מדרש

# Midrash

ON GENESIS 21:19

## God judges each person by who they are right now

Bereshit Rabbah 53:14

God attends to the tears of the lowly and the stranger as readily as to those of the righteous, as shown by His response to Hagar's weeping over Yishmael. Though the angels protested that Yishmael's descendants would one day bring suffering upon Israel, God judged him "as he is there" — solely by his present righteousness, not by his future deeds, teaching that each person is judged according to who they are now. The well was already present, but Hagar's eyes needed to be opened by God to see it — for all people are presumed blind until God grants them sight — yet her act of filling the skin rather than trusting fully in what she had seen reveals a lingering deficiency in her faith. AI SUMMARY

That is what is written: “You have taken account of my wandering. Put my tears in Your flask [nodekha]” (Psalms 56:9) – [accept my tears] like that woman with the flask [Hagar]. Just as it is written in the book of Psalms: “Hear my prayer, Lord, and heed my cry; [do not be silent at my tears]” (Psalms 39:13) – [David said:] ‘To the tears of Hagar You were not silent, but to my tears You are silent? And if You will say: Because she was a stranger she was beloved, I, too, “for I am a stranger with You, a sojourner, like all my fathers”’ (Psalms 39:13).

“God heard the voice of the lad; the angel of God called to Hagar from the heavens, and said to her: What is it with you, Hagar? Fear not, as God has heard the voice of the lad, as he is there” (Genesis 21:17). “The angel of God called to Hagar from the heavens” – due to the merit of Abraham. “As he is there” – due to his own merit; the prayer of an ill person himself is superior to all others.

“As he is there” – Rabbi Simon said: The ministering angels leapt to condemn him before God]. They said before Him: ‘Master of the universe, a person who is destined to kill your children by thirst, will You produce a spring for him?’ He said to them: ‘What is he right now, righteous or wicked?’ They said to him: ‘He is righteous.’ He said to them: ‘I judge a person only at his present time. “Rise, lift the boy”’ (Genesis 21:18).

“God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. She went and filled the skin with water, and gave the lad to drink” (Genesis 21:19). “God opened her eyes” – Rabbi Binyamin said: Everyone has the presumptive status of being blind until the Holy One blessed be He opens their eyes. [This is derived] from here: “God opened her eyes.”

“She went and filled the skin with water” – this teaches that she was lacking in faith.

