

## WHAT'S IN A NAME: The God Who Sees

Scripture used: [Genesis 15:1-6](#); [Genesis 16:4-6](#); [Genesis 16:7-13](#); [Genesis 17:4-5, 20](#)

### OVERVIEW

Pastor Ezemdi brings today's message highlighting two names of God—**El Roi (the God who sees)** and **El Shaddai (God Almighty)**. He takes us into Genesis 16 and 17, walking through the story of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar. In their struggles with waiting, infertility, and broken relationships, God reveals Himself as the One who sees us in our pain and the Almighty who is faithful to keep His covenant promises.

### KEY POINTS

#### 1. Context of the Story (Genesis 15:1–6)

Abram, whose name meant “exalted father,” and Sarai, whose name meant “princess,” were elderly and wealthy but had no children. This was a deep tension in their lives, because not only did they long for a child, but they also had no one to inherit their wealth. In Genesis 15, God stepped into their story with a promise: Abram would have a son, and his descendants would be as numerous as the stars. Though circumstances made it seem impossible, God called Abram to trust His word and live by faith.

#### 2. Challenges in Marriage & Hurt People Hurt People (Genesis 16:4–6)

As time went on, the waiting became too painful for Abram and Sarai. Struggling with infertility—a painful reality in a culture where children were seen as blessings and a sign of prosperity—they decided to take matters into their own hands. They involved Sarai's servant, Hagar, in their plan to have a child, which only led to more brokenness. Sarai likely carried the trauma of not being able to conceive, while Hagar, far from home, probably never wanted to live her life as a servant. Though polygamy was accepted in the culture, Genesis shows us the pain and destruction it caused in families. This story reminds us that marriage is beautiful but requires hard work, and when we act from hurt, we often end up hurting others.

#### 3. Hagar Runs Away but God Pursues Her (Genesis 16:7–13)

Hurt and mistreated, Hagar chose to run away. Yet in the wilderness, God pursued her. He sent an angel who met her in her pain, acknowledged her struggle, and gave her guidance. The Lord told her to return but also assured her that she was seen and cared for. Moved by this encounter, Hagar gave God the name **El Roi – “the God who sees me.”** This moment highlights God's compassion and His willingness to draw near to those who feel overlooked or forgotten.

#### 4. God Changes Names & Establishes His Covenant (Genesis 17:4–5, 20)

God's promises to Abram and Sarai did not fail. In Genesis 17, God gave them new names: Abram became Abraham, meaning “father of many nations,” and Sarai became Sarah, meaning “princess.” With this name change, God was marking His covenant with them and reminding them of His faithfulness. At the same time, God revealed Himself as El Shaddai – God Almighty, the One powerful enough to bring His promises to pass. Importantly, even while establishing His covenant with Abraham and Sarah, God also showed care for Hagar and Ishmael, proving His compassion extends beyond what we might expect.

## DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Share a time when you felt unseen but realized later that God was with you.
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - When God changes Abram's and Sarai's names, He gives them a new identity tied to His covenant promises. In Christ, we also receive a new identity as God's children ([Galatians 3:29](#)). How should understanding our "new name" or identity in Christ reshape the way we live, especially when our present circumstances don't yet match God's promises?
- 3) **DO** - God is both the One who sees us in our struggles (El Roi) and the Almighty who can fulfill His promises (El Shaddai). This week, trust that His timing is perfect, even when it feels delayed. Remember that you are never unseen, and look for ways to show compassion to someone who may be feeling overlooked.