**El Roi – You Are the God Who Sees**

*Genesis 16:13*

1. Introduction
2. The Circumstance
   1. NOTE: **Galatians 4:21-31** – contrast of Sarah/Hagar – two covenants – freewoman/bondwoman – children, Isaac/Ishmael – ***“Cast out the bondwoman and her son…”***
      1. Referring to events in Genesis 21 after Isaac is born.
      2. **Nevertheless, she was not cast away from God’s care and compassion.**
   2. Ten years after initial promise – **Genesis 16:3**
      1. Also, after the promise is reiterated, and Abram believed – **Genesis 15:4-6**
   3. Abdication of headship as in the beginning:
      1. ***“And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai” (Genesis 16:2).***
         1. God said to Adam, ***“you have heeded the voice of your wife” (Genesis 3:17)***.
      2. ***“Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made” (Galatians 3:16)*** – It was Abraham that God spoke to, and gave the promise to, and he should have known better.
         1. It was Adam that God initially gave the prohibition to **(cf. Genesis 2:15-17).**
   4. Worldly wisdom causing problems, not solving them – **Genesis 16:2-3** – polygamy – ***“from the beginning it was not so.”***
      1. Conforming to the culture.
      2. Not trusting in the wisdom/promises of God.
      3. **Genesis 16:4-6** – causing pride (Hagar), jealousy/resentment/shifted blame (Sarah), further abdication of leadership (Abram)
   5. Hagar’s circumstance brought on by worldly wisdom:
      1. Not without fault:
         1. Pride – **Genesis 16:4**
         2. Failing in submission – **Genesis 16:9**
      2. Afflicted – **Genesis 16:11** – Sarai dealt harshly with her, Abram consenting, difficult position in general.
3. The Significance of El Roi
   1. Blessings proclaimed – **Genesis 16:10-12**
   2. Reaction of Hagar – **Genesis 16:13-14**
      1. Name given:
         1. **El Roi** – literally, god of vision.
         2. **A God who Himself sees all?**
            1. He did not disregard Hagar.
            2. He saw and knew her circumstance, cared, and condescended to her in loving provision.
            3. NOTE: **Genesis 21:8-21** – Again when Ishmael scoffed, and they were cast out – complete desperation to the point of death – the Lord heard and saw again.
         3. **A God who allows Himself to be seen?**
            1. Reason given – ***“Have I even remained alive here after seeing Him?” (v. 13b, NASB***)

“It is God as seen, even more than as seeing, that is the theme of the two verses” (Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, VOLUME 1, Genesis, Derek Kidner)

* + - * 1. **Well named – Beer Lahai Roi** – “’well of the seeing alive,’ i.e., at which a man saw God and remained alive.” (Keil and Delitzsch – Keil) ***(“Well of the One Who Lives and Sees Me,” NKJV fn***)
        2. NOTE: **(v. 11)** – Ishmael, for the Lord has heard (**cf. Exodus 3:7** – seen, heard, know).

Metaphor – God is Spirit – neither eyes nor ears – when He hears, He sees, and vice versa.

Does not the revelation of Himself presuppose His sight and concern for those to whom He makes Himself known? (**Cf. Psalm 8:4)**

* + 1. **The account expresses the wonderful reality that each unique person, and their unique circumstances, are within the field of God’s vision, and that He cares enough about who and what He sees to make Himself known and provide aid.**
       1. NOTE: A sobering, as much as comforting, thought – **cf. Hebrews 4:13**

1. You Are the God Who Sees
2. Our Works
   1. ***“she fled…the Angel of the Lord found her…” (Genesis 16:6-7)***.
      1. ***“maidservant” (Genesis 16:1***) – had a responsibility.
      2. **Genesis 16:9** – submit yourself.
   2. God saw Hagar’s affliction, but His appearance was not merely for comfort:
      1. Acknowledgment – ***“the Lord has heard your affliction” (v. 11).***
      2. Admonition – ***“Return…and submit” (v. 9).***
         1. Preceded the acknowledgment.
         2. Regardless of Sarah’s treatment, or of Hagar’s circumstances, it was wrong for her to flee.
         3. ***“be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh…because of conscience toward God” (1 Peter 2:18-19).***
   3. ***“I know your works”*** – **Revelation 2:2, 9, 13, 19; 3:1, 8, 15**
      1. Will give accordingly – **Revelation 2:23**
      2. So, He lovingly rebukes and chastens – **Revelation 3:19**
      3. He knows good works, and promises reward – **Revelation 2:8-11; 3:7-8, 12**
   4. He sees works of faith – **Hebrews 11:6, 13-16** – not ashamed to be called their God.
      1. **James 2:18-23** – called the friend of God due to God’s observation of His working faith.
      2. He sees all service of love as works of faith in Him – **Matthew 25:40**
   5. He sees the works of faith in the past as a reason for confidence of better things in the future (when presently in need of repentance) – **Hebrews 6:7-12**
      1. Certainly, present danger – **(vv. 4-8)**
      2. Not rebuke for destruction, but restoration – **(v. 9)**
      3. Confidence based on what has been seen – **(vv. 10-12)**
3. Our Circumstances
   1. Hagar’s circumstances:
      1. It appears she was headed back to Egypt ***(“Egyptian maidservant,” v. 1***) – **Genesis 16:7** – “Hagar no doubt intended to escape to Egypt by a road used from time immemorial, that ran from Hebron past Beersheba, ‘by the way of Shur.’” (Keil and Delitzsch)
      2. Pharaoh’s treatment of Abram concerning Sarai – **Genesis 12:16** – so Hagar was abruptly uprooted from her life in Egypt and sent with a wandering stranger.
      3. On top of this she was put into the difficult position as one under another’s command to be joined to Abram who already had a wife. Then was dealt with harshly by Sarah after the plan contrived by her led to Hagar’s pride.
      4. Did it justify her actions of fleeing? No. Did God show her compassion considering her circumstances? Yes!
   2. God is aware that each person has unique circumstances, for good or bad, and has ensured sufficient provision for anyone to overcome.
      1. **Our circumstances may be worse than that of others – though, no doubt they are better than that of others.**
      2. **A relationship with God is not dependent on circumstances, but on God’s grace:**
         1. **Andrew, Peter, James, and John** – lowly fishermen
         2. **Matthew** – Tax Collector
         3. **Uneducated, untrained** – **Acts 4:13**
         4. **Paul** – born out of due time, persecutor – **cf. 1 Timothy 1:13-16** – pattern for all who will believe.
      3. ***“For many are called, but few are chosen” (Matthew 22:14).***
         1. **One reason – some allow their circumstances to eclipse God’s grace rather than allowing God’s grace to change their circumstances.**
         2. **John 5:5-9** – His circumstances were unfortunate, and surely put him at a disadvantage, but did not take away his sincere desire to be well, and certainly were no match for Jesus’ power.
         3. Some may feel that they have unfavorable circumstances – upbringing, environment, health, etc. – but that should only strengthen our resolve to lean on the Lord. (**cf. Matthew 11:28-30** – come find rest)
   3. God has seen the circumstances of all and calls them even more – **1 Corinthians 1:26-31** – That he who glories would glory in Him.
   4. The fact that there are so many circumstances of varying difficulty for each person, but only one gospel, should engender greater faith in its power for salvation – **1 Timothy 2:4; Romans 1:16**
4. Our Afflictions
   1. God heard Hagar’s affliction – **Genesis 16:11** – ***“Ishmael”*** – God Hears.
   2. He has sent His Son to see them firsthand – **Hebrews 2:10, 14, 17-18** – He Himself has suffered.
      1. He wants us to push through the pain and struggle to realize joy as He did – **Hebrews 12:1-4**
      2. He has overcome the body of corruption that we might as well – **1 John 3:3**
   3. He has been through emotional affliction:
      1. He Himself has groaned – **John 11:33**
      2. He Himself has wept – **John 11:35**
      3. But He is the resurrection and the life – **John 11:25-27**
         1. Does not want us to sorrow as others who have no hope – **1 Thessalonians 4:13-14**
         2. He wants us to have confidence ourselves – **2 Timothy 1:12**
   4. He sees our spiritual affliction, and has not ignored us, but has provided us salvation – **Romans 5:6-8; Mark 16:15-16** (every creature)

**Conclusion**

1. The account of Hagar provides us much needed insight into the perception of God.
2. God sees us in all our troubles and has made Himself visible through His word that we might receive all we need by His grace.