



Breathe

with guest speaker, Lina AbuJamra

To view the accompanying video,
go to <http://ariseministries.net/breathe>

It's easy to get caught up in circumstances that quickly excite or overwhelm us. The Bible is full of people wrestling with the chasm between fact and emotion. The story of Hagar in Genesis depicts a woman who was frantic with fear and uncertainty. She was a pawn in someone else's game of self-control. Hagar experienced the "God who sees me" in the midst of her wandering, and His words transformed her. He offers the same for each of us—the promise that He sees us and we are not alone. Discover this powerful truth in Session 1. Breathe, and find rest in the God who cares.

1. What situations make you feel as if you've been overlooked, abandoned, or mistreated?
2. Carefully read the account of Hagar in **Genesis 16**. Record the highlights as you read.
3. Describe Hagar's situation. (Refer to **Genesis 16:4-6**.)

4. Have you ever experienced a disappointing interruption of life as a result of someone else's poor decision? Describe an occasion. How did that make you feel? How did you feel toward God?

Hagar had little control of this situation. She was an Egyptian maidservant who was given to her owner's husband for the purpose of bearing his child. When the plan worked, the author of the scheme became jealous, bitter, and abusive—an unsurprising result of a bad idea. To escape the mistreatment of her mistress, the pregnant, single, and soon-to-be mother takes to the street. Who wouldn't be tempted to run away? She was following the orders of her owner, doing what she was told, and now she is being punished for someone else's very poor judgment. Sarai created this problem, and it seems Hagar is suffering the consequences.

5. Read **Genesis 16:8**. What two questions did the angel of the Lord ask her?

How did Hagar respond?

Hagar didn't directly answer the angel's question. It's quite certain the angel knew the answers. Hagar was running from Abram's home in Canaan, and she probably didn't know where she was going. She had but one destination—away. Her distress convinced her that anywhere was better than suffering ridicule and insult she didn't deserve. Yes, anywhere was better—even a lonely walk through the desert.

It's interesting to read Hagar's response to the angel. She replies, "I'm running away from my mistress Sarai." We can read between the lines, can't we? She may as well have said, "I'm running away from my problems because I don't know the solution and I can't take it any longer." And which of us would disagree with her lament?

6. What is the angel's instruction to her in **Genesis 16:9**?

7. What is the promise she received in **Genesis 16:10-11**?

You and I may have responded to Hagar differently. Perhaps we would have rallied around her and encouraged her to follow her feelings. “Run! Get away while you still can! Sarai is crazy and you deserve better. You don’t have to put up with this.” Yet, the messenger of the Lord tells her to go back and face the problem head-on with submission to authority.

Of course, no one should be encouraged to remain in a physically abusive situation, and it certainly isn’t the point of this story. Even before Hagar’s son was born, God already had a plan to redeem the poor decisions made by the actions of this threesome. Running away from our problems is rarely the answer. As difficult as the situation seemed, Hagar was told to face this problem squarely, and with God’s help, He would make something out of this mess.

8. What name did Hagar give to the Lord? How do you think Hagar felt after this encounter with the angel? (Refer to **Genesis 16:13**.) Explain your answer.

Engrained in our human nature is the desire to be seen—to be noticed and acknowledged. You only need to glance at social media for a few minutes to see the evidence of this. Hagar encountered the God who sees me. He didn’t just see her physical body wandering in the desert. He saw her heart and acknowledged her pain with the angel’s words, “...for the Lord has heard of your misery.”

When we are hurting and broken, we desperately want to know we have not been abandoned or overlooked. When we walk through a desert of disappointment or feel troubled, we have the promise that God is with us. Friend, you are never alone. His eyes are always upon you. You are seen by the Creator.

9. Read the following scriptures. Record your thoughts for each one.

Psalms 46:1

Joshua 1:9

Psalms 23:4

10. Like Hagar, do you believe God sees *you*?

11. Review the three statements from the video and the scripture references. Write your response to each statement. How can you apply these principles to your life?

When I am treated unfairly, God sees me and understands.
(See also **Isaiah 30:18.**)

When I am too stuck to find God, he always comes looking for me.
(See also **Jeremiah 23:24.**)

When my circumstances are out of control, God is still in control.
(See also **Romans 8:28.**)

12. How can you teach these principles to your children?

When life takes a difficult turn, our first reaction shouldn't be to run away or try to fix it the problem in our own strength. Our responsibility is to submit to God's authority and find rest in the God who sees.

Notes for Small Group Discussion:

1. Briefly share your thoughts on the video.
2. Briefly talk about spiritual concepts you learned.
3. Share with your group a choice you need to make that will honor God.
4. Consider practical ways to find accountability with these truths.

To share your thoughts regarding this study, contact us at info@ariseministries.net.

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Arise Ministries is excited to partner with Lina AbuJamra to bring you *Breathe: Finding Rest in the God Who Cares*. Lina is a Pediatric ER doctor and founder of [Living with Power Ministries](http://LivingwithPowerMinistries.com). Her vision is to bring hope to the world by connecting biblical answers to everyday life.



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Kim serves as the Director of Operations with Arise Ministries and coordinates the online Bible study content. As a former single mom she's been encouraging women using her life experiences in parenting, growing in the Word of God and everything in between. Kim writes for www.AriseMinistries.net and for her personal website [The Mom Experiment](http://TheMomExperiment.com).