

The older man smiled weakly at Me. "A Rabbi," he whispered, "Is it true?"
"Yes, My friend, it is," I said. His face seemed to brighten a little and he tried to sit straighter. "Can we pray and read Scripture together," he asked. "It has been so long, that I think God may have forgotten me."

GOD KNOWS EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU

"God never forgets anyone. God knows every breath you take, every word you speak, every thought you have. To God everyone is special," I said, as the old man began to cry. "But I have been unable to pray for so long. I can't seem to read Scripture. It is only when my son Michael reads to me, that I have God's words before me, and sometimes even then, I cannot hear Him. God must be so disappointed with me. Look at my poor son, a good, good boy with a big heart, but he cannot run the farm alone.

"My daughters never have time to visit, so they have no husbands. My family and I must be a shameful sight before God. I know I will die soon, but I am sorry that I have not made good with the gifts Yahweh has given in my family and in my land. Why, even my wife died from working too hard. I hope God will forgive me," he said.

"Old man, God loves you and will forgive your mistakes in your life. God has seen throughout your life how you love Him. God has heard all of your prayers, even when you thought you were not praying, for your thoughts of God were prayers.

"God looks upon your life and sees how, through difficult and very hard times, you never stopped loving Him. How even when your son, Michael, was born crippled, you and your wife thanked God for such a wonderful gift.

"God has seen how you loved your wife, and even when she died, you thanked God for her life, for the love she brought you every day she was with you, and for the love you could give to her. God looks upon your family and sees the pure love and joy in your son's heart, the generosity and kindness in your daughters, and the humility in their father, who loves God so much he worries that he can no longer go to the synagogue. What a man of God you are and what a family of God is your family," I said, as the old man began to cry from his heart.

"Oh," Yahweh, I do love You. Oh Lord, take me soon. Lord, please bless my family so they can be safe when I am gone." His arms were raised feebly in the air offering his words to My Father. His voice trembled.

"Rabbi, please pray with us and bless my family," he said to Me. Together My disciples, Michael, his father and I began to pray, as the daughters waited in the other room.

I could see James crying in his prayers, and I felt by the prayers from his heart that My Father would help this family.

We prayed for almost two hours and as we finished the old man spoke, "Rabbi, thank You for Your prayers. My heart feels so happy now. Please bless my daughters before You go to sleep tonight."

"My friend, of course I will," I replied.

"Rabbi," he said, "how did You know so much about my life?"

"God knows all of your life," I said. He looked at me quizzically.

"But how did You know?" he asked. "What the Father knows is known by the Son," I replied. I could see he did not understand, then he said, "But who is the Son?"

"I am," I replied, leaving the room. The older daughter came to Me, saying. "He will die soon, will he not?" "Yes," I replied, "but he will die a happy death and leave behind a happy family." Both girls began crying softly. I placed My hands on their heads and said, "In the name of Yahweh, My Father, I bless you."

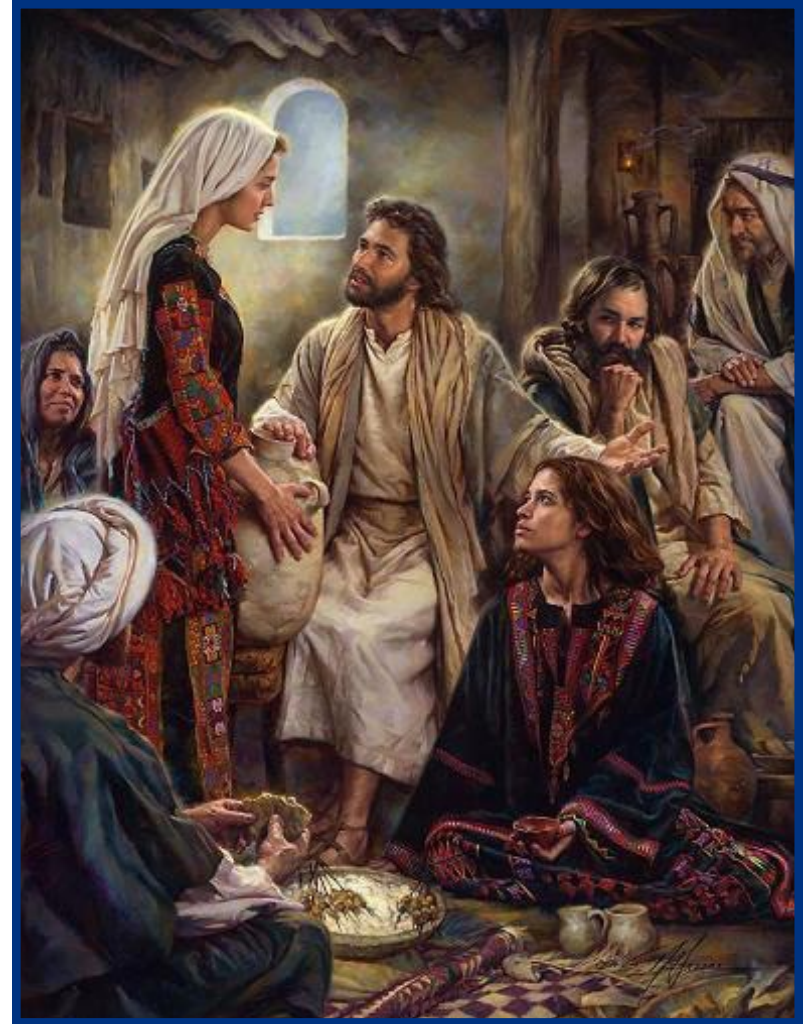
With these words a calmness filled them and they set about preparing the meal. Michael came and sat next to Me at the large table in the room. "Thank You, Rabbi Jesus, for praying with my father. I know he enjoyed it," he said. "It is always a joy to be with a man who loves God," I replied. Peter, who was sitting opposite Michael said, "I wonder, can anything be done for this good family?" "We shall see," I said. "We shall see."

THIS STORY WILL CONCLUDE IN PART II

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CAN YOU HELP US ?

PART I OF II



***... " Peter, they need our help.
We must never turn away anyone who asks for help, ... "***

CAN YOU HELP US ?

by C. Alan Ames
from *Through the Eyes of Jesus*

When I rose the next morning, I felt full of strength for the day's work ahead. I knew it would be a difficult day. My disciples ate a large morning meal. Judas seemed to have an appetite that could never be satisfied. I ate a little bread and did not need anything else. Then Judas with his mouth full of food said, "Jesus, You are not eating much, You will be hungry later," he warned.

"I have had enough," I replied, but he cut in before I could finish, spraying Me with the food from his mouth as he spoke. "You may think that now, but wait until later in the day." He put more food in his mouth and drank some water. "I always make sure I have enough." How true I thought, even at the expense of others.

WE WENT TO THE WELL

After the meal we went to a nearby well to draw some water to wash. There were two women there from a nearby farm. When we came close to them, one young woman said, "Can I help you? Here, let me get you some water." She reached out to take our containers and began to fill them for us.

"Thank you for your kindness," I said, as I took the water container back from her. "Yes, thank you," said My disciples, as each collected theirs from her.

"Where are you traveling to?" asked the other woman.

"Jerusalem," answered Peter.

"That is a long walk," said the young woman who had given us the water. "It will take you some time."

"It does not matter how long it takes," I said, "there is much we can do on the way."

The older woman looked at Me, and said, "If You are in no hurry, maybe You could come to our farm. There is work there You could do. Our father is old and our brother cannot manage by himself. He has fallen behind planting the seeds, even with our help. We would feed You and pay You," she offered.

Peter spoke up, "We would like to help, but we must go to Jerusalem."

"It would only take two or three days, maybe less with all of you," said the younger woman, pleadingly.

"I think we can stay awhile," I said, "but only for two days, no longer, for we have much to do."

"Thank You, thank You," said the two women in unison, looking very happy.

"Collect your belongings and follow us," said the older of the two. We returned to our camp. On the way Peter said, "Is this wise, Lord?"

"Peter, they need our help. We must never turn away anyone who asks for help," I answered. "Yes, Lord," said Peter, obediently. We collected our belongings and returned to the women, who were talking to each other.

Then the older said to us, "It will be good to have company. We don't see too many people on our farm because we are always busy working." "Yes," joined in the other, "we don't even go to town that often."

James came up to the younger one, who was about his age. "You look as if you work so hard. You know, sometimes it is good to rest, for if you only work, life can become a burden," he said. I had to smile, for I saw in James someone who was beginning to learn what life's real meaning was.

The young girl smiled back at James, "That is easy to say, but when you have a sick father and a crippled brother, who can only do a little, life is a burden at times." James blushed for he did not know how to answer.

"Don't be embarrassed. Life is hard you know," said the older woman, gently, as she turned to lead us to the farm.

The walk to the farm was quiet. James seemed too frightened to say anything after the last time. "Let us pray," I said, and so we all began to recite a prayer to the Father. Even the women joined in as we walked. When we finished praying, the younger woman said to James. "Are you holy men?"

"The Lord is," he said, looking at Me. "The rest of us are trying to be." "Where do you come from, then? One of the big synagogues?" she asked.

"No," said James, "We come from different places, and we visit many different synagogues. Our Lord is a rabbi," he stated, proudly. "A Rabbi," said the older woman. "Maybe He can pray with my father and brother. They have not seen a Rabbi for a long time. With father sick and my brother, Michael, crippled, it is hard for them to go to the synagogue. I know they enjoy praying. Maybe later you could all pray with them?" she asked, hopefully. "Of course we will," I said. "It will bring us great joy to pray with them."

CRIPPLED SINCE BIRTH

We arrived at the farm and Michael came to meet his sisters. He hobbled as he walked and I could see both his legs had been crippled since birth, but he had enough strength to walk.

"Sisters," he called out, "you have brought so many visitors. Welcome, welcome," he said, smiling and laughing as he spoke. What a happy heart this man had through all his pain, and what a bright soul.

"I am Michael, let me help you with your bag," he said, as he half reached, half leaned, to take it. "Thank you, Michael," I said, smiling back at him. "We have come to help you with your seeding."

"What a blessing from God you are," he said happily, "God is good. You know, *I was praying for help* and here you are. Praise the God of Israel." He almost sang as he spoke, he was so happy. Peter said, "Show us where to begin, then."

"Follow me, follow me. It is good you are so keen. There is so much to do," Michael said, as he led us towards the fields. The younger sister looked at James, and said, "Thank you," quietly. We spent all day working in the fields. During the day, the women brought us water to drink and food to eat. Michael worked so hard but could do so little because of his legs. All day he was happy and smiling, just so full of love. How I wished all men could be as Michael.

In Michael I saw a pure spirit filled with love, a love which covered the pain he felt within from the mockery and abuse of others, from feeling less than a man, and from the pain in his legs every time he moved them. Through all this, his love shone through. Then I thought of those who, with little or no suffering, could not love anyone except themselves. What an example was Michael to them, if only they would open their eyes and look. Evening was coming as we went to the house. We were washing the dirt of the work from us and feeling very tired, when Judas spoke, "See, Lord, I told You to eat more. You needed it today."

"Judas, I had plenty at the morning meal, and today there was the food the sisters brought to us. That was enough," I answered. "Yes, Lord, that was good food," said Judas, thinking of what he had eaten out in the fields. "I can't wait for the evening meal." We all looked at him in silence, until Peter threw a wet cloth at Judas, saying, "You are so greedy."

"What do you mean?" replied Judas, feeling hurt. "I just have a good appetite. There is nothing wrong with that," he said, justifying himself. "A good appetite is one thing," Andrew said, "but you are just greedy."

"That's not fair. I eat what I need to keep me going. I do a lot of work you know, more than most of you," Judas said. Thomas cut in, "Yes, counting all that money is difficult." Judas looked to Me for help, so I said, "Let us go inside and join our hosts. Try not to argue, and I know tonight Judas will only eat a little, to show he is not so greedy." Judas' chest expanded as he said, "The Lord is right, you will see. I am not greedy."

We entered the house after making sure we were cleansed of the dirt from the field. The older sister came to Me, asking, "Rabbi, will You pray with my father and brother first?" "Of course we will," I replied. "Where are they?"

She led us all into a large room with a bed in the corner. In the bed was her father propped up by some pillows. Beside the bed, leaning against it, was Michael. When he saw us he said to his father. "Father, this is Jesus. He is a Rabbi who has been helping in the fields today with His followers."