

Motherhood is hard.

Even from the beginning, God said being a mother would not be easy (Gen 3:16).

Motherhood of course it's wonderful in so many ways. There's a special bond between mothers and their children that is often the deepest bond with another human being that we have.

The Bible is filled with examples of the struggles of motherhood.

Think about the difficult life of the first single mom mentioned in the Bible. Think about Hagar, Sarah's maid. Sarah had a plan to get a child, and said in Genesis 16:2 **2 So Sarai said to Abram, "Now behold, the LORD has prevented me from bearing children. Please go in to my maid; perhaps I will obtain children through her." And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai**

Now notice that Sarai doesn't seem very concerned about how this fit into God's plan, she's really concerned about herself "obtaining children" by whatever means possible.

4 He went in to Hagar, and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her sight.

Now in those days, family and having a large family was especially important. Children were also regarded as a gift from God, and so over and over in the bible, we see women who cannot have children being looked down upon.

5 And Sarai said to Abram, "May the wrong done me be upon you. I gave my maid into your arms, but when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her sight. May the LORD judge between you and me."

Sarai has a difficult time handling her former maid now looking upon her with contempt. Now she blames Abram. Fights within the family are the most painful and often the most difficult kind to settle.

6 But Abram said to Sarai, "Behold, your maid is in your power; do to her what is good in your sight." So Sarai treated her harshly, and she fled from her presence.

Since Sarah's had given Abram Hagar as a wife, she now had no real power over her. She mistreats Hagar. So Hagar ran away.

7 Now the angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur.

God ministered to this rejected servant-girl in the time of her greatest need. God cared about this runaway pregnant girl and was willing to meet her in the midst of her need. He sent help to her when she was helpless. THAT's the God that we serve! **Psalm 138:7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life; you stretch out your hand against the wrath of my enemies, and your right hand delivers me.** See Psalm 46:1, Isaiah 41:10, etc.

8 He said, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from and where are you going?" And she said, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai."

He asks her an important question: "Where have you come from and where are you going?". She's fleeing from the presence of her mistress Sarai, but this is not a good decision for her. She's leaving the people who believe in God. Abram and Sarai aren't perfect, and sometimes they make the wrong decisions, but they are followers of God. Are the decisions you're making going to bring you closer to God or farther from Him?

9 Then the angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit yourself to her authority."

So God told her that she was headed in the wrong direction and to return back the way she came.

Proverbs 9:6 - Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding.

Ezekiel 33:19 - But if the wicked turn from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby. **Zechariah 1:3** - Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Turn ye unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the LORD of hosts.

See, God only really asks of us two things: Faith, and in particular Faith that Jesus Christ's death on the cross saves us from sin when we accept that gift and make Him Lord and Master of our lives. The other

thing is obedience—which makes perfect sense if Jesus is the Lord and Master of our lives. And if we are sinning or going in the wrong direction, it is clear that obedience means that we turn from our own way, our wicked way and follow him. **Proverbs 9:6 - Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding.**

¹⁰ **Moreover, the angel of the LORD said to her, “I will greatly multiply your descendants so that they will be too many to count.”**

Only God can make this promise. It suggests that God, either God the Father, God the Son or God the Holy Spirit is the one who has taken a bodily form and is speaking here to Hagar. That’s quite an honor for a maid to receive. ¹¹ **The angel of the LORD said to her further, “Behold, you are with child, And you will bear a son; And you shall call his name Ishmael, Because the LORD has given heed to your affliction.** The name Ishmael means “GOD HEARS” and she is to name her child Ishmael because the Lord has heard her suffering. God met her where she was, and told her to turn from her ways, and back to the plan that He had for her life.

13 Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, “You are a God who sees”; for she said, “Have I even remained alive here after seeing Him?”

So the wonderful thing here is that she recognizes God when she sees him. Not only that she calls him God who sees. God who sees her. God who sees her in her need and cares about her and her unborn son. God hears your cries, and He sees your struggles, no matter what they are.

There are so many biblical examples of the struggles of motherhood.

Rebekah: Isaac’s wife who struggled with favoritism

Jochebed: Moses’ mother was forced to give up her child, and put him up for adoption.

God Understands Motherhood.

The Bible speaks frequently about the fatherhood of God. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus speaks 17 times of God as Father. Similarly, when scripture wants to describe God’s nurturing nature, we see descriptions consistent with motherhood.

God weeps over unbelieving children, just as a Mother

In Matthew 23:37, we see the tenderness of God and the heartache as God’s Chosen people finally reject Jesus, their Messiah. Jesus knows that their rejection of Him is going to bring death, destruction, desolation, and ruin to them. And He says as weeps over Jerusalem: **“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!”**

God Cares for and Protects His People

We see God’s caring for His people in many places, but in the Song of Moses, in Deuteronomy 32, specifically looking at verses 9-11 we read **9 For the Lord’s portion is His people; Jacob is the allotment of His inheritance. 10 He found him in a desert land, And in the howling wasteland of a wilderness; He encircled him, He cared for him, He guarded him as the apple of His eye. 11 As an eagle stirs up its nest, And hovers over its young, He spread His wings, He caught them, He carried them on His pinions.** God’s portion of the world, what He’s going to take out of the world to dwell with Him are His people—they are the Lord’s inheritance out of the world, and He protects His people and broods over them.

God will protect forever

God does not leave or forsake His people. We may think that He has sometimes, and this isn’t new (Isaiah 49:14). He has not forgotten you: 49:15-16 ¹⁵ **“Can a woman forget her nursing child And have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you. ¹⁶ Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Your walls are continually before Me.**

Indelible means that which cannot be removed, washed away, blotted out, canceled, effaced or erased and thus speaks of that which is unforgettable, lasting and cannot be lost or annulled (see also Luke 12:6-7. He Loves you more than you can imagine.