

# THOU GOD SEEST ME



At a glance

God's ever seeing eyes watch over His children during the good times and troubled times. He sees the overall picture from beginning to end.

HAGAR AND ISHMAEL.

We keep our eyes on our children. You know that funny little thing mothers do: they point two fingers at their eyes then turn their hands and point the two fingers at their children. Interpretation: "I'm watching you. I don't want you to misbehave."

You also know the preschooler's refrain, "Look at me! Look at me!" Someone needs to watch the new trick, new achievement, or same old trick or escapade.

Mothers watch their children to protect them. You've seen the toddler who wants to explore the electric sockets or bookshelves, the first-grader in the parking lot, the busy children at the beach who need mothers to keep them in sight. "Don't go where I can't see you," a parent says.

Our Heavenly Father has His eyes on us, too. What a glorious promise! Based on the character of God Himself, we know He sees us. Even on a crowded globe, with no star power or fame of our own, God sees. Even more, He is not a casual or disinterested observer. God wants to see us, He looks for us, and He looks with love.



## THE CHARACTER OF GOD: HAGAR AND THE BACK STORY

Genesis 16 is a sad chapter in the Old Testament patriarch's life when Abraham (then Abram) stepped outside of God's plan. We meet Hagar—a slave, an Egyptian slave, a female Egyptian slave. She had no say-so in decisions made about her; if her mistress Sarai said she was to share Abram's bed, that was what she did. When Hagar conceived, knowing Sarai could not, she might have expected some affection—or at least some protection—from Abram. But he turned her over to her harsh mistress. Was Hagar beaten? We don't know. But Scripture does tell us she chose to flee into the barren wilderness rather than stay with her angry slave owner. The desert was a better choice than Sarai on a mean streak.

Did Abram or Sarai send a search party for the lowly slave girl? No. But one came. The angel of the Lord found her, alone, by a little stream in the wilderness, without resources and exhausted. "Go back," he told her, "and submit to your mistress." [Note: this



was not what Hagar wanted to hear. She would certainly have preferred to hear, “I’ll take you back home to Egypt,” or “I will put a pox upon your unfair boss,” or even “I’ll make them apologize and treat you better.”] But the angel also gave the servant girl a promise—in fact, he gave her the same promise he had given Abram: you will have a son and your offspring will be innumerable. The God of Heaven heard the cries of a lowly servant girl, found her in the desert, and gave her a promise.

So she worshipped. “You are the God who sees,” she told Him. “Here I am in the desert seeing the One who has His eyes on me.”

Hagar recognized a wonderful truth about God: He sees us. He knows us. He has His eyes on His children. Knowing that God is watching us speaks to His omnipresence and His omniscience. He is able to see us, no matter where we are, no matter what our circumstances. When we are unjustly treated, when things around us seem out of control, when we suffer in part because of our own bad attitudes and actions, still we are on His mind and in His sight. Like Hagar, our response is praise to the God who is above all others, the God who sees.

Do you ever feel invisible? Are you frustrated with injustice, whether at work or at home? Are there days when you would like to run away like Hagar did?

How does it change your thinking to recognize that God sees your situation? What does this say about God?

Read Hagar’s story in Genesis 16. Is there any evidence that Sarai’s treatment of Hagar improved when she returned? What kept her from running away again?

Read the rest of Hagar's story in Genesis 21:3-21. How does "seeing" enter into the story again (verse 19)? What promise does God give again to mother and son in the wilderness (verse 18)? Can you trust the promises God has given you?



## THE CAUTION OF GOD'S SIGHT: THE EYES OF THE LORD

Truthfully, does your driving change when cameras monitor the intersection? In other words, if you know there is a red light camera, do you stop on yellow? Would you have eaten that last cookie if your family were sitting there watching? If your Internet searches were broadcast all over the office, would anything change?

In the same way, knowing that God is watching us should encourage us to obey Him. When the books of Kings and Chronicles evaluate various rulers of Israel, they often give us a glimpse from God's viewpoint. "He did evil in the eyes of the Lord" or "he did what was good in the eyes of the Lord." Scripture goes on to tell us that it isn't just Israelite kings whom God is watching. His eyes are on us, all over the earth. We cannot hide; we cannot stay out of sight. He sees us no matter what.

That might be an important reflection the next time you face temptation. God sees. You may think your sin is secret, but you cannot hide from Him or deceive Him. Big things or little things (you cheat on your diet or you cheat on your taxes or you cheat on your husband), He sees. You may justify your actions, but the Judge is there to witness against you, and He knows your motives as well as your deeds. This accountability and conviction will prompt us to live righteously.

The same promise that brings us incredible comfort also brings us a warning. If we remind ourselves of His constant attention, this promise will help us make better decisions and serve Him faithfully.

Contrast the life of Asa (1 Kings 15:11, 2 Chronicles 14:2) with Nadab (1 Kings 15:26), Baasha (1 Kings 15:34), and Ahab (1 Kings 16:30). In God's sight, how would you be measured?

Check out 2 Chronicles 16:9. In addition to seeing us, what do the eyes of God do for those who live in holiness?

Read Job 34:21-22 and restate it in your own words. Psalm 34:15 uses personification to let us know that God is on our side. How does this verse express it?

The book of Proverbs also reminds us that God sees our deeds. Look at 5:21, and 15:3. How does the character of God remind us that we are in His sight? Does it change your decisions to reflect on the truth that God is watching?

Deuteronomy 12:28 has a multi-generational promise for those who do good and right in God's sight. What is it?



## THE CONCERN OF GOD'S SIGHT: HE NUMBERS THE HAIRS ON OUR HEADS

If you are a parent or grandparent, you will understand. The stage is full of lovely children; all are singing and saying their parts. Or the court or field is full of athletes, doing their best in the competition. But your eyes are on one child—your child. You know the others are there (maybe with bigger parts or better performances), but they stay in the shadows of

## SEPTEMBER STUDY

the one child you came to see. Your eyes are on the one you love.

Your heavenly Father watches you, just the same way. He knows when we sit down or stand up (Psalm 139:2). He knows our steps (Job 31:4). He knows our thoughts (Psalm 94:11). He knows how many hairs are on our heads (Luke 12:7) and He knows what we need (Luke 12:30). He sees our hearts—not merely our outward appearances (1 Samuel 16:7). He watches us with eyes of love with great delight. He cares for us even more than He does the sparrows, the wildflowers, and the grass of the field (Matthew 6, Luke 12). He knows our pasts and our futures (Psalm 139:15, 16). He treasures us, His own children.

When I am in trouble, He is watching out for me. When I feel lonely, He is attentive. When I am struggling and overloaded, He sees. When I am discouraged, He has His eyes on me. I am not forgotten nor orphaned, because God sees me. I am cherished and valuable and precious in His sight.

List at least five truths from Psalm 139 about the God who sees you.

Look at the twin verses, Psalm 14:2 and Psalm 53:2. What's so important that God tells us twice?

In Job 31:4, Job reminds us that God is always watching us. Does this promise affirm you or frighten you?

What is the reason David gives in Psalm 31:7 for rejoicing in God's love?

Even if our circumstances do not change, why is it important to realize that God sees us?



## THE COMFORT OF GOD'S SIGHT: WE SEE WHAT HE SEES

Do you remember that great account of Elisha and the Syrian army from 2 Kings 6:8-23? The king of Syria was frustrated that the prophet kept warning the Israelite king in advance of attacks. The Syrians were trying to find the “mole”—but none of them were leaking the information. God was protecting His people through Elisha, telling Israel’s prophet the words that the king whispered in his bedroom! So the army went after Elisha, who was living in the town of Dothan. The best part of the story was not the battle strategy or the surprise ending. It wasn’t all the back and forth with blindness and seeing (though that is really interesting). The best part was when Elisha’s servant started to panic as he saw the horses and chariots surrounding Dothan. This huge army was coming against one prophet! But Elisha asked God to open the servant’s eyes, revealing that God’s army—horses and chariots of *fire*—had surrounded the city, too.

God sees us when we are surrounded; and sometimes He gives us a glimpse of what He sees. He shares the true picture with us. He adjusts our vision to see from His viewpoint. He opens our eyes to what is happening in the spiritual realm.


The next time you are feeling defeated, out-numbered, or overwhelmed, just ask the God who sees to open your eyes. Focus on what He sees, not on what you can see. Look to the all-seeing God who was watching baby Moses in the river, Daniel in the lions’ den, Esther in the king’s harem, Elijah in the cave, and Paul in the prison cell. Like Elisha’s servant, like Sarah’s servant, see the God who sees you. And rejoice!

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Examine some other times when God asked His children to be still and watch Him fight for them in Exodus 14:13-14 and 2 Chronicles 20:13-17. What are some common themes in these accounts?

What is the promise in Psalm 37:34? Why is it so hard to wait on the Lord?

Hebrews 11:27 states that “seeing the invisible” helps us to endure by faith. Who was the example that the writer of Hebrews uses in this passage? Do your eyes of faith allow you to see the invisible, too?

Remember the old gospel hymn, “Open My Eyes That I May See”? Sing a verse or two. (Google it if you need to!) Remind yourself that the God who sees you wants you to see what He sees, too. He has His eyes on you! 

**About the Writer:** Carol Reid edits FUSION and FUSIONext devotional magazines at Randall House Publications. She and her husband Garnett worship at The Donelson Fellowship (Nashville) where he serves as pastor of older adults. Carol loves books, bargain shopping, chocolate with nuts, and crafts; she does not love cleaning house.