

DAY 3

**GOD'S
HEART FOR
ORPHANS**

HIS PRESENCE IN PAIN

SCRIPTURE FOCUS: PSALM 139:13-14

We serve a God who cares deeply for children who have been orphaned. Throughout scripture, we see God's compassion for the poor, the needy, the vulnerable, and the lonely.

God made clear his vision for his followers in the words of James 1:27: "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world."

God is the great protector and loving Father of all. He cares uniquely and passionately for each of his children, and he invites us into this holy work as an expression of true faith.

Psalm 68:5 reads, "Father of the fatherless and protector of widows is God in his holy habitation." The same God who numbers the hairs on our head intimately walks with and holds dear those who are often and easily overlooked by others. He is at work to bring goodness and life.



**"FATHER OF THE FATHERLESS
AND PROTECTOR OF WIDOWS IS
GOD IN HIS HOLY HABITATION."**

PSALM 68:5

PRAYERFUL REFLECTION

- + What types of challenges can you imagine a child growing up without a father or mother would face? What if that loss included extended family, friends, safe community, and a place to call home?
- + Millions of children around the world live outside the safety, protection, and permanency of a family every day. What are some ways we can work to impact their lives and make a lasting difference while also trusting God's promise to be "Father to the fatherless?"

Join in this prayer from Psalm 67 and "The Book of Common Prayer":

Make your ways known upon earth, O God, your saving power among all peoples. Help us to lighten the burden of anyone we can and to seek justice and peace for all.

ACTIVE REFLECTION

The role of loving caretakers is vitally important in our lives. In the ancient Near East, which is the context for much of scripture, father figures were central to society. A family without a father had no financial support, social standing, protection, or inheritance. It is in this setting of loss, insecurity, and hurt that we learn of God's heart for the fatherless.

- + Take time to think through some of the loss, insecurity, and hurt in your own life. Be honest as you consider what it means to find God's heart in each of these vulnerable spaces. If you are comfortable, ask one or two trusted mentors to talk and pray with you about your experiences and feelings, asking God to bring hope and healing where there is brokenness and gladness where there is pain.
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