



SURVIVING THE UNBEARABLE

April 2019

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

I was delighted to receive a devotional from an old Living Room friend. So good it is when people from my past say hello.

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The piece expressed exactly what I've been going through for a very long time now. I have a story that caused a lot of pain. But no one was able to understand, or even believe, my experiences.

If you've gone through anything like this, you will realize how desperately our hearts long for someone to see—for someone to understand—our pain.

The story of the young handmaid Hagar reveals just how life-giving it is to be understood. Hagar was a slave girl belonging to Abram. When Abram's wife Sarai was unable to conceive, she urged Abram to conceive a child with Hagar—a familiar practice in those days. But when Hagar became pregnant, tensions flared until she was forced to flee into the wilderness to escape Sarai's abuse.

Imagine what this woman must have felt like. Pregnant and alone in this unforgiving place, Hagar came to hear from God through a heavenly messenger who said, "Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?" (vs 8)

She was relieved to hear God with her. She wasn't alone. Hagar 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."* (vs 13) Hagar had encountered Someone who truly heard and understood.

The God who understood Hagar's pain, understands yours as well. When we know his empathy our pain becomes more bearable. When we feel his compassion and love, all becomes bearable.

Look up. He's with you right now, hearing you, seeing you.

Thank you God!

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