



[View this email in your browser](#)



## Release Women Email - January 2021

Hello Friend

### The God who sees

Many of you will be familiar with the Old Testament story of Hagar, told over several chapters in Genesis. Hagar was an Egyptian slave of Sarai, wife of Abram. Hagar may have come into Sarai's 'possession' when Abram and Sarai stayed in Egypt during a time of famine (Genesis 12:10-20). Pharaoh had treated Abram well on account of Sarai, whom he believed was Abram's sister. Hagar remained with the family when they settled in Canaan and after a period of ten years there Sarai 'gave' Abram her slave Hagar, so that he could have an heir. Once pregnant, Hagar showed her contempt for Sarai; and Abram, wanting no responsibility for Hagar, allowed Sarai to ill-treat her. It's little surprise therefore that Hagar, having been treated as mere property, used and abused, runs away.

It is in the desert that Hagar has an incredible encounter with 'an angel of the Lord', later referred to as the Lord. The angel calls Hagar by name and by her position and asks her where she has come from and where she is going. Surely, if the angel of the Lord knew her name and knew she was Sarai's slave, he also knew the answer to these questions? Interestingly, Hagar doesn't appear to answer the second question – she had no plan, perhaps, except to get away from the misery she was experiencing. The angel of the Lord

gives Hagar a command – to return to Sarai and to submit to her, and a promise – that she will have a son and descendants too many to count.

Hagar knows that she has encountered God and she becomes the first person in the Bible to name God, calling him the God ‘who sees me’. Sarai and Abram seem to have been blind to her as a person, treating her as acquired property; to be discarded after use. But God saw her. We know that Hagar was obedient as she later bore Abram’s son, Ishmael, and Hagar later had a second encounter with God.

In the world’s eyes Hagar was nothing; seen as property to be given away or discarded when she caused problems or was no longer useful. Yet she had not one but two encounters with God. God saw her and heard her.

God sees and hears the sisters we serve, some of whom may find themselves in similar positions to Hagar. Sisters such as Arzoo (see Release’s latest [Voice magazine, page 5](#)) and other young Christian girls in Pakistan who have been abducted, forcibly converted to Islam and married. Sisters such as Martha in Egypt whose young son was beaten up, robbed and threatened by a group of youths, because she had become a Christian ([Voice magazine, page 7](#)). Sisters whose faces we don’t see, whose names we don’t know, whose voices we don’t hear in Eritrea, China, North Korea. God sees and hears them all. In the same way, God sees and hears you, whatever situation you may be facing during this global pandemic. Remember Hagar’s story as you pray for your sisters today and trust that God sees them and hears their cries to Him.



*You have searched me, LORD, and you know me.  
You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.  
You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you, LORD, know it completely.  
You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me.  
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.*  
Psalm 139:1-6

Blessings,

Release Women Team

---

Please **CLICK** on the red button if you prayed.

**I prayed!**

---

---

Through our international network of missions, Release International serves persecuted Christians in 25 countries around the world by supporting pastors and Christian prisoners, and their families; supplying Christian literature and Bibles; and working for justice.

Please note that the email and internet are not 100% secure media and no IT defence measures guarantee 100% security – but all feasible and reasonable security measures are in place. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender and delete all copies.

**DATA PROTECTION ACT (DPA) 2018**

All personal data/special categories of personal data are processed in accordance with the DPA 2018. Please read our Privacy Statement published on the Release International website for full details.



Registered Charity (England No. 280577) and company limited by guarantee (England No. 1506576)

Registered office: Betchworth House, [57-65 Station Road, REDHILL, Surrey, RH1 1DL](#)

Scottish Charity No: SC040456

---

*Copyright © 2021 Release International, All rights reserved.*

Thank you for asking to receive information from Release International.

**Our mailing address is:**

Release International

P O BOX 54

Orpington, Kent BR5 4RT

United Kingdom

[Add us to your address book](#)

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)