



Hagar and the God who Cares



WELCOME

Grab a drink and as you gather together share a story with one another

- Recall a time when you felt hard done by
- or
- Recall a situation when you saw someone in need and you responded.

WORSHIP

Create some space for you and God. It might be silent, it might be prayerful.

If you have the resources listen to some music together. (suggestion <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AUwXo0jgORI>)

Sing together if you can or perhaps take some time to be quiet

WORD

Hagar's is a story of ill treatment, hardship, abandonment all through no fault of her own. In this study you will have a chance to read her story and the ways in which she 'Encounters God.' This is a tale of two stories; a tough story of one lady and her illegitimate son, and another of a God who 'sees.'

Setting the scene - Read Gen 16:1-6

- What was Hagar's role in Sarah's life?
- Given that she conceives - How do Abraham and Sarah see Hagar? What words would you use to describe the way they see her and treat her?

Read Gen 16:7-12

Hagar is about to hear the audible voice of God.

- When Hagar speaks with God about her situation what do you think she would be asking for God to do?
- What changes do you think she would want in her life right now?

v9 must be crushing to hear. Go Back and submit to someone that is treating you badly, someone who is the very cause of your desperation.

- Have you had a time in your life when you wanted God to do something but the answer felt the opposite of your prayers?
- How did you respond both in action and word to God?
- How can we approach God when it feels as though he just doesn't care? He doesn't see it our way?

Hagar goes back to her captives, but she goes back with a prophesy of her own. Her son will not be forgotten. Her life is to care for him and make sure God's prophesy of his descendants comes to fruition.

Read Gen 16:13-16

Hagar gives God a name - 'You are the God who sees me' In English we only get half of the meaning.

What Hagar actually calls God is -'The God who sees me and the God who responds.'

God does not see Hagar and ignore her, he sees her and although he asks her to go back, he responds in her need. It would be this conversation in her life that would give her a building block of faith for what was to come.

Read Gen 20:5 - 21:16

The birth of Isaac means Hagar represents something deplorable to Sarah. The embodiment of her inability to provide Abraham with an heir but also the embodiment of her own lack of faith. God promised Abraham kids, but Sarah couldn't provide, so Hagar was her plan B for God. Turns out what she should have done was have faith that God knew what he was doing.

Hagar is homeless, in a desert, her son is dying of thirst and she places him under a bush so she cannot see his demise.

The God who SEES and the God who RESPONDS is listening.

Read the following passage to be reminded of the fact that God see us, but he is also acting for us, the best for us.

Read v17-19 , Isa 40:27-29 Eph 2:12-13 (Read the MSG if you have it)

- What do these passages tell you about God and his care for you as an individual?

WALK

God cares and responds so what should we do about it?

Hagar's story is one that mirrors God's love for his people. When they run he follows them, when they cry out he answers. But God demands a response from his kids too, in these passage he reminds us of our responsibility in his Kingdom plan.

Lk 5:30-31 & Deut 24:14 7 v17-22

Spend some time identifying people in your church, community, things that you SEE need a RESPONSE.

It might be offering to babysit for someone in the church you know that hasn't been able to get and do something for themselves.

Invite someone for a meal

Use a skill you have to offer some help in the church or community.

Be creative, split into groups if you lifegroup is a good size and be as creative as possible.

Share your ideas together and then spend time praying for one another.

Closing Prayer

To the God who sees me, To the God who knows me, To the God who loves me, draw me near.

To the God who cares for me, To the God who nurtures me, To the God who leads me, move me on.

To the God who fills me, To The God who blesses me, To the God who empowers me, give me the strength to see your ways, love your people and share the life saving gift of your Son in all I do this week. Amen

Gen 32:24-31 Next time Jacob and the God of Hurting and Healing