



There are moments when we meet God in a new way. After these moments, we exchange a concept for an encounter. When God shows up, it's not to show us what He looks like, but to show us what He is like. In the Old Testament, God shows up to young and old, to men and women. Let's look at these encounters and ask Him to continuing showing up in our lives.

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family and/or with a group.

1 Read Genesis 16:1-6. This part of God's story seems to go from bad to worse. Barrenness leads to abuse, hurt upon hurt. Abram and Sarai are the people God chose, but here they are making a mess of things. What does this say about God? What does it say about us?

2 Read Genesis 16:7-8. God finds us when we're lost. How do you interpret Hagar's answers to the angel's questions? How does this part of the story reflect our own journey from "lost" to "found"? Share with the group ways in your own life God sought you.

3 Read Genesis 16:9-14. Hagar doesn't protest to the angel's instructions, but responds with an insight about God: **God sees us when we feel invisible.** Why is this a comfort to Hagar? Why does it matter to know that God doesn't just know everything, but that He specifically knows you?

4 Read Genesis 21:8-21. After 13 years of relative peace, Hagar and her boy are rejected and sent away, and all hope seems lost. After Hagar's first encounter with God in chapter 16, does it surprise you at all that she doesn't cry out to him? What causes us to forget God's promises?

5 Genesis 21:17 says that, "God heard the boy." God heard the boy whose name means, "God hears." The point is emphasized for us: **God hears us when we hurt.** What does this tell us about God's nature? How does this truth affect how we face the hardest seasons of life?

6 How do you see Jesus foreshadowed in this story? What are other ways the story points to the hope we can have in Jesus? (For extra credit, **check out Galatians 3 & 4**).

