

Title: I Know He Watches Me

Text: Genesis 16:1-16 ESV

Tension: We all wrestle with the fear that God may not do what He has promised.

I. We see a promise manipulated

A. Sarai's Perspective

1. Forgot God's Promise
 - a. God had already promised Abram a son. (Genesis 15)
2. Forced God's Plan
 - a. *"Go in to my servant; it may be that I shall obtain children by her." And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai.* (Genesis 16:2)
 - b. Control masked as faith
3. Forsook God's Design
 - a. Polygamy was never God's design to accomplish his promise.
 - b. Every attempt to "help God" creates more pain.

B. Abram's Passivity

1. Abandoned Spiritual Leadership
 - a. *"And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai."* (Genesis 16:2)
2. Accepted Human Wisdom
 - a. Instead of trusting God's promise...he embraced human strategy.
 - b. He exchanged revelation for reasoning. He knew God's promise. He just preferred Sarai's plan.
 - c. *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding."* (Proverbs 3:5-6)

II. We see a family fractured

A. Hagar's Pride

1. *"And when she saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress."* (Genesis 16:4b)

B. Sarai's Punishment

1. *"And when she saw that she had conceived, she looked on me with contempt."* (Genesis 16:5b)
2. *"Then Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she fled from her."* (Genesis 16:6b)

C. Abram's Passiveness (*again!*)

1. *"Behold, your servant is in your power; do to her as you please."* (Genesis 16:6a)
2. Avoided personal responsibility
 - a. Abram doesn't protect Hagar. He doesn't confront Sarai. He doesn't own his part. He abdicates.
 - b. Passivity is never neutral. When godly leadership steps back, someone else bears the weight.
 - c. The opposite of passivity is activity. → Are you active in your faith?

D. Eden's Pattern

1. A wife takes → A husband listens passively → Sin enters → Blame begins → Relationships fracture → Someone leaves the place of security.

III. We see the overlooked found

A. God Finds Hagar

1. *"The angel of the Lord found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, the spring on the way to Shur."* (Genesis 16:7)
2. Low in ancient social order: Egyptian → female → enslaved → pregnant → alone → outside Abraham's biological covenant line
3. Psalm 139

B. God Questions Hagar

1. *"And he said, 'Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?'"* (Genesis 16:8a)
2. God's questions are not for information but rather an invitation to name reality.

C. God Directs Hagar

1. *"Return to your mistress and submit to her."* (Genesis 16:9)
2. But does not remove her from the circumstance.

D. God Blesses Hagar

1. *"The angel of the Lord also said to her, 'I will surely multiply your offspring so that they cannot be numbered for multitude.' ¹¹ And the angel of the Lord said to her, 'Behold, you are pregnant and shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, because the Lord has listened to your affliction.'"* (Genesis 16:10-11)
2. Blessing =
 - a. *Promise:* Multiplied offspring beyond what she can imagine.
 - b. *Name:* "Ishmael" means "God hears"
 - c. *Assurance:* Heaven has heard your affliction.
3. God's compassion was never restricted to the main covenant family line.

IV. We see the God who sees

A. Hagar Names God

1. *"So she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, 'You are a God of seeing,' for she said, 'Truly here I have seen him who looks after me.'"* (Genesis 16:13)
2. *"El Roi": "a God of seeing" or "The God who sees me"*

B. Hagar Marvels at God

1. *"For she said, 'Truly here I have seen him who looks after me.'"* (Genesis 16:13)

C. Hagar Moves in obedience

1. *"And Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael."* (Genesis 16:15)

Takeaway: God sees the sin done by us, the pain done to us, the mess surrounding us...and yet still moves toward us