

SIR/MADAM, DOES GOD KNOW YOU?

Dear Sir/Madam, this may seem a strange question, but when I saw you, my heart's burden was whether you stood in an approved relationship with God our Maker, with whom we all have to do. We shall all stand before God one day to give an account of our lives on Earth. Some shall then say, "Lord, Lord, we have done many good deeds and miracles and preached and prophesied in your name." Will He thereby recognise and own us or sadly say, "I never knew you, depart from me, you workers of iniquity"?ⁱ

To know God, we must recognise that God is the True and Living God Who loves and cares for us.

The Psalmist contrasts the Creator of the heavens with idols of silver and gold made by human hands,

Wherefore should the heathen say, Where *is* now their God? But our God *is* in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased. Their idols *are* silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat.ⁱⁱ

God says in His Ten Commandments, "I *am* the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness *of anything* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." These commandments are also summed up as, "And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might."ⁱⁱⁱ

If your view of God has been low, may you pray for forgiveness and grace to recognise God's eternal power and Godhead, revealed to us through His created Universe. The Psalmist sings, "O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth!" Can anybody say, "I did not know that there is God"?^{iv}

To know God, we must recognise that God is absolutely holy, just and righteous

Knowing that there is God is not enough; we must experience and fellowship with God. Personal relationships are two-way, meaning we must know God personally while He acknowledges us as His blood-bought children. No man, sinful as we are, can stand in the light of God's holiness and come into His presence, for "Without holiness, no man can see the face of God." Some may venture, "What is sin?" or "I have no sin"! First, sin means "missing the mark" or falling short of God's glory. God did not set an arbitrary standard for what constitutes holiness but commanded man, made in His image, to be holy, as He is holy - God is the standard! Second, sin is a "transgression of the law", including all disobedience against Divine law. Not obeying any Commandment is a sin. The Fifth Commandment, "Honour thy father and thy mother", and the Sixth to the Tenth Commandments are summed up in, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Is there any who has not sinned and come short of the glory of God?^v

But what of all our Good Deeds?

God looks at our inner motives and intents and discovers our hearts desperately wicked: who can know it? Jesus said that out of our hearts flows sin and iniquity: evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witnesses and blasphemies, which defile us. All our good works are thus as filthy rags. No man can perfectly keep all of God's Law, given 430 years after God's confirmed promise to Abraham and His Seed by faith, to restrain men from sin by showing how exceedingly sinful sin is until the promised Messiah comes. By the deeds of the law, no flesh shall be justified under His pure and fiery gaze.^{vi}

For countless reasons above, understanding God's holiness and the basis of His judgement, we cannot save ourselves by good works, keeping religious and moral laws, or doing good deeds or penance to cleanse our sins. No one shall be able to pretend or hide our true hearts before the Great Judge.

If that is the case, what shall we do to get saved? How shall we stand right with God?

If we could live holily on our own abilities and stand right with God on our own righteousness, God would not have had to send a Saviour to interpose on our behalf and save us from our sins. But since our first forefather sinned, sin entered the world, and we all, like Adam, have continued to sin. But what all our good deeds and trying to keep the law could not do, God did, sending His Son to be born of a woman to take on human flesh, to die on the cross on our behalf and rise again on the third day. Thus God paid the penalty of sin and justified the sinner: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."^{vii}

The Bible is God's Word for all peoples and times. It tells us of one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. When Jesus was on the earth, He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." He sits today at the right hand of the Father in heaven, ever living to make intercession for those whose hearts have got right with God. He has promised to save unto the uttermost all who come to Him^{viii} and has given us this assurance through the Resurrection of Jesus, who will judge the world in righteousness. We can, through Him, also have the same Hope of Resurrection that one day too, we will be raised again with the dead in Christ, evermore to be with the Lord.^{ix}

A living relationship with God

Sir/Madam, if God is speaking to you today, do not harden your heart but take the first step in humble response of repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Ask God to forgive your sins and grant His Holy Spirit to come into your heart, fill you, and own you so you can cry out, "Abba, Father!" Even as you start to know Him as your heavenly Father in an experiential, personal way, you will stand in an approved relationship with Him, justified by the blood of His Son Jesus. You will know that you are His because **God knows you as His own**. It is our prayer that God will bless you and that you may find peace and grow in grace and the knowledge of God through Jesus Christ His Son.^x

ⁱ Matthew 7:21-23

ⁱⁱ Psalm 115:2-7

ⁱⁱⁱ Exodus 20:2-8, Deuteronomy 6:5, Mark 12:30

^{iv} Psalm 8:1-9, Romans 1:19-20

^v Exodus 20:12, Hebrews 12:14, Exodus 20:12, Leviticus 19:18, Matthew 19:19, James 2:8, Roman 3:23

^{vi} Jeremiah 17:7-10, Matthew 15:19-20, Isaiah 64:6, Galatians 3:18-25, Romans 3:20, Revelation 19:12

^{vii} John 3:16

^{viii} 1 Timothy 2:5, John 14:16, Matthew 22:44, Hebrews 7:25

^{ix} Matthew 27:53, 28:6, Mark 16:6-16, Luke 24:6-34, John 21:14, Act 1:22, 17:31, Romans 1:4, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

^x Romans 8:15, 2 Timothy 2:19, Colossians 1:9-10, 2 Peter 3:18