



El Roi

The God Who Sees

Genesis 16:13-14

The Hebrew word ראה (rā'â) occurs several times throughout the story of Abraham, Gen 12:1 being the first occurrence and 24:64 the last.

ראה means "to see" in the base stem (Qal) and "to cause to see = to show" or "to be seen = to appear" in the derived stems (Hiphil and Niphal).

God Who Sees Us

- Hagar calls God “El Roi” and the place where God appears to her “Beer-lahai-roi” because he providentially cares for her after she runs away from Sarai - Gen 16:13-14.
- Because his “vision” is unlimited, the Bible often uses the metaphor of eyes and seeing to describe the omniscience and omnipresence of God - Ps 33:13-15; Prov 15:3.
- Depending on one’s relationship to him, the “all-seeing eye” (omniscience) of God represents either condemnation or consolation - Gen 18:21; Ps 11:4-5; Heb 4:13; 2 Chron 16:9a.

God Who Causes Us to See

- God not only sees us but also causes us to see him and the truth of his promises, which requires that we put our faith in him - Gen 12:1, 7; 13:14-15; 17:1; 18:1, 2; 21:19; cf. 15:6, 18.
- Abraham does not always know why God asks him to do certain tasks (e.g., sacrifice Isaac), but he trusts and obeys without hesitation - Gen 12:1; cf. Heb 11:8-19.
- God requires Abraham to obey him "blindly" to show him that he (God) is seeing to the outcome himself (i.e., providing) - Gen 22:2, 4, 8, 13, 14; cf. 2 Chron 3:1; 1 Chron 21:28.

God Whom We "See"

- Faith enables us to "see" him whom we cannot yet see and assures us that he will one day bring us before him to see him face to face - Heb 11:1; cf. v. 27; 2 Cor 5:1-10; John 20:29-31.
- Because we know that God sees us, we can face the present trials, trusting his providence and anticipating our (ultimate) salvation - Rom 8:18-39 (esp. vv. 18, 24-25, 32); 1 Pet 1:3-9.
- When we "see" God and his works, we will trust him, worship him, and imitate him so that we can see him just as he is on the last day - Gen 12:7; 22:13-14; 1 John 2:28-3:3.

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