

The God Who Sees

Introduction. There are lots of names of God in the Old Testament, and these names give us insight into the nature and character of God. For instance, Jehovah-Jireh (“the Lord will provide,” Genesis 22:7-8); Jehovah-Rapha (“the Lord who heals,” Exodus 15:26); Jehovah-Shalom (“the Lord is peace,” Judges 6:24); Jehovah-Sabaoth (“the Lord of hosts,” 1 Samuel 1:3); and, El-Shaddai (“Almighty God,” Genesis 17:1). These are vital to our understanding of God and our faith in His listening to our prayers.

But there is a name of interest to us in Genesis 16:7-14. After the conception of Ishmael, Hagar fled from the presence of Sarai. Sometimes we are running from sin or some problem, and we need to realize that that God is there and wants to help you, but you have to face what you’re dealing with. The angel of the Lord appeared to her and said her son’s descendants would be numerous, and that he would be strong. Hagar responded by referring to God in v. 13 as El Roi, or “the God who sees,” (the only time it occurs in the Bible) because He had seen and responded to her affliction.

This is the name that assures us when we experience loneliness, discouragement, hopelessness, despair, despondency, and feeling forgotten and overlooked. Taking a cue from this unique name of God, we’re going to make some observations and applications about how God continues to see His people.

I. Does God See Me?

A. How do people view God?

1. Some view God as being unconcerned — God doesn’t care what’s going on in my life so why should I serve Him?
2. Some view God as being a figurehead — He’s in heaven and we talk about Him to use to scare our children or scare people in the church.
3. Some view God as a casual onlooker — He sees like the Levite who saw the beaten man, but He just observes.
4. Some view God as a cynical examiner — He’s keeping score and just waiting to see how you’ve messed up.

B. None of these are true. These are not the God we serve. This is not the God of the Bible, for the Bible assures us that God does see and monitor His creation — in a positive way (Psalm 33:13-15; Hebrews 4:13). He can see your inner struggles because He sees the heart (1 Samuel 16:7). We may look at people and wonder why they’re so weak, but God doesn’t see it that way. He sees what you’re going through.

II. What Does He See?

A. Let’s get this out of the way first. God sees everyone (Psalm 10:1-11:7; 34:15; Proverbs 15:3; cp. 1 Peter 3:12).

B. Specifically, what does God see?

1. He sees every barren mother (Genesis 29:32).
2. He sees every child yet to be born (Psalm 139:16).
3. He sees the sorrowing heart (Ezra 9:5-15).
4. He sees those struggling with temptation (Genesis 39:7-12).

5. He sees those grappling with anxiety (Daniel 2:17-18).
 6. He sees the mistreated, abused, and neglected:
 - a) Hagar's afflictions (Genesis 21:14-21).
 - b) Jacob's afflictions (Genesis 31:38-42).
 - c) Israel's afflictions (Exodus 2:23-25; 3:7-8).
 7. He sees those fighting with sickness (2 Corinthians 12:7-10).
- C. This does not mean that we won't experience hardships and difficulties, but it does mean that God cares and that He wants to work out something far more important for us (James 1:2-4, 12). God is able and willing, but He is not bound by time. He will answer when it is time for Him to answer. He will respond.

III. Your Salvation

- A. As far as your salvation is concerned today ...
 1. God saw the wickedness of sin.
 - a) Old Testament — idolatry (2 Kings 17:7-12).
 - b) New Testament — sexual depravity (Romans 1:24-26).
 2. God saw that a solution was needed (Genesis 3:15; 12:1-3; 49:10; 2 Samuel 7:12-13).
 3. God saw His Son die on the cross (Luke 23:44-46; Acts 2:22-23).
- B. God is waiting to see you come home (cp. Luke 15:17-20). He stands at the door and knocks, awaiting your response to His heartfelt summons (Revelation 3:20; 22:17).

Conclusion. The Lord knows how hard you struggle with loss, with your marriage, with discouragement, with loneliness, with despondency, etc. He sees and knows what you need, even before you ask for it (Matthew 6:8). Do you realize that you are not alone? He gives you a sense of purpose and direction. You don't have to wonder where you came from or where you are going. You can know, and He is making the effort to be a comfort to you. God is making the effort to save you. Will you come and be cleansed of your sins?

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