



SUCCESS

AND THE **SHAPE**

OF LIFE

Do You See Me?

Genesis 16:1-13



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Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; ² 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.

Genesis 16:1-13

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³ 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. ⁴ He slept with Hagar, and she conceived. When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress. ⁵ 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."

Genesis 16:1-13

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⁶ "Your slave is in your hands," Abram said. "Do with her whatever you think best." Then Sarai mistreated Hagar; so she fled from her. ⁷ The angel of the Lord found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. ⁸ 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. ⁹ Then the angel of the Lord told her, "Go back to your mistress and submit to her."

Genesis 16:1-13

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¹⁰ The angel added, "I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count."

¹¹ 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, for the Lord has heard of your misery. ¹² 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."

Genesis 16:1-13



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¹³ 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."

How many people, worldwide,
died due to shark attack between
2008 and 2021?



How many people, worldwide,
died due to shark attack between
2008 and 2021?

Answer: 90



How many people, worldwide,
died from taking dangerous
selfies between 2008 and 2021?



How many people, worldwide,
died from taking dangerous
selfies between 2008 and 2021?

Answer: 379



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“We all want our lives to matter, but in our celebrity-saturated culture, we’ve come to believe that our lives matter only if they are noticed. This deep longing to matter by being seen is what fuels social media. We want someone—anyone—to take notice, to care about us, to see us and like us. We’re searching for someone to tell us, ‘You matter. Your life counts.’”

(Skye Jethani)

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Hagar is a "slave."



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Hagar is "given" by Sarai and
"taken" by Abram for one specific
purpose: to create a child and
"build a family."



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Hagar is "given" by Sarai and "taken" by Abram for one specific purpose: to create a child and "build a family."

Did Sarai begin to feel forgotten by God... unseen?



“What comes naturally to us is a desire for relevance—proving my usefulness to a world that demands I justify my existence through successful endeavors... But this tends to warp human interactions into opportunities to leverage things from others. And in that sense, relevance is the antithesis of healthy relationship.”

(Pete Portal)

Our desire for relevance and importance is rooted in our desire to be seen. But, that desire can only truly be met in mutual relationship—in friendship with God and with others.

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“She felt hilariously safe, seen, and validated. We may want relevance because we want to be seen, but it is only in the most intimate of relationships that we truly can be.”



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The text says twice that Hagar began to “despise” Sarai after she became pregnant by Abram.



Sarai isn't just pointing fingers at Hagar... she's blaming Abram, too!

"You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering."



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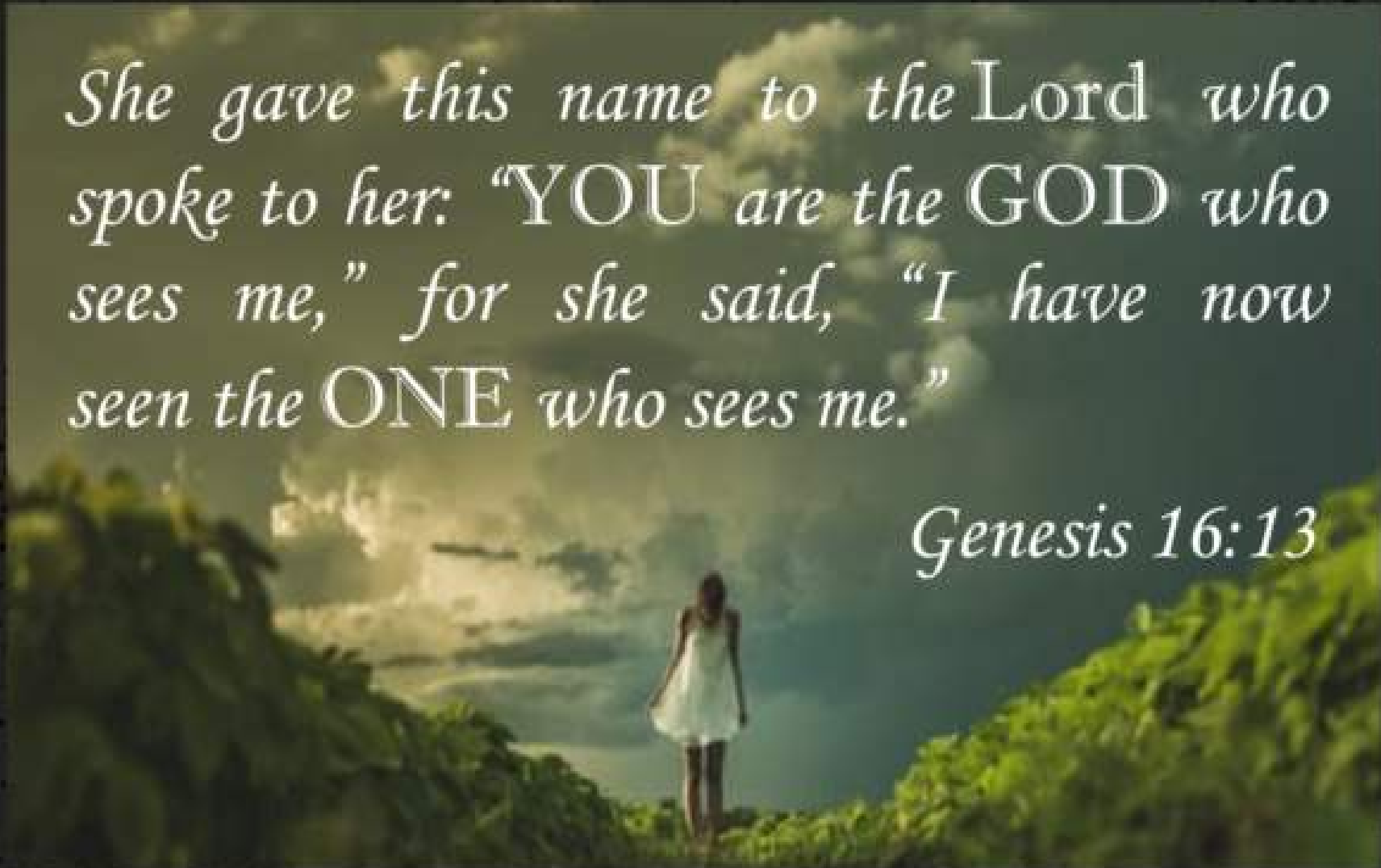
More evidence that Hagar is being used and leveraged for “relevance” instead of valued as a person: Did you notice that neither Abram nor Hagar ever says her name?

“The angel of the Lord found Hagar near a spring in the desert... And he said, “Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?” (v. 7-8)



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."

Genesis 16:13



Proverbs 3:1-4

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¹ My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart, ² for they will prolong your life many years and bring you peace and prosperity. ³ Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. ⁴ Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man.

“The angst that comes from dwelling on what others think of us and our achievements is created by a deep-seated desire for relevance. But, the important question is not: How many people take you seriously? How much are you going to accomplish? Can you show me some results? But: Are you in love with Jesus?”

(Pete Portal)

“If we want to introduce people to Jesus, and we do that through showing them that God sees them, then our greatest missional strategy may well be to *slow down*—to eliminate hurry—so that we can first see the person in front of us. Hurry doesn’t just harm me; it stops me from seeing people beyond their use to me.

Only when we slow down can we see someone. And only when we see someone can we become their friend. And only when we have become *their* friend are we truly able to introduce them to *our* friend Jesus.”

(Pete Portal)

Closing Reflections



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How deep is your desire to be seen? What is it rooted in? When was the last time you rested in the truth that God sees you?

Closing Reflections



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Have you ever been “leveraged” by someone, and felt useful but not truly valued?

Closing Reflections



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Invite the Spirit to reveal any indicators in your life that shame or blame are influencing how clearly you are seeing God or others.

Closing Reflections



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Ask God to correct your priorities as needed—from primarily seeking relevance and success to pursuing friendship with Him and other people first.



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