**As A Hen Gathers Her Chicks**

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday May 9th, 2021

Text: Matthew 23:37-39; Luke 13:31-35

Intro

1. Genesis 1:26-27: God says He would create man and woman in His image and then we’re told that’s what He did!
2. He created men and women and gave them roles and characteristics, from His image, and made them into husbands and wives, and fathers and mothers to their children.
   1. Genesis 2:24: “For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.”
   2. Genesis 3:20: The glory for all living mankind didn’t go to Adam, but to his wife, Eve. She was so named “because she was the mother of all the living.”
3. While God is referred to in Scripture as Father and King, and Jesus is the King and Savior, both also refer to themselves with feminine characteristics.
   1. It makes sense that the Creator that made them male and female in His image would display the characteristics both are to pattern after!
4. Today, let’s talk about how God demonstrates His love as a mother!
5. **God is Compassionate**
6. Our God is a compassionate God
   1. Psalm 86:15: “But You, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, Slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness and truth.”
      1. NKJV: But You, O Lord, are a God full of compassion, and gracious, Longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth.
   2. Isaiah 49:15: *God compares Himself to a mother.* “Can a woman forget her nursing child And have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you.”
      1. Israel said God forgot about them (Is. 49:14). God says as a mother doesn’t forget her child so He will not forget them. Even if a mother forgets, God won’t.
7. Jesus is compassionate
   1. Many times we read in the New Testament that the Lord had compassion on the multitudes or those that were sick *(Mt. 14:14; Mk. 1:41; Lk. 7:13).*
   2. We read of one instance in particular regarding the man who had a legion of demons within him. After the demons had been cast out, the man wanted to follow Jesus.
   3. Mark 5:19: “And He did not let him, but He said to him, “Go home to your people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He had mercy on you.”
   4. He wanted to get the news out that he was compassionate (NKJV).
8. Mothers in particular reflect the spirit of compassion
   1. We don’t know much about the daughter of Pharoah that rescued Moses from the river, but we do know that it was compassion that saved him.
   2. Exodus 2:5-6 (NKJV): Then the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river. And her maidens walked along the riverside; and when she saw the ark among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it. And when she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby wept. So she had compassion (NASB: “pity”) on him, and said, “This is one of the Hebrews' children.”
   3. Were it not for the natural instinct within a mother to be compassionate, Moses might never have been saved!
9. Compassionate mothers are a blessing from God and the Creator who is compassionate and full of mercy!
10. **God is Caring**
11. Our God is a caring God
    1. I Peter 5:6-7: Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.
    2. Isaiah 66:13: *God compares Himself to a mother.* “As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you; And you will be comforted in Jerusalem.”
    3. When a child is hurt or scared, there’s no other comforting place than in his/her mother’s comforting embrace!
12. Jesus is caring
    1. We know that Jesus cared for us.
    2. Romans 5:6-8: For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
13. Mothers are naturally caring
    1. The Shunamite woman in II Kings 4:8-17 cared for God’s prophet, Elisha, and in turn was able to care for a child.
    2. II Kings 4:8-11: Now there came a day when Elisha passed over to Shunem, where there was a prominent woman, and she persuaded him to eat food. And so it was, as often as he passed by, he turned in there to eat food. She said to her husband, “Behold now, I perceive that this is a holy man of God passing by us continually. Please, let us make a little walled upper chamber and let us set a bed for him there, and a table and a chair and a lampstand; and it shall be, when he comes to us, that he can turn in there.” One day he came there and turned in to the upper chamber and rested.
    3. God blessed her for it: With a child (II Kings 4:12-17) and with the raising of her child when he died in her arms (II Kings 4:18-37). Her account is given as a woman of faith who received back her dead in Hebrews 11:35.
    4. What a great example she is to us today in caring for others! She saw a need and she had the means and opportunity to fill it and she did it!
14. Caring mothers are a blessing from God and the Creator who cares for us!
15. **God is Loving**
16. Our God is a loving God
    1. Deut. 7:7-8, 13; 10:15; Zeph. 3:17; John 3:16; Rom. 5:8
    2. Part of God’s loving nature is the desire to protect His people, and He is described as a mama eagle and a mama bear!
    3. Deut. 32:11 (vss. 3-43): In talking about how God brought Israel out of Egypt and cared for them in the wilderness Moses uses the imagery of a mother eagle. “Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, That hovers over its young, He spread His wings and caught them, He carried them on His pinions.”
    4. Hosea 13:8 (vss. 1-16): In pronouncing judgment on Israel God describes Himself like a mother bear robbed of her cubs and a lioness going after prey. “I will encounter them like a bear robbed of her cubs, And I will tear open their chests; There I will also devour them like a lioness, As a wild beast would tear them.”
17. Jesus is loving and protective
    1. Rom. 5:8; 8:35-39: He loved us enough to die for us and to keep us in His love!
    2. Jesus described Himself as a mother hen that gathers her chicks in relation to how He wanted to protect the Jews from the coming disaster of AD 70.
    3. Matthew 23:37-38 (vss. 37-39): “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!”
    4. Just as a mother hen wants to bring her brood close when trouble comes, so God wants to bring His people close in times of difficulty – This should bring us great comfort!
    5. Luke 13:34 (vss. 31-35): “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it!”
    6. Jesus has one point to make: Through His prophets, God has expressed His desire to deliver a penitent Israel from its enemies, and He is doing so again in the ministry of Jesus. Nevertheless, God’s children will reject Him once more as they nail His chosen one to a cross (Messiah/Christ means “anointed One of God”).
18. What a beautiful image this reveals about God’s nature and what God longs to give us.
    1. The first is comfort.
       1. The outstretched wings of a mother hen nurture and comfort her chicks. Under her wings is where her chicks are safe and warm, right next to her heart; where they experience her gentleness and tender compassion. It is where those who feel vulnerable and afraid are cared for.
       2. How beautiful that God has a soft, motherly side! There is something so appealing about a God who longs to comfort us like that.
    2. The second is safety.
       1. Ever snuggled into someone’s arms and felt the peace and rest that comes with knowing someone stronger than you has got your back?
       2. The heart of the mother hen is always to protect her chicks from anything that might snatch away their life. She is so committed to the lives of her chicks that she would even give up her own life to keep them safe under her wings. No questions asked. It’s who she is. It’s her nature.
       3. It’s God’s nature, too.
       4. It is no coincidence Jesus uses this image towards the end of His life. He would rather give up His own life than have us lose ours. Herod is the fox (Luke 13:32), an enemy of chicks. Jesus would go to him to die for His people (chicks, brood).
       5. The arms of Jesus Christ stretched out as He died on the cross are the wings of a mother hen, the arms God outstretched for us to come and find comfort and safety in them (Matthew 11:28-30: He offers eternal rest).
19. Mothers are loving and protective
    1. *I Kings 3:16-27:* When two women came to King Solomon each claiming to be the mother of a living child and accusing the other for switching their dead child for the living one, he commanded the child cut into two and each would get half!
    2. I Kings 3:26-27: Then the woman whose child was the living one spoke to the king, for she was deeply stirred over her son and said, “Oh, my lord, give her the living child, and by no means kill him.” But the other said, “He shall be neither mine nor yours; divide him!” Then the king said, “Give the first woman the living child, and by no means kill him. She is his mother.”
    3. He saw the loving, protective nature of the child’s real mother come out in wanting to see no harm done to him. She would prefer to see her son raised by the other woman than to see him dead!
    4. Mothers are loving and protective and want the best for their children!
20. Loving mothers are a blessing from God and the Creator who loves us and gave us the best of Heaven: Jesus Christ!

**Conclusion**

* + 1. God is described in masculine language but on rare occasions He chooses to describe Himself with feminine language that conveys the characteristics of a mother.
    2. The poem, ‘The Song of Moses,’ that closes Deuteronomy begins picturing God as Father:
       1. Deut. 32:6: “Do you thus repay the LORD, O foolish and unwise people? Is not He your Father who has bought you? He has made you and established you.”

1. But soon adds mother to the thought:
   1. Deut. 32:18: “You neglected the Rock who begot you, And forgot the God who gave you birth.”
   2. Here God is depicted as a mother who gave birth to the nation!
2. Christianity is referred to as a “new birth,” which provokes the imagery of God as a Father & a Mother of His people. First Israel (Deut. 32:6, 18) and then Christians (John 3:3-10; James 1:18)
   1. I Peter 1:3: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
   2. I John 4:7: Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.
3. This Mother’s Day as you appreciate your mother, praise God, the Creator of mothers, because He made them to be…
   1. Compassionate
   2. Caring
   3. Loving
4. Mothers reflect the highest attributes of God! Perhaps this is at least part of what God meant when he said, “Let us make man in our image…Male and female He created them!”
5. If not a Christian, you need to be! God has mercy and compassion for you too, so He has given you a way to be reconciled to Him. Heed the plan that He has for man’s salvation today!
6. If a Christian in error…repent of your sins and be renewed! God is compassionate, caring, and loving towards you.
   1. He stands ready like the Father of the prodigal son to show mercy and compassion for you this day *(Luke 15:11-32).*
   2. You can repent of the things that have separated you and come back into His loving arms!
7. Whatever your requests, let them be known by coming forward ***NOW*** while we stand and sing!