

Devotion 44:

Our Father Is Compassionate

Mark 1—16

“The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being.” Hebrews 1:3

Jesus gives us in the Gospels the best view of our Father. In Exodus 34:6, our Father told Moses that He was *“the compassionate and gracious God.”* The Gospel of Mark confirms this through Jesus:

“Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man.” 1:41

“When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd.” 6:34

“I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. If I send them home hungry, they will collapse on the way, because some of them have come a long distance.” 8:2-3

Webster’s Dictionary defines *compassion* as “sympathetic consciousness of others’ distress together with a desire to alleviate it.” In Scripture the essence of the word goes beyond feelings; it becomes action. To be compassionate is to show kindness, beneficence, or assistance to one who is suffering. Many unbelievers often wonder how there can be a good and loving God when there is so much suffering in the world. It is sad that these people miss one of the most prominent attributes of our Father. He is compassionate!

Our Father’s compassion pours through His Son in whom He is well pleased. In Mark Jesus heals Simon’s mother-in-law of fever, brings back to life a dead girl, heals a leper, heals a bleeding woman, heals a paralytic, feeds the hungry, heals a man with a shriveled hand, heals a deaf mute, heals the blind, and comforts terrified disciples by calming the wind and the waves.

Are you distressed today? Are you experiencing any suffering? Take heart.

“As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.” Psalm 103:13

“The Lord is gracious and righteous; our God is full of compassion.” Psalm 116:5

“The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.”
Psalm 145:9

“Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you; he rises to show you compassion.” Isaiah 30:18

Our ultimate distress, our ultimate suffering, of course, is our burden of sin. And praise God, He has had compassion on us! His desire ever since the Fall in the Garden of Eden has been to alleviate it. And He has done exactly that through Jesus’ death on a cross. *“By his wounds we are healed.”* (Is. 53:5b)

Like Father, like Son. Our Father is compassionate. Jesus is compassionate. And our Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, calls us to comfort those in any trouble. (II Cor. 1:3-4)

“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.”
Colossians 3:12

There is much pain and suffering in the world. Our lives are not exempt from distress. The lives of friends and family are not pain-free either. Our biggest source of trouble has been dealt with—our sinfulness. And we are waiting now for our Father to complete the full deliverance. *“He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”* (Rev. 21:4) In the meantime, by the power of His Spirit working compassion in us, we can show a troubled world that our Father is compassionate.