

"From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth, from the laziness that is content with half-truths, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, O, God of Truth, deliver us."



## *A Controversial Newsletter "The Printed Voice of Summit Theological Seminary"*

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### **EL-ROI, THE GOD WHO SEES ME!**

#### **Genesis Chapter 16**

How many have ever heard of the God, "El-Roi"?

He is mentioned in the Bible in the Book of Genesis.

You may not have ever heard of Him but you know Him.

You experience Him every single day because He knows you.

It was a woman who saw Him that named Him. She was a foreigner. Let me tell you about her because there's things we can learn from her history in the Bible.

It all starts with a man whose father was an idolater, who worshipped the moon goddess.

This man was called of God away from his father's idolatry. He was of Shem, and was 75 when God called him to bring one of his descendants into the world to bless all nations. His name was "Abram".

His call was **Genesis 12:1-3**

In **Genesis 12:10-20** in not trusting God for his daily bread, he went down to Egypt and Pharaoh wanted his wife Sarai. Disgusted with Abram and Sarai for lying to Him, but in fearing their God, Pharaoh gave him much cattle, sheep, etc. and her a servant girl. (Some Jews say his own daughter because he thought it would be better for her to live with such a woman as Mistress Sarai, than to be mistress of her own house.)

In **Genesis 16:1ff**, Sarah did not have a child for ten years from the promise. She complained and offered the slave girl, "Hagar", to him - vs 2.

Abraham took her up on it. 4 (he was like father Adam in listening to his woman.)

Hagar began to despise Sarah. Sarah began to treat her like a jealous wife would and blamed Abram for her troubles.

Abraham tells her she can do as she wants. (He does not seem to be overly fond of the young woman. No house is big enough for two women to share her man.

Hagar runs away, which was a dangerous thing for a slave to do – vs 6.

The pre-incarnate Christ goes to meet Hagar, but not Abraham.

He found her at a fountain on her way to Egypt in the wilderness.

**He asks her two important questions that one always ought to ask runaways:**

1. Where are you from - that is, what are you leaving?
2. Where are you going - that is, what am I getting into? Remember the Prodigal son.

She is honest and says, "I am fleeing from my mistress, Sarai".

**He gives her two commands:**

1. Return to her.
  2. Submit to her and be under her hand.
- It is safer than being in the wilderness and being caught as a runaway or starving.

**He gives her two promises:**

1. I am going to give you many children.
2. So many that they cannot be numbered.

**He tells her two facts:**

1. You're pregnant.
2. It is a boy so call his name, "Ishmael" (God hears).

**He tells her two things about the boy:**

1. His nature and disposition A wild ass of a man whose hand will be against every man and every man's hand will be against him. Not a bad one-sentence description of Ishmael's descendants, the Arabs.
2. His dwelling. He will dwell among his brethren.

**Two things she named, or called God:**

1. God is El-Roi.... "The God who sees me."

2. The well is "Beer-la-hai-roi".  
The well of "the living one who sees me."

Since Abraham called him Ishmael, Hagar must have told Abraham upon returning home. She made it work for about 13 years.

Finally, Sarah conceived.

**Genesis 21:3**

There's two sons in the family for about five years.

On Isaac's weaning day, the teenage Ishmael persecuted or mocked Isaac. **Genesis 21:9, Galatians 4:22-31**

Hagar and Ishmael were thrown out of the camp due to Sarah.

Abraham loved the boy very much. (He once had asked if Ishmael could be his seed.)

God appeared to Abraham and comforted him about the boy and Abraham obeyed his wife with God's approval.

Hagar and Ishmael are given bread and a bottle of water and sent into the wilderness. Her son would not be Abraham's heir. **Galatians 4**

Hagar fears the death of her child and weeps.

God heard her and said, "What's your problem?" – vs 17. Do not fear.... the boy will not die. Remember my promise earlier. (She's as bad as Sarah and Abraham in forgetting promises.)

Arise and give the boy a hand.

Hagar obeys and the boy became a great hunter, or warrior and she got him a wife.

Later, in **Genesis 25:8-9**, the two sons buried their father, Abraham, next to Sarah.

Ishmael had the twelve princes he was promised and he died at age 137 among his brethren, as foretold.

Hagar had more sons called "Hagarites" and one of her descendants' name, Jaziz, ended up over the flocks of King David. **1 Chronicles 27:31**

The apostle Paul uses the family as an allegory for us in the New Testament - **Galatians 4:22-31**, "22 For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one (*Ishmael*) by a bondmaid (*Hagar*), the other (*Isaac*) by a freewoman (*Sarah*). 23 But he (*Ishmael*) who was of the bondwoman (*Hagar*) was born after the flesh; but he (*Isaac*) of the freewoman (*Sarah*) was by promise. 24 Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is



Agar. 25 For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. 26 But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. 27 For it is written, Rejoice, *thou* barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, *thou* that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. 28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. 29 But as then he that was born after the flesh (*Ishmael*) persecuted him (*Isaac*) that was

born after the Spirit, even so *it is* now. 30 Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman (*Hagar*) and her son (*Ishmael*): for the son (*Ishmael*) of the bondwoman (*Hagar*) shall not be heir with the son (*Isaac*) of the freewoman (*Sarah*). 31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman (*Hagar*), but of the free (*Sarah*)."

But here are some practical lessons for us to learn, too:

- The foolishness of running ahead of God, like Sarah.
- Of forgetting Gods promises.
- That laws, traditions, and customs of the world are no excuse for ignoring God's foundational desires.
- That it is not to our benefit to blame God for His tardiness and not giving us what we want nor to try to rush ahead of Him.
- Do not be proud of what we have that others do not have; like Hagar.
- Or being jealous when others are given it, like Sarah.

We need to stop and ask, "What am I leaving?" and "What may I be getting into when I run from my problems?"

We need to remember that God is all-knowing, all-seeing, works in providence, and is Hagar recognized, though a stranger, His eye was upon her plight, He cared and would take care of her if she was submissive where God put her. Maybe daddy hurt her, maybe Sarah hurt her, maybe Abraham was indifferent, but God was not. He was El -Roi.

**Conclusion:** God is El-Roi, the God who sees me.

But it is a two-side coin.

God saw:

- ➔ The fear and scheming Abram ... "Say you're my sister".

- ↳ The suggestive impatience of Sarah... "Take my servant girl".
- ↳ The pride of Hagar once she was wife of Abraham.
- ↳ The jealousy of Sarah.
- ↳ The foolishness of Abram giving heed to Sarah, his wife. Custom and law.
- ↳ What kind of servant Hagar was.
- ↳ What kind of wife Sarah was as a mistress.
- ↳ What kind of husband Abraham was. (**Malachi 2:14, 1 Peter 3:7** – shows God's discipline for this.
- ↳ How we treat others. **Proverbs 24:17-18**, "17 Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth: 18 Lest the LORD see it, and it displease him, and he turn away his wrath from him."
- ↳ Hagar's plight, helplessness, tears, and fears but she is found of God, though she sought him not. **Isaiah 65:1**, "I am sought of *them that* asked not *for me*; I am found of *them that* sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation *that* was not called by my name."

He is a God who hears.....

He is a God who sees....

He is a God who cares...

And He does require it of us when we do wrong and He is not a respecter of persons.

Call upon him while he is near.

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