

The God Of All Comfort

"the Lord has heard of your misery"

Genesis 16:11

Hagar, to whom this word was spoken had a miserable situation that threatened her very life and that of her unborn child. She had been severely mistreated and she fled into the desert. The Angel of the Lord came to her and spoke these wonderful words.

In Genesis 16:13 we clearly see that this Angel is God Himself. Many who comment on this scene believe it was an incarnation of Jesus Christ. I agree.

When Hagar has received the encouraging words from the Angel she named Him and said, "You are the God Who sees me."

There can be tremendous comfort in our misery in the mere fact that God sees us. Hagar was told what God would do for her in her suffering and the knowledge helped. The fact is that sometimes the Lord does not reveal to us the reasons for our sorrow, nor the future prospects we have down the road.

As long as it is Jesus who sees us, the One who raised the dead, Who healed the sick, Who spoke and the storms subsided, then we can draw comfort from this truth. When Jesus walked among us He partook of all the different kinds of sorrow we face in life. His family rejected Him, His own people

the Jews rejected Him, and the Gentiles through Pilate also rejected Him. He felt also great physical pain, being flogged and beaten with fists. Then He was abandoned by His heavenly Father when on the cross. He was properly titled a Man of Sorrows.

We have a similar story to Hagar's in Mark 6:45-52. Here Jesus commanded the disciples to get into a boat and cross over the Sea of Galilee. He, however, did not go with them but went up a mountain alone to pray. The sea was about 4 miles across, but during the night a storm came up and the disciples were in danger of swamping and losing their lives.

An interesting feature of this story is that by obeying Jesus and starting across the sea they got into so much trouble they nearly died. Living for the Lord can be a costly affair for anyone. Many people through the years since Jesus ascended to the Father have lost their lives for the sake of living for the Lord.

We should not come to Jesus and believe on Him with the attitude we will never suffer for being a Christian. Our personal heaven does not start with faith in Christ. We have remarkable promises about our eternal future with Jesus, but for now, in this world, we may pay dearly

for following the Lord.

What is again so remarkable about this story is that when the disciples were in such trouble Jesus was watching them. It says, "He saw the disciples straining at the oars." V.48. If you are a follower of Jesus, you may be very certain whatever is happening to you that Jesus sees your situation. This can be embarrassing if we are sinning, but oh, so comforting if we are suffering while living for Him.

When Jesus walked on the water and approached the disciples He said, "Take courage, it is I. Don't be afraid." We need to calm ourselves if we are Christians and in a storm, simple because of Who is with us. Jesus did not tell them how He was going to save them, just called attention to the fact of His presence.

Can you find peace in your difficulties just because Jesus is with you? The more you read about Him in the Gospels the greater will be your trust. Faith feeds on facts and we need to know more about Jesus to address our issues in life. The Lord knows, be at peace with your situation. He sees and will act when He is ready...

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