



## Word on Wednesday Bible Study

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*April 29, 2026*

*After The Trauma: The God Sees Me*

*Genesis 16*

ANCHOR VERSE: *"Truly here I have seen him who looks after me."* Genesis 16:13 (ESV)

1. **DEFINING TRAUMA:** Many of us have lived with trauma for years without ever being given language for it. Let's start by giving it a name.

### A WORKING DEFINITION

Trauma is the lasting emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical \_\_\_\_\_ to an event or pattern of events that \_\_\_\_\_ a person's ability to cope, \_\_\_\_\_ their sense of safety, and \_\_\_\_\_ the way they see themselves, others, and God.

### FOUR THINGS TO NOTICE ABOUT TRAUMA

1. It is a \_\_\_\_\_, not just an event.

*Dr. Diane Langberg: "Trauma is not just an event—it is an experience that overwhelms the capacity to cope."*

2. It is \_\_\_\_\_-person.

*Bessel van der Kolk: "The body keeps the score." Trauma touches mind, emotions, body, and soul.*

3. It shatters \_\_\_\_\_.

Especially deep when the people or places that should have been safe became the source of pain.

4. It distorts \_\_\_\_\_.

Trauma reshapes how we see ourselves, others, and God.

## **CATEGORIES OF TRAUMA** (Check any that you want to think more about this week)

- Acute trauma — a single overwhelming event
- Chronic trauma — repeated, prolonged exposure
- Complex trauma — multiple traumatic experiences, often beginning in childhood
- Secondary/vicarious trauma — wounding from caring for or witnessing others' trauma
- Generational/collective trauma — pain passed down through families and peoples

## **2. THE PAIN OF BEING USED**

*Genesis 16:1–6*

Key Phrase to Circle in Your Bible

“ \_\_\_\_\_ ” — Genesis 16:3

Hagar was not consulted. She was not asked. She was assigned. She was valued not for who she was, but for what she could produce.

Big Idea: A lot of trauma begins when people are treated as \_\_\_\_\_ instead of \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Howard Thurman on Misuse**

*“Systems of power and misuse don’t just harm the body... they corrupt the souls of everyone involved.”*

Some of the pain we carry was never supposed to be ours to carry in the first place. Someone else’s \_\_\_\_\_ found its way into your body, your heart, your story.

### 3. THE PAIN OF BEING UNSEEN

*Genesis 16:7–13*

The Heart of the Story

Two Truths That Sit Side by Side

- Trauma makes people feel \_\_\_\_\_ — even in a crowded room.
- God \_\_\_\_\_ Hagar before she \_\_\_\_\_ Him.

The Name She Gave God:

EL \_\_\_\_\_ —  
“The God Who \_\_\_\_\_ Me.”

This is the only name for God in all of Scripture given by a human being — and it was given by a foreign, enslaved, pregnant woman in the wilderness.

Henri Nouwen on Presence

*The people who help us most are not those who give us advice but those who “share our pain and touch our wounds with a warm and tender hand.”*

60 Seconds of Silence

*Where do I most need God to see me right now?*  
(You don’t have to share. Just let Him see.)

### 4. THE PAIN OF BEING UNSETTLED

*Genesis 16:10–12*

What God Does — and What He Does Not Do



God speaks \_\_\_\_\_... but He does not remove the \_\_\_\_\_.

Sometimes God speaks into your life in a way that gives you direction ... but not immediate relief.

## WHAT TRAUMA DOES TO IDENTITY

Trauma leaves you asking questions you never had to ask before:

“Where do I \_\_\_\_\_?”

“What comes \_\_\_\_\_?”

“Who am I \_\_\_\_\_?”

Read aloud:

*“Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me?” — Psalm 42:5*

Weak Anchors (Circle any you have reached for)

control • performance • money • relationships • achievement • reputation  
• busyness • numbness • denial • self-reliance • distraction • avoidance

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

What Trauma Disrupts, God Restores

Read Colossians 2:6–7 aloud:

*“Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him,  
\_\_\_\_\_ and built up in him and \_\_\_\_\_ in the  
faith...”*

## 5. ANCHORED IN EL ROI

The Big Idea of the Whole Study

Healing does not begin with \_\_\_\_\_.

It begins with being \_\_\_\_\_.

### SCRIPTURES OF ANCHORING

Psalms 34:18 — *“The LORD is near to the \_\_\_\_\_ and saves the crushed in spirit.”*

Psalms 62:8 — *“\_\_\_\_\_ out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us.”*

Psalms 139:1 — *“O LORD, you have \_\_\_\_\_ me and \_\_\_\_\_ me.”*

Curt Thompson

*“We are most deeply changed when we are \_\_\_\_\_.”*

### MY TAKE-HOME TRUTHS

Trauma may be part of my story, but it is not the \_\_\_\_\_ of my identity.

Before God changes my situation, He confirms my \_\_\_\_\_.

People may overlook me, but God knows how to \_\_\_\_\_ me.

What history overlooks, \_\_\_\_\_ notices.

I am not invisible. I am not forgotten. I am not disqualified. I am \_\_\_\_\_.



## **IF YOU NEED HELP**

*Your pastor is not your therapist. If something surfaced that needs more care, please reach out. Some patterns we cannot break alone, and we are not meant to.*

- 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline — Call or text 988 (free, confidential, 24/7)
- National Domestic Violence Hotline — 1-800-799-7233 or text START to 88788
- RAINN (Sexual Assault) — 1-800-656-4673
- Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline — 1-800-422-4453

## **FINDING A CHRISTIAN COUNSELOR**

- American Association of Christian Counselors — [aacc.net](http://aacc.net)
- Psychology Today — [psychologytoday.com](http://psychologytoday.com) (filter by faith and specialty)

## **BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY**

- *Suffering and the Heart of God* by Diane Langberg
- *The Body Keeps the Score* by Bessel van der Kolk
- *Anatomy of the Soul* by Curt Thompson
- *Try Softer* by Aundi Kolber

*El Roi — The God who sees — is still watching over you right now.*