase, Sandhu called out to me: 'John, where are you staying? I responded: 'I don't know.'. He then said that I could come to stay with him and his family (he had a wife and two young children). I would stay with Sandhu for a couple of weeks and then found a place to stay through the church. It was not long after that when I discovered a scripture that even now means a lot to me. It reveals God as a Father who sees and cares about his people.

The Lord your God, who is going before you, will fight for you, as He did in Egypt, before your very eyes, and in the desert. There you saw how the Lord your God carried you, as a father carries his son, all the way you went until you reached this place. In spite of this, you did not trust in the Lord your God, who went ahead of you on your journey, in the fire by night and the cloud by day, to search out places for you to camp, and to show you the way you should go.
- Deuteronomy 1:30-33 NIV

There are times in our life when we feel like we are in a desert and all alone. Even God seems far away at times. We need to remind ourselves and others that God has not forgotten about us. There are so many examples in the Bible and in history of God's faithfulness to look after His people and even those who will become His people in the future.

As believers in Jesus, we have access to God our Father as citizens in His kingdom and members in his **household** - Ephesians 2:18-19. God has told us that if anyone does not provide for those of his **household**, he is worse than an infidel - 1 Timothy 5:8. Does God practice what He preaches? Yes, for it is impossible for God to lie - Hebrews 6:18. We can trust Him!

At times I have taken time to think of how my earthly father took care of me and how I felt secure as a son in his household. How much more should I think such thoughts about my heavenly Father. Take time to recall and thank God for the the times He has displayed His faithfulness to you in times of need. You might even want to write them down in a notebook. Thank Him for going ahead of you, for He is our Father who sees before and is our provider. He is Jehovah Jireh.

- John Beckerink