

**Count the Stars**  
*“Ishmael”*

**GETTING STARTED**

ICE BREAKER: What is something you’ve named (car, pet, object, etc.), and why did that name matter to you?

KEY THOUGHT: ***God sees our distress and affliction, and He hears***

**GETTING THE POINT**

Read Genesis 16:1-16

1. What signs do you see in Genesis 16 that Abram and Sarai were struggling to trust God’s timing and promises?
2. Sarai says, “The Lord has prevented me from bearing children” (v. 2). How do pain and disappointment sometimes shape the way people view God?
3. Why do you think Abram went along with Sarai’s plan so quickly? What does this reveal about fear, impatience, or passivity?
4. What were the consequences of Abram and Sarai trying to “help” God fulfill His promise? What stands out to you about the ripple effects of their decision?
5. Read verses 7–13 again. What is surprising or significant about the way God treats Hagar in the wilderness?
6. Hagar calls God “El Roi” — “The God Who Sees Me.” Why would that name have been especially meaningful to her?

**GOING DEEPER**

1. What is the difference between faithful action and trying to force God’s hand?
2. Hagar felt invisible, mistreated, and alone. Why is it important that God chose to reveal Himself to someone like Hagar in this story?
3. Which of the names of God mentioned in the sermon most encourages you right now, and why?
  - El Roi — The God Who Sees
  - Jehovah-Jireh — The Lord Provides
  - Jehovah-Shalom — The Lord Our Peace
  - Jehovah-Shammah — The Lord Is There

**PRAY...**

*Spend a few minutes praying honestly about areas of distress, waiting, disappointment, or impatience. Thank God that He is El Roi — the God who sees — and ask for faith to trust Him rather than forcing your own solutions.*