

Opened Her Eyes

Rabbi Avi Katz Orlow

1. Genesis 21:15-19

When the water was gone from the skin, she left the child under one of the bushes, and went and sat down at a distance, a bowshot away; for she thought, "Let me not look on as the child dies." And sitting thus afar, she burst into tears.

God heard the cry of the boy, and an angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, "What troubles you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heeded the cry of the boy where he is.

Come, lift up the boy and hold him by the hand, for I will make a great nation of him."

Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. She went and filled the skin with water, and let the boy drink.

וַיִּכְלוּ הַמַּיִם מִן־הַחֲמָת וַתַּשְׁלֶךְ אֶת־הַיֶּלֶד תַּחַת אֶחָד
הַשִּׁיחִים:
וַתֵּלֶךְ וַתֵּשֶׁב לָהּ מִנְּגַד הַרְחֵק כְּמִטְחָוִי לָשֵׁת כִּי אָמְרָה
אֶל־אֲרָאָה בְּמוֹת הַיֶּלֶד וַתֵּשֶׁב מִנְּגַד וַתִּשָּׂא אֶת־קִלְעָה
וַתִּבְרֶךְ:
וַיִּשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶת־קוֹל הַנְּעִר וַיִּקְרָא מַלְאָךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶל־
הַגֵּר מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ מֵה־לָּךְ הֲגַר אֶל־תִּירְאִי כִּי־
שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶל־קוֹל הַנְּעִר בְּאֲשֶׁר הוּא־שָׁם:
קוּמִי שְׂאִי אֶת־הַנְּעִר וְהַחֲזִיקִי אֶת־יָדָהּ בּוֹ כִּי־לָגוֹי גְּדוֹל
אֲשִׁימוּ:
וַיִּפְקַח אֱלֹהִים אֶת־עֵינֶיהָ וַתֵּרָא בְּאֵר מַיִם וַתֵּלֶךְ וַתַּמְלֵא
אֶת־הַחֲמָת מַיִם וַתִּשְׁקֶה אֶת־הַנְּעִר:

2. John Gadsby Chapman, Hagar and Ishmael Fainting in the Desert, 1830



3. Guide for the Perplexed, Part 1 2:1, 12th Century

... the Hebrew word *pakah* used in this passage is exclusively employed in the figurative sense of receiving new sources of knowledge, not in that of regaining the sense of sight. Comp., "God opened her eyes" (Gen. 21:19).

4. Sforzo on Genesis 21:15-19, 15th Century

opened her eyes God granted her the instinct to look for water in the place where she would find it. She had not been blind previously so that her eyes had to be "opened."

ויפקח אלהים את עיניה
נתן בה דעת להכיר מקום מים שהיה שם כי לא היתה סומא
קודם לכן: