

## 20260510 Eyes That Never Look Away – Ps Bijoy

### Genesis 16:1-13

“Now Sarai, Abram’s wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; so she said to Abram, “The Lord has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her.”

Abram agreed to what Sarai said. So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian slave Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife. He slept with Hagar, and she conceived.

When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress. Then Sarai said to Abram, “You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my slave in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the Lord judge between you and me.”

“Your slave is in your hands,” Abram said. “Do with her whatever you think best.” Then Sarai mistreated Hagar; so she fled from her.

The angel of the Lord found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. 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.

Then the angel of the Lord told her, “Go back to your mistress and submit to her.”<sup>10</sup> The angel added, “I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count.”

The angel of the Lord also said to her:

“You are now pregnant and you will give birth to a son. You shall name him Ishmael,<sup>[a]</sup> for the Lord has heard of your misery. He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone’s hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers.”

She gave this name to the Lord who spoke to her: “You are the God who sees me,” for she said, “I have now seen the One who sees me.”

Mother's Day is not easy for everyone. Some of you nearly didn't come this morning. And many of you are not mothers but every single one of us was once a child. And every child has said those words: "Watch me. Mum, watch me."

There's a piece written by Nicole Johnson called I'm Invisible. She writes about being a mother—some days you're only a pair of hands. Can you fix this? Can you tie this? Can you open this? Some days you're not even human, you're a clock, a satellite guide, a car service.

So whether you're the child crying watch me or the mother wondering if anyone sees you, this biblical passage speaks directly to your heart.

Lets Turn to Genesis 16. Here we meet a woman named Hagar. She is an Egyptian immigrant. A displaced person. A maidservant whose body has been used to produce a child for an infertile couple Abraham and Sarah. She has no rights, no freedom, no choice. Sarah and Abraham refer to her simply as "the maid" or "the Egyptian." To them, she is a nobody with no name. She is invisible.

And she has had enough. She runs.

"The angel of the Lord found her near a spring in the desert" and he asks her something remarkable. Not "what are you running from?" but "where have you come from, and where are you going?" God sees her. God meets her. And in that encounter with the Lord (verse 13), Hagar does something no person in the Bible has ever done before, she gives God a name - El Roi (Hebrew word for The God who sees me.)

"I have now seen the one who sees me."

Up until this moment, God had given Himself names Elohim, Yahweh, El Shaddai. Vast, majestic names. But Hagar not only saw a vast majestic God there, but she saw a God who is intimate and personal. And she finds Him.

### **What difference does it make to know that God sees you?**

When I was ten years old, I went into my room, shut the door, clicked my fingers, looked around and said "Did anybody see that?" Silence. I concluded there was no one there.

But I was wrong. Because years later I discovered Matthew 6:6 "Go into your room, close the door... and your Father who is unseen, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." I had done exactly that. And although I couldn't see Him, He had seen me all along.

**To be seen is to be significant.**

Psalm 139 says God's eyes saw our unformed bodies before we were born. He envisioned us into being. You are not an accident. You are not invisible. Before anyone else knew your name-God saw you.

**To be seen is to be safe.**

Jeremiah 24:6 "My eyes will watch over them for their good." 2 years ago, when I flew back from Singapore to Newzealand, I remember that my family waved until they couldn't see me anymore. And in my heart I heard God say "I see you." How many times have I felt I'm probably invisible and God says, "I see you."

**To be seen is to be understood.**

Psalm 33 says, God fashions the hearts of all people and understands all their works. One of the things that hurts most is being judged by someone who doesn't know your motives. God alone sees the heart and He understands you completely.

**To be seen is to be free.**

When David brought the ark back to Jerusalem, he danced before the Lord with total abandon. His wife Michal despised him. The crowds were embarrassed. But David said "I will celebrate before the Lord. I will become even more undignified than this." Why? Because David lived before an audience of one. He didn't care what the crowds thought, what his wife thought, or even what he thought of himself.

Are you free before the Lord or are you always worried about what people think?

**To be seen is to be strengthened.**

In Genesis 21, Hagar runs again. This time she and Ishmael are in the desert and the water runs out. She places her son under a bush and walks away because she cannot watch him die. "She began to sob." Have you ever come to the end of your resources as a parent? When you feel you simply cannot provide what your child needs?

God heard the boy crying. The angel called to Hagar "Do not be afraid. Lift the boy up." And then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. God doesn't always remove the desert, but He opens our eyes to the source of life within it.

**To be seen is to be loved.**

Think about Peter the night he denied Jesus three times. As the rooster crowed, Jesus was being led from one trial to another. And He walked past Peter. Luke 22:61 "The Lord turned and looked at Peter."

What did that look say? Not - I knew you'd fail. You've let me down. I'm done with you. No. I believe that look said "I knew you'd fail, Peter. I love you. And I know you still love me. We're still in business."

And here's the thing how do we know Jesus looked at Peter? Because Peter looked back. If he hadn't looked back, he would never have seen it.

Jesus never took His eyes off Peter. And He has never taken His eyes off you.

Hagar, alone in the desert, invisible to the world met the God who saw her. And it changed everything.

He sees each tear that falls. He sees the mother who nearly didn't come this morning. He sees the child who just wants someone to watch. He sees you in that hospital bed. He sees you walking down the aisle. He sees you in your most ordinary, invisible moment.

**You are not invisible to God.**

The only question this morning is this, are you looking back?

Fix your eyes on Jesus the author and finisher of your faith. Because the God who sees you is waiting for you to return His gaze.

"I have now seen the God who sees me."