

# The God Who Sees Me

On this Mother's Day, let's start by looking back to when we were all children. Children like to be watched. I bet you said to your mom, "Hey, mom, watch this! Look what I can do! Look at me!" And your mothers looked every time, no matter what goofy thing you were doing (and you know you did some goofy things). We all know what that's like as a child, wanting to be seen by our moms.

## 1. Does Anyone See Me?

Many a mom wonders if she is ever seen—because there comes a point as a mom where you begin to think you are invisible. Nicole Johnson wrote a beautiful article called, "I Am Invisible," and I am going to read a part of it:

"It all began to make sense—the blank stares, the lack of response, the way one of the kids will walk into the room while I am on the phone and ask to be taken to the store. And inside I am thinking, Can't you see? I am on the phone. Obviously not. No one can see if I am on the phone or cooking or sweeping the floor or even standing on my head in the corner because no one can see me at all. *I am invisible.*

Some days I am only a pair of hands, nothing more. 'Can you fix this? Can you tie this? Can you open this?' Some days I am not a pair of hands; I am not even a human being; I am a clock to ask, 'What time is it?' I am a satellite guide to answer, 'What number is the Disney Channel?' I am a car-to-order—'right around 5:30 please.' I was certain that these were the hands that once held books and the eyes that studied history and the mind that graduated. But now they had all disappeared into the peanut butter never to be seen again. She's going, she's going, she's gone."

I don't know if you feel like that as a mom, but we are going to look in our Bible story at a mother and child to explore a truth that is relevant for all of us. This is a story in [Genesis 16](#) about a mother who felt invisible.

**1 Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had a female Egyptian servant whose name was Hagar. 2 And Sarai said to Abram, "Behold now, the Lord has prevented me from bearing children. Go in to my servant; it may be that I shall obtain children by her." And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. 3 So, after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her servant, and gave her to Abram her husband as a wife. 4 And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress. 5 And Sarai said to Abram, "May the wrong done to me be on you! I gave my servant to your embrace, and when she saw that she had conceived, she looked on me with contempt. May the Lord judge between you and me!" 6 But Abram said to Sarai, "Behold, your servant is in your power; do to her as you please." Then Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she fled from her.**

**7 The angel of the Lord found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, the spring on the way to Shur. 8 And he said, "Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?" She said, "I am fleeing from my mistress Sarai." 9 The angel of the Lord said to her, "Return to your mistress**

***and submit to her." 10 The angel of the Lord also said to her, "I will surely multiply your offspring so that they cannot be numbered for multitude." 11 And the angel of the Lord said to her, "Behold, you are pregnant and shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, because the Lord has listened to your affliction. 12 He shall be a wild donkey of a man, his hand against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he shall dwell over against all his kinsmen."***

***13 So she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, "You are a God of seeing," for she said, "Truly here I have seen him who looks after me." 14 Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; it lies between Kadesh and Bered.***

## **2. An Unseen Mother**

In this story we meet a mother, Hagar. She is an immigrant from Egypt and has no sense of belonging. She is running away from a household where her body has been used to produce offspring for an infertile couple.

Like many daughters of Hagar, this Hagar is mistreated. She is trapped in a system where she feels as though she is invisible. She has no rights, dignity, freedom, or choice, and she has had enough. It is very hard to be a nobody with no name. She is referred to by Abram and Sarai as "the maid" or "the Egyptian." Sarai and Abram probably did not really see Hagar as a person. She was there to serve a purpose. They probably didn't even notice that she actually ran away.

It would seem to me that Hagar doesn't know what she wants. She knows what she doesn't want—she doesn't want to be treated as a non-person, as an invisible person. She doesn't realize what her greatest need is until she meets the God who meets that need. And she names him in Verse 13, *El Roi*—"the God who sees."

I wonder what name you would give God if you had the chance to name him—the God who loves, the God who comforts, the God who guides, the God who forgives, the God of the second chance? Whatever you choose would actually 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 our deepest way.

Hagar, who might feel insignificant and misunderstood, is actually a very significant person. Hagar has the longest conversation of any woman—and almost of any man—in the whole of the Old Testament with God. Hagar, the Egyptian maid, is the only person in the Bible who gives *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."

These are vast, majestic, out-there names of God, but Hagar needs more than a vast, majestic God out there, who she has probably heard about but she doesn't *know*. She needs an intimate, personal God and she meets that God. "I have now seen the God who sees me," Hagar declares.

I have thought for a long time about why that statement is so important, and I want to spend the next few minutes looking at the importance of this statement. What difference

does it make in my life to know that there is a God who sees me? What difference does that make as a mom, as a dad, as a man, as a woman, as a young person?

### 3. God Sees You

We all have a fundamental need to be seen. That's why we say, "Watch me, Mommy! Watch me, Daddy!" We don't want anyone else to watch; we actually just want it to be my mom or my dad. I don't want my friend's mom coming to watch me play Football; I want my mom coming to watch me play Football.

God says in ***Ps 139:15-16***

***My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. 16 Your eyes saw my unformed substance;***

God saw us before anyone else did.

But still, we don't feel like He sees us. Do you know why we feel like that? Because we don't actually trust God. God's eyes are loving and when we know that, we can relax in his presence. To be seen is to be significant and to be seen is to be safe. [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 anymore, maybe God doesn't see us anymore.* They hung up their harps and they wept. But ***"My eyes see them. I will watch over them."***

For those of you that have kids, you know what it's like when they are growing up and suddenly, they leave home for camp, college, or to live their own lives. You don't know what is going on with them because you can't see them anymore. Your only consolation comes in knowing that God sees them.

### 4. What It Means to be Seen

What is it like to live under the gaze of a loving heavenly Father? There is a beautiful verse in [Zephaniah 3:17](#), which says, ***Zeph 3:17***

***"he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing."***

Do you know that feeling, to be quieted by the love of God, where you just dare to sit and be loved and be seen?

***Ps 33:13-14***

***The Lord looks down from heaven; he sees all the children of man; 14 from where he sits enthroned he looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth,***

He *understands* and he understands as he *looks*.

To be seen is to be significant, it's to be safe, it's to be understood, but it's to be free—be free under the gaze of your heavenly Father.

You see, when God delights in us and we know that, we are free to dance. Free to be goofy. David danced; he danced before the Lord and it was embarrassing to the people around him. But David's dance was expression on earth of God's joy in heaven. The ark is coming back!

## 5. Seeing the God Who Sees Us

What difference does all this make in our lives? Let me put this as plainly as I can. It makes absolutely no difference unless you look up, unless you actually meet his gaze now in your life. The Bible tells us one day every eye will see him. But what are we waiting for? What more does God have to do than he has done? "God so loved the world he sent his Son ... Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father."

## Conclusion

Have you looked up? Have you fixed your eyes on Jesus, the Author and finisher of our faith? Or are your eyes still wandering around the world looking for all the things that glitter so brightly, because it is the eyes that draw us away from looking up. Whether you like it or not, whether you believe it or not, and whether you want it or not, God sees you today. He sees you with a look of love.

You can see him—not literally of course, but with eyes of faith—with eyes that look into this book and meet him, the living Word and the written Word. God knew we wouldn't be able to see him literally. [John 20:29](#): "**Blessed are those who have not seen yet believe.**"

When you see you believe; when you believe you see. Hagar had longed to be seen and she met the God who sees. I have now seen the God who sees me.