
THE GOD WHO SEES ME

Dave Solmes

May 14, 2023

I want us to consider - The story of Hagar - found in Genesis 16 and Genesis 21 is a story of a first look.

It is difficult to appreciate the life events of Hagar, because we may never understand the societal hierarchies and roles people had within families those days. We do know Hagar was a slave, an immigrant from Egypt, most like bought and then brought as a slave, into the household of Abram and Sarai, who lived in Canaan.

As we read the chapter, we read that Sarai is barren and it was decided to give Hagar to Abram, her husband, to conceive and bare Abram and Sara a child. When Hagar becomes pregnant the relationship between Sarai and Hagar falls apart - Sara begins to despise Hagar and mistreats her. So much so that Hagar runs away - carrying Abram's child.

Genesis 16: 7 The angel of the Lord found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. 8 And he said, "Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?" "I'm running away from my mistress Sarai," she answered.

In Verse 9-12 .. The angel instructs Hagar to go back to her mistress and submit to her ... and then went on to share a prophetic promise. A story of God's future blessing and increase and favor over her life, for generations. The child she was carrying, was to be called Ishmael.

We need to know that the Sara / Hagar story is filled with layers of Jewish tradition and prophetic promise. So much so that Paul notes this in Galatians 4 - we see how all the prophetic promises coming along as we follow the lineage of Hagar and Isaac - generations upon generations. God unfolding a plan for all mankind - Jew and Gentile that started back in the desert in Genesis 16.

This message brought Hagar great relief.

In Verse 13-14 we read Hagar's response as she reflected this first look

Genesis 16:13-14 Speaking to God she says- "You are the God who sees me. I have now seen the One who sees me." 1 Verse 14 - That is why the well was called Beer Lahai Roi, it is still there, between Kadesh and Bered.

And she names him in Verse 13, El Roi—"the God who sees."

It should be noted that Hagar is the only person in the Bible that had given God a name. Up to this point, God gave himself names. He introduced himself to the children of Israel as Elohim—"the Creator," Yahweh—"the Covenant maker," El Shaddai—"the Almighty." [1]

These names are vast, majestic, out-there names for God, but Hagar needs more than a vast, majestic God out there. Hagar needed an intimate, personal God, and that day in the desert she meets this God, and says "I have now seen the God who sees me,"

Question: What name you would give God if you had the chance to name him?

- o The God who loves,
- o The God who comforts
- o The God who guides
- o The God who forgives
- o The God of the second chance?

Whatever you choose would say as much about your need as it would about the character of God, because it is through our need that we experience God in the deepest way.[2]

At some point we all share Hagar's need. A need to be assured that God sees us.

A Christian columnist once said, "You don't really understand human nature unless you know why a child on a merry-go-round will wave at his parents every time around—and why his parents will always wave back." [3]

QUESTION: Why the need to be seen? And why do we long for a God who sees us?

Perhaps the longing to be seen is a need that takes us back to our roots.
[4]

God says in Psalm 139:16: "Before I formed you I saw you. My eyes saw your unformed body." God saw us before anyone else did. He visioned us, and created us, and then he declares He watches over us and all that he created— all people and our beautiful planet.

Jeremiah 24:6 says, "My eyes will watch over them for their good." That's talking about the children of Israel. When they were in exile, they were miles from home and thinking, Maybe God doesn't know us anymore, maybe God doesn't see us anymore. They hung up their harps and they wept.

Many times in Scripture God acted or spoke in ways that were intended to remind people that He sees us.

Adam and Eve – Genesis 3:9

But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?". Of course God knew where they were, He wanted them to know what He knew.

Psalm 33:13-15 says, "The Lord looks down from heaven. He sees all the sons of men; from his dwelling place he looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth—he who fashions the hearts of them all, he who understands all their works."

Jesus in Matthew 6:6, when teaching how to pray says, "Your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."

Take a look, and you will know that we have a God that sees us.

God sees you today. understands as he looks. To be seen is to be understood and to be seen is to be encouraged. & To realize we are not forgotten is transformative.

Back to our STORY: Hagar's deliver a son, named Ishmael, but as the story goes son goes in their old age Abram and Sarai also conceive and have a child of their own, naming him Isaac.

As the story is told, Ishmael and Isaac don't get along and for the parents it all become a mess. Resulting in Hagar and Ishmael being asked to leave the home. They leave this household and this time for good. They wander to desert to live and for Ishmael to grow up. Quite an uncertain future.

As we see how this story develops Genesis 21:8-20 once again Hagar meets the God who sees once again. During hard times we read of God opening her eyes to see something she didn't realize was there, another well. This is something that God does – miraculously.

Hagar grew up in the desert because Hagar had discovered a source of life in the desert. God gave Hagar courage, and she discovered what it means to be strongly supported by God.

Encouragement: When no one else knows, and no one else seems to care, and no one else sees, and no one else helps, no one else steps us. God sees. And to be seen – is to be known.

My prayer for us today is: to know the God sees who sees us:

That's what Hagar discovered when she fled into the desert. He sees me. She says, "I have now seen the God who sees me."

Question: What does the idea of God watching over you conjure up within you?

I mean – do we always want God looking in ? What about privacy?

Most of us, when we come to God, we look back at our lives and our kind of fumbling journey towards God, and easily pinpoint times when we realized he was watching over us, even though we weren't necessarily aware or thinking about this – at the time.

A few reasons this is such good news – 5 ideas

1. **Falling and Failing** – To be seen does not mean we don't fall and fail

Matthew 10:29 "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care."

The Bible does not say, "No sparrow falls." It says, "He sees the sparrow that falls."

When we fall and fail, we are common to man. God doesn't stop everything that hurts us. We chose to have our own independence, to live with free will and that's where we now live.

When we get hurt and other people hurt. God doesn't cause hurt – nor does he often prevent hurt – we do know that He always provides the possibility of healing—even if that restorative, redemptive narrative comes many years later.

Why ?? Because God is watching over us. He loves the whole world – not wanting anyone to perish.

2. **Fatigue & When things are Delayed:**

Just because you can't see God, or sense Him working all things out it doesn't mean that God is not there. Just because you think he is not there, doesn't mean he doesn't see you. Just because I can't see him doing anything immediately does not mean he is not doing something.

2 Peter 3:8. 8 But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.

3. **Frustration and Fear:** There is so much suffering in the world, people that are suffering in our congregation – often living with circumstances that are difficult.

Guard your heart. – 2 Chronicles 16:9 For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.

4. **In times of Favor:** Zephaniah 3:17 – He will delight over you with joy. He will quiet you with His *love*. *He will dance for joy over you with singing.*

5. **Future:** The Bible tells us one day every eye will see him. For Christians the 2nd look,

Revelation 1:7 "Look, he is coming with the clouds," and "every eye will see him, even those who pierced him"; and all peoples on earth "will mourn because of him." So shall it be! Amen.

But what are we waiting for? What more does God have to do than he has done? God has nothing else he can do. "God so loved the world he sent his Son ... Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father."

Close

When we take a look Hagar's life we see it is bitter sweet. Not much is said after Genesis 20.

Genesis 20 leaves her in a desert with her son, so vulnerable. Only by God's grace would she have a future. Her first look, opened up a whole new world of relationship, peace and promise.

Let me encourage you today – TAKE A LOOK and SEE THE GOD WHO SEES YOU.

Question: What are the benefits of regularly looking at the God that is looking back at you?

Question: What steps can you take today to Look to Jesus?

Question: Is there anyone in your life that needs encouragement to look to Jesus?

[1] Hilary Price: <https://www.preachingtoday.com/sermons/sermons/2014/april/god-who-sees-me.html>

[2] Hilary Price: <https://www.preachingtoday.com/sermons/sermons/2014/april/god-who-sees-me.html>

[3] Hilary Price: <https://www.preachingtoday.com/sermons/sermons/2014/april/god-who-sees-me.html>

[4] Hilary Price: <https://www.preachingtoday.com/sermons/sermons/2014/april/god-who-sees-me.html>