

All God's children (Genesis 21:8-21)

No one is ever outside God's grace.

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An amazing thing happened to me one morning. As I started to wake up, I heard an inner voice say, "Good morning, child of God." Though not an audible voice, the pronouncement startled me with its clarity and directness. I remained in bed thinking about what I had just heard. What did it mean? Where did it come from?

I kept replaying the strange, powerful greeting in my mind, each time grasping more deeply the potent potential of its affirming message.

Moments later, while preparing to shave, I stared at the face in the mirror longer than usual. Soon, I heard the greeting again: "Good morning, child of God." This time the voice was audible; the voice was my own.

Hagar and her son are dismissed from family and friends. But to be dismissed by some is never to be dismissed by somebody greater. No one is ever outside God's grace. However, we can be outside the awareness of such. Our salvation is in our awareness and acceptance.

"Just to be is a blessing," declared Abraham Heschel. "Just to live is holy."

Such sacred worthiness is grace on grace. It is not bought, earned, or won. This worthiness is the birthright of us all.

Jesus hints at the same hallelujah reality: "The kingdom of God is within you." There is something of ultimate significance residing in you that you had nothing to do with

creating. It is pure gift.

The late singer, pianist, and composer Donny Hathaway created music that resonates with pathos and passion. His songs—especially when he is the one presenting them—can make you cry, shout, and everything in between. Hathaway began singing at the age of three. He offered up what was welling up inside of him. At six he told his grandmother, “You should hear the music I’m hearing in my head.”

Can you hear the music within you? Before you have planned or accomplished anything at all, can you feel something within that is pure, pleasing blessing?

Listen for it, and once you hear it, dare to repeat it as often as you feel led to: Good morning, child of God.