

Living On A Prayer - Hagar's Prayer

Introduction

Have you ever felt completely overwhelmed by your life circumstances and wondered where God is? I can only imagine how Hagar felt. She was an Egyptian slave to Sarai, in a Hebrew household. Sarai, unable to have children, offers Hagar to her husband Abram in hopes of starting a family. (It is important to note that God never condones polygamy, having more than one wife, or slavery in scripture. This information is descriptive of cultural practices of the time rather than instruction for Christian practice. We see in the Old Testament that God desires to free his people from slavery in Egypt. Also, in Galatians 3:28, we read, "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.")

Sarai mistreats Hagar, and she flees into the desert. There, she meets an angel of the Lord who promises her that her descendants will be too numerous to count. Hagar is to give birth to a son and name him Ishmael, which means "God hears." Hagar calls God, El Roi, "the God who sees me." God "sees her" in her time of need and shows her His will for her life.

Read Your Bible

- Genesis 16:1-16

Apply God's Word to Your Life:

1. What do you notice or have questions about from Hagar's story?
2. Hagar calls God "the God who sees me." How does God see us? What does that name mean to you?
3. This story is full of broken relationships. Sarai doesn't trust in God's promise of a child, so she takes things into her own hands and offers her slave to Abram to have a family. Hagar ends up despising Sarai, who mistreats her, and Sarai gets mad at Abram for all of it. How does God respond to this dysfunction?
4. Have you experienced pain or unhealthy relationships in your family? What might be God's will or plan in that?
5. How does God see us amid suffering?
6. How does God call us to see others?

Reflecting on the text:

1. What have you learned about God?
2. What have you learned about the world?
3. What have you learned about yourself?

Pray

Lord, you are the God who sees us. We cannot pretend with you or deceive you. You know every thought and every desire of our hearts: the good and the bad. And yet, you love us. Help us to see and love ourselves and others as you do. In Jesus' name, Amen.