

January 10, 2021 - The God Who Sees Me

Read and consider the following, from Genesis 16:

An angel of GOD found Hagar beside a spring in the desert; it was the spring on the road to Shur. He said, "Hagar, maid of Sarai, what are you doing here?" She said, "I'm running away from Sarai, my mistress." The angel of GOD said, "Go back to your mistress. Put up with her abuse." He continued, "I'm going to give you a big family, children past counting. From this pregnancy, you'll get a son: Name him Ishmael; for GOD heard you, GOD answered you. He'll be a bucking bronco of a man, a real fighter, fighting and being fought, Always stirring up trouble, always at odds with his family." And Hagar answered GOD by name, praying to the God who spoke to her, "You're the God who sees me!"

And this, from Genesis 21:

Abraham got up early the next morning, got some food together and a canteen of water for Hagar, put them on her back and sent her away with the child. She wandered off into the desert of Beersheba. When the water was gone, she left the child under a shrub and went off, fifty yards or so. She said, "I can't watch my son die." As she sat, she broke into sobs. Meanwhile, God heard the boy crying. The angel of God called from Heaven to Hagar, "What's wrong, Hagar? Don't be afraid. God has heard the boy and knows the fix he's in. Up now; go get the boy. Hold him tight. I'm going to make him a great nation." Just then God opened her eyes. She looked. She saw a well of water. She went to it and filled her canteen and gave the boy a long, cool drink. God was on the boy's side as he grew up. He lived out in the desert and became a skilled archer.

Think about it:

1. What is your reaction to this story? How do you feel towards Hagar and Ishmael? Abraham and Sarah?
2. Can you remember a time when you felt truly seen and understood by someone else?
3. Hagar is the first person in the entire Bible ever to call God by a personal name, a name that came from her experience with God. What name would you choose based upon your experience with God?
4. What do you think about the way God cared for and blessed Ishmael, who later became a Patriarch of Islam? Does that surprise you?
5. In John 10:16, Jesus says this to his disciples: "You need to know that I have other sheep in addition to those in this pen. I need to gather and bring them, too. They'll also recognize my voice. Then it will be one flock, one Shepherd." When Jesus says that he has other sheep, he's talking about people who aren't Jewish (as his disciples were). Consider this in light of the story of Hagar and Ishmael. What do you think of this?

Journal: use the space below to journal your thoughts and questions about Hagar and Ishmael, or to offer a prayer about what's on your mind:

Extras:

Read [an article from the Huffington Post](#) that goes into more detail about how Christianity, Judaism, and Islam are connected.