

Jehovah Jireh

Well now....isn't God just amazing and faithful! He's done it again, and "parted the Red Sea" in front of us! That which looked impossible has become possible, and is happening! In the last two weeks our theme song has been "God will make a way where there seems to be no way." And He has!

We are in Los Angeles, about to depart on our journey to Singapore, Indonesia, Hong Kong and China! It has been a classic experience that proves again the faithfulness of God and illustrates His way of working.

He gave us a plan, and then required us to put it in motion without having any money. The down payment on our airline tickets came on the day when it had to come -- not one day before. The last part of the money due for the tickets arrived in the mail on the last day they could be purchased -- in fact, one hour before the travel agency closed. The final provision for other outreach expenses came only hours before I boarded the plane.

It made me remember the Lord's revelation of Himself as Jehovah Jireh, "the Lord our Provider". The account is in Genesis 22, where Abraham is about to offer Isaac as a sacrifice. Abraham had already lifted the knife and was about to plunge it into Isaac's chest when the Lord said "Stop!". Only then, at the last moment, did God show Abraham His provision, a ram caught in the thicket and ready for Abraham's use. God was not a minute early for Abraham and Isaac, nor a minute late!

The parting of the Red Sea had a similar last minute timing. Not until the Egyptian army was breathing down the neck of the Israelites did God tell Moses to strike the water with his rod. Only in the last available hours did the waters part and Israel escape. In this case the reason became very clear why God wanted to wait until the final hour to do the miracle. He wanted the Egyptian army to be really close on their trail so that they would foolishly follow Israel right into the Red Sea between the walls of water. And why? So that He could destroy them. By parting the water at the last available moment, God brought salvation to Israel and destruction to their enemies!

God evidently accomplishes many more things in answering our prayers than we know, and He seems to have mighty fine reasons for not being early in bringing those answers. One of the finest reasons is probably to purify our faith and our commitment to Him. As the hour gets late and time gets short for the answers to come, anything in our hearts such as doubt, fear or resentment cannot be hidden. It all comes up to the surface, giving wonderful opportunity for repentance and cleansing! We also learn to cling to God Himself, as well as to what He has spoken to us -- one moment at a time. God seems to use these times of being "out on a limb" to bring us to the beautiful place of simply trusting Him and being obedient.

John Matthews