

“Heavenly Hugs” Waiting for You!

By Stephen Elkins

The Book of Genesis could easily be called the “Great Book of Firsts”. For it’s there we find the first **light** to ever pierce the darkness. It’s there we read about that first sky into which the first bird spread its perfectly fashioned wings and soared. God’s wondrous creation was one gigantic burst of firsts! The first star, the first earth, the first planets...all never before seen until God spoke. But in the midst of all these “fantastic firsts” there stood the most spectacular “first on earth”. His name was Adam! Adam was God’s greatest “first”, fashioned in the image of the One who made him. Adam was the first man and given some amazing gifts. Take for example “freewill” and the capacity to love...pretty amazing! He was also gifted with emotions. And it happened on a day, maybe like Valentine’s Day, that Adam discovered he had an emotional problem. We understand from scripture that Adam suffered from a now too common emotional condition.

Adam was lonely.

Adam observed that every animal, bird and reptile created by the Maker had “someone”. Someone to love...someone to hug”. By that I mean, each one had a mate to share life with. But there sat Adam, just another **first**...the “**first**” lonely man. It might appear to the casual observer, that God had overlooked this very important emotional detail. But He was not finished with his “firsts”. Nor is he finished with you or child’s emotional condition, should you or your child be lonely right now. In fact, God set the record straight in Genesis 2:18 by saying:“ **It is not good for the man to be alone.**” Few would argue that point. Loneliness is *not* a good thing. And not that God needs any endorsement but... child psychologists agree. According to *Intelligence Quotient Development in Children* on eHow.com, they say:

“ Affection is important, so make sure your child gets plenty of hugs and kisses and hears positive and encouraging words from you.” Why? Because it is not good to be alone, and to be without affection and affirmation. So if this holiday season brings emotional stress, please consider another big **first** found in scripture: Introducing **The Heavenly HUG**. It is found first in Psalm 94. And it reads:

“God will cover you with his “feathers”. He will shelter you with his “wings”. His faithful promises are your armor and protection.” Psalm 91:4 (NLT)

Isn’t that the perfect description of a “Heavenly HUG?” God covering us with “His wings”. His wings (arms) wrap around us like “armor” to protect us. Protect us from what, you may ask? Among other things, emotional stress and loneliness. But that’s not all. God’s kind of hug gives us all a sense of affirmation. It says “I love you and I am with you.” This verse gives us the comfort and affirmation that only a hug can bring.

So if your kids are feeling some emotional stress this Valentine’s Day season, take as your example Psalm 94. Share a Hug with someone you love! Make that your new motto!. Because hugs are an important part of the affirmation kids need. Every HUG, big or small, sends a powerful message. It is a silent language of acceptance and encouragement and says in that sensitive way:

1. *You are SPECIAL to me*
2. *I want to be Special to you*
3. *You are PRECIOUS to me*
4. *You are NEEDED*
5. *You are LOVED by me, Just the Way You are*
6. *You make me HAPPY!*
7. *You are SAFE with me.*
8. *I will be your FRIEND forever!*

You can say all this to a child or family member with one simple HUG! In fact, that is why I wrote the book "STORIES THAT END WITH A HUG". When read to a child, you will be "covering" them with "your feathers". That is to say, you share all the above mentioned encouragements in that "silent language" called a HUG!

If you need a HUG and no one is around, it may be time for a "Heavenly Hug", the kind only God can give. Remember how Adam's story ends? Make no mistake, God had not overlooked Adam's emotional condition. Adam undergoes some divine anesthesiology. And with the miracle touch of God, he brings forth another "first"!...the **first** woman, Eve! Eve must have been perfect in every way, fashioned by the hand of God! She was the answer to Adam's loneliness giving him the very first HUG! But don't miss this: We are not told in scripture just how long Adam was alone. Maybe a week....perhaps a month...maybe years. We do not know. Perhaps Adam began to think his condition was *permanent* and the only hug he would ever get was from that big ole bear he had named!

Psalms 94 was written for everyone. It would include Adam and it includes you and me. God is acutely aware of our emotional needs and has a heavenly hug waiting for us. So until there is a person in your life to share a hug with, let God cover you with his "wings". He wants to wrap His arms around you and protect your heart with His promises. He wants to give you a great big Heavenly Hug that says, "I love you. I will never leave you or forsake you." He speaks in His "silent language",

"It is not good for man (a woman or a child) to be alone." Then offers His heavenly hug saying:

1. You are SPECIAL to ME: *"For we are God's masterpiece.." Ephesians 2:10*
2. I want to be special to you: *" We love Him because He first loved us." 1 John 4:19*
3. You are PRECIOUS to ME: *"You are precious in my eyes...and I love you." Isaiah 43:4 ESV*
4. You are NEEDED by ME: *"God has planned good things for us to do." Ephesians 2:10b*
5. You are LOVED by ME, JUST the WAY YOU ARE: *"Come to Me all of you who are weary..." Matthew 11:28 NLT*
6. You make ME HAPPY: *God will rejoice over you with singing." Zephaniah 3:17*
7. You are SAFE with ME. *" For You alone O Lord will keep me safe." Psalm 4:8 ESV*
8. I want to be your FRIEND forever! *"You are My friends..." John 15:14 ESV*

May this Valentine's day be filled with Heavenly Hugs from your Heavenly Father! Then perhaps, another "first" will occur. May it be the first time you say to your Heavenly Father, "I love you, Lord. Thank you for this wonderful "Heavenly Hug!"