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WEEK 3 | El Roi: The God Who Sees

PRAYER

God, we know that you see us when no one else does, and that you indeed bring redemption in the midst of our suffering and hardship. We worship you, in Jesus' name, Amen.

WARM UP

(OPTIONAL)

Talk about the most beautiful sight (not a person) you have ever seen. What made it so beautiful?

NOTES

WORD

¹ Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had a female Egyptian servant whose name was Hagar. ² And Sarai said to Abram, "Behold now, the Lord has prevented me from bearing children. Go in to my servant; it may be that I shall obtain children by her." And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. ³ So, after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her servant, and gave her to Abram her husband as a wife. ⁴ And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress. ⁵ And Sarai said to Abram, "May the wrong done to me be on you! I gave my servant to your embrace, and when she saw that she had conceived, she looked on me with contempt. May the Lord judge between you and me!" ⁶ ... ¹³ So she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, "You are a God of seeing," for she said, "Truly here I have seen him who looks after me."¹⁴ Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; it lies between Kadesh and Bered.

¹⁵ And Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. ¹⁶ Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.

[GENESIS 16:1-10](#)

First, the above passage reveals to us the nature of humanity. It is just one of many stories in the Bible that illustrate for us the sinfulness and unfaithfulness of humanity—even by those who are chosen by God, like Abraham. This is not the most important point of this story, but we shouldn't pass over this point too quickly, either. In just one short story, we find unbelief, unfaithfulness, sexual exploitation, marital strife, jealousy, covetousness, and abuse. This story is a profound reminder of the depravity of humanity.

Second, and most importantly, this story gives us insight and revelation into the character of God. Not only are we given a new name for God—El Roi—but we are given a story that displays his compassion for the marginalised and the forgotten. Hagar was someone who felt forgotten and unseen, and much to her surprise, God not only saw her, but he also called her and gave her life a purpose.

The third point is connected to the second. This story is important to the overall narrative of Scripture, because it gives us a pattern for understanding how God relates to people on the margins and even those outside of his covenant—with compassion. We may not see them and we miss them, but God does not. The story of Hagar is just the first in a long line of stories of God seeing unseen women on the margins of society and bringing redemptive purpose to their lives (for a few examples, consider Tamar [[Genesis 38](#)], Rahab [[Joshua 6](#)], Ruth [[Ruth 4](#)], and the Samaritan woman [[John 4](#)]).

GUIDE QUESTIONS

(NUMBERED ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF DEPTH AND READINESS TO SHARE)

1. On a scale of 1-10 (1 being never and 10 being always) how would you rate your ability to trust God's faithfulness in your life. Why have you rated yourself this way?
2. We know from this passage regarding Abraham, Sarah and Hagar that God Calls Us into His Purposes - Are you aware of the purposes of God in your life? How would you describe your purpose if you know it?
3. Is there any difference in the way you would live every day knowing that God is a God who sees all? If yes, what would be the difference?
4. God is sure to keep His promises. It just may take us so much longer to see him bring his promises to pass. For Abraham and Sarah, they learnt this the hard way. Have you ever tried to make things happen on your own strength only to see them not work out to the best that God has for you? If so, would you be willing to share?

Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, and I ask for your forgiveness. I believe you died for my sins and rose from the dead. I turn from my sins and invite you to come into my heart and life. I want to trust and follow you as my Lord and Saviour. In Jesus' name, Amen.