

# *The Names and Character of God*

*"But the people who know their God shall prove themselves strong and shall stand firm, and do mighty exploits [for God.]" Daniel 11:32 AMPC*

*"They that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee;  
For Thou, Lord has not forsaken them that seek Thee." Psalm 9:10*

## *Portion for the Journey*

The Psalmist says *"The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it and is safe."* **Prov. 18:10** His Name is a refuge to us and we can literally run into His name to find safety!

**A person's name is highly significant in each of our lives.** Our name describes not only who we are, but is essential in all promises and contracts that we make. A check or legal document is of no value unless we place our name on it. In knowing God's name, we know His character, and His nature and His covenant promises to His children. The more we know His name, the more we can be assured that we can trust Him to the uttermost. His name is His bond! *"Some trust in chariots and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God. They are brought down and fallen, but we are risen and stand upright."* **Ps. 20:7**

**The Hebrew word for 'name' used in the OT is 'sam' (pronounced 'shame').** It means name, character, reputation and individualization. It speaks of the honor and authority that come from one's name or reputation. (Strong's H8034) The Hebrew word נשמה (neshamah, Strong's #5397) is formed by adding the letters מ (m) and ה (h) to the word שם (shem). This word is used in Genesis 2:7 and means "breath." This is the word used in Genesis when God created man. "And the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and he blew in his nostrils the breath (נשמה) of life and the man became a living soul. God literally breathed His name into man when He gave him life!!

Jeff A. Benner, a Hebrew scholar tells us, "Our Western understanding of the breath does not easily grasp the concept that a breath can teach. While our Western understanding can easily associate thoughts and emotions as the function of the "mind", the Easterner sees the same function in the "breath". The "breath" of both men and God has the ability to carry thought and emotion. A "name" is a person's "breath," his character."

**Our Father is called the "Ever-Revealing One."** He wants us to know Him and have an intimate relationship with Him. From the first words of the Bible, He has steadily given us His Names by which we can know His personality, character and very essence. Beginning in Genesis God progressively reveals His name in with greater revelation of His person all the way to Revelations when we see Jesus in His full glory! Jesus is the fullest and most perfect manifestation of His name. God has given His children His names as a means of granting them a greater knowledge of Himself. God revealed each of His names to His people when they needed them in moments when they were in great crisis. **Eccles. 3:11 AMPC**

In his book, "The Name of God," Kevin J. Connor states, "It is the Word of God that unveils, unfolds, and reveals the glories of the Name of God in all of its wonder, glory, beauty and majesty. The Word of God and the Name of God are absolutely inseparable in the Plan and Purpose of God in His redemptive manifestation and revelation to His Creatures." **Job 11:7; Matt. 11:25-28; Acts 17:23; Ps 138:2; 1 Sam. 3:21; Deut. 29:29**



Thomas a Kempis prayed, "Write your blessed name, o Lord, upon my heart, there to remain so indelibly engraved, that no prosperity, no adversity shall ever move me from your love. Be to me a strong tower of defense, a comforter in tribulation, a deliverer in distress, a very present help in trouble, and a guide to heaven through many temptations and dangers in this life." ~Thomas a Kempis (1380-1471)



**This progressive revelation begins in Genesis.** The Old Testament gives us three primary names for God: Elohim (God); Jehovah (LORD) and Adoni (Lord). From this we are given over 80 compound names and many descriptive titles. Genesis 1 only speaks of God as Elohim, the creator God who is God over ALL His creation. **Genesis 2** reveals YHWH (Jehovah LORD) who is the LORD over mankind and speaks of His essence and authority and covenant with man. He reveals additional aspects of His person to Abraham, as El Elyon (Most High God) in Genesis 15:2; Adonai (Ruler, Lord, Master) **Gen. 15: 1-2; 4-5**; El Olam (the secret name of God who exists without beginning or end) **Gen. 21:33**; Jehovah Jireh (The LORD our provider) **Gen. 22:14**. In Exodus, God reveals Himself as Jehovah Nissi (The LORD our Banner of Victory over our enemies) **Ex. 17:15**; Jehovah Raphe (The LORD our Healer) **Ex. 15:26**.

**Throughout the generations, men have wanted to know God's name.** We can be certain that God never changes and we can know Him in the same way men and women of past generations have known Him. **Ps. 8:1; 29:1-2; 48:10; 103:1; 113:3; 145:1-3 AMP**

- **Jacob:** "And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. **Gen.32:29-30 (KJV)**
- **Manoah:** "Manoah said unto the angel of the LORD, What is thy name, that when thy sayings come to pass we may do thee honor? And the angel of the LORD said unto him, Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is [Wonderful, a wonder, a Wonderful Secret] secret? **Judges 13:2-23 (esp. v. 17,18)**
- **Moses:** Moses knew it was significant that he could tell Israel God's Name along with God's promise to free them from their slavery. "Then Moses said to God, "Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you.' Now they may say to me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?" The express purpose of God was to reveal to Moses, Israel and all of the earth, that He alone is the One True God and there is no other! He is the Name above all names. **Ex. 3:13; Ex. 9:16; Ex. 33:11-23; Rom. 9:17**

## *Why do we study the Names of God?*

In the Word, the person's name is highly significant and is equated with character or essence of the person's identity. In the Bible, individual's names were personally given or changed by the Lord. The names the Lord chose for His people were descriptive of the person's character and often prophetic of His plans and purposes for them. Abigail's husband's name was Nabal which meant "fool" and this is

exactly how he behaved. When the LORD entered into covenant with His people, He often changed their name. These name changes were to establish their character or calling His kingdom purposes.

- **Abram's name**, meaning "father" was changed to Abraham meaning "father of multitudes" by the Lord to reflect His plans and purposes for him.
- **Sarai's name**, meaning "Princess" was changed to Sarah which meant "mother of nations."
- The Lord told Abraham and Sarah to name their son "Isaac" which means laughter. Through his line the Messiah was born, bringing joy to the whole world.
- **Jacob's name** was changed from "Jacob" which means deceiver or supplanter to Israel, meaning "having power with God." His twelve sons made up the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel. [Gen. 17:5, 15; Gen. 32:28](#)
- **John the Baptist's** father was given very specific instructions by the Lord in what they were to name their son.
- **Jesus changed Simon's name** from "God has heard," to Peter, meaning "the Rock." [John 1:42; Matt. 16:16-18](#)

**The names of God signify who He really is** and express His attributes and purposes. God is 100% true to His Name. He does not change! His name is totally trustworthy. They reveal His glory, grace, love, power and goodness. God has given His names to His children as a covenant so that we can know Him and trust completely in Him. Each one of His names gives us a greater knowledge of Him and leads us into greater intimacy with our loving Father. God wants us to know His name: [Isa. 52:6; Ps. 91:4, 14-16; Mic. 6:9](#)

**The Bible is full of promises for those who diligently seek to know God's name in order to know Him.**

As we know His promises to us through His name, we can depend upon Him more fully in our walk with Him. The more we know His name, the more we can be assured that He is a God in whom we can trust to the uttermost. *"But the people who know their God shall prove themselves strong and shall stand firm, and do mighty exploits [for God.]"* [Daniel 11:32 AMP](#)

- **It is sound wisdom to meditate on His Name!** *"Then those who feared the Lord talked often one to another; and the Lord listened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him of those who revered and worshipfully feared the Lord and who thought on His name."* [Mal. 3:16 AMP](#)
- **It is by His Name that we are saved!** His Name is our Salvation: [Joel 2:32; Ps. 54:1,6; 116:4; Acts 2:21; Rom. 10:13](#)
- **We will increase the intimacy of our relationship with Him.** We can be certain that God never changes and we can know Him in the same way men and women in past generations knew Him. [Ps. 8:1; 29:1-2; 48:10; 68:4; 103:1; 113:3; 145:1-3](#)
- **Knowing God's name allows us to put our hope in Him.** [Ps. 52:9](#)
- **To know Him is to be able to fully trust Him.** "They that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee: for Thou, Lord has not forsaken them that seek Thee." [Psalm 9:10; Isa. 50:10](#)

- **Knowing His name is essential in our ability to praise Him and worship Him.** [John 4:24](#) calls us to worship God in Spirit and in Truth. Knowing His name is a vital part of worshipping in in both Spirit and truth! Job modeled a life devoted to the LORD and when troubles descended on him, He responded with worship! [Job 1:21](#); [Dan. 2:20](#); [Ps. 5:11](#); [P. 7:17](#); [Neh. 1:11](#); [113:1-3](#); [Isa. 56:6](#)
- **Knowing His name allows us to call on His name in time of need.** The Psalmist says *"The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it and is safe."* In knowing His name, we know His character and His nature, that He is a God in whom we can trust to the uttermost in times of attack." [Ps. 18:10](#); [Gen. 4:26](#); [Ps. 124:8](#); [Ps. 18:1-6](#)
- **In time of battle, the LORD's name is a powerful defense against our enemies.** *"Through You we will push back our enemies; through Your name we will trample those who rise up against us."* [Ps. 44:4-5](#)

*"Some trust in chariots and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God. They are brought down and fallen, but we are risen and stand upright."* [Psalm 20:7-8](#)

- **God's name is the basis for our prayers to be answered.** His name gives us the power and authority to transact business on His behalf. *"And whatever you ask in My Name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."* [John 14:13](#); [Jer. 10:6](#); [1 Sam. 17:45](#)

**God's name is very important to His children.** It is ...

Our defense [Ps. 20:1](#)

Our help in time of need [Ps. 9:10](#)

Our comfort [Dan. 11:32](#)

A strong tower [Prov. 9:10](#)

A weapon [1 Sam. 17:45](#), [2 Chron. 14:11](#)

An ointment poured forth [Song of Solomon 1:3](#)

His Name is our Banner in time of war [Ps. 20:5-7](#)

## *You Shall Call His Name Jesus*

All of the names of God are summed up in the Person of Jesus Christ who came as the complete revelation of the Father. He is the embodiment of each of the names revealed in the Old Testament. Everything in the Church, done by believers, is to be done "in the Name of Jesus."

[John 17:5-6](#), [11,12](#), [26](#); [Heb. 2:12](#) ([Ps. 22:22](#)); [Eph. 1:21](#); [Eph. 4:7-10](#); [Col. 3:17](#)

## *Meditate on the Names of God*

God's name is very important to His children. God revealed Himself to His children with many different names and each name is a covenant promise to us because He is always faithful to His name and keeps His promises. Our response to the name of the Lord is to trust [Ps. 66:2](#); to give thanks, praise and bless [Ps. 100:4](#); pray and to lift up our hands in true worship [Ps. 63:4](#).

As you meditate upon His names and character you will find your love for Him deepening, your trust in His character growing, and your desire to worship and praise Him coming out of your meditation of His

nature. To study and meditate on His Name will greatly bless you and help you grow in your love and trust of our LORD!

**Suggestions for using the studies:** When I began this study back in the late 1970's there wasn't a lot of information available on the Names of God. I started the study, with a ream of notebook paper and a 3-ring binder. As I discovered a name of God in my daily reading, I wrote down the reference on the top of a page along with the reference. Each day, I would choose one of the names in my growing collection and meditate on that name. I used my concordance and made a list of the various places this name was used in the Word. I stayed with this one name until I had really felt I had learned all I could. I learned to look up the Hebrew and Greek meanings of the words and added reference materials to my study as I was able to find them. Invariably, the name upon which I was studying at the time became very relevant in my daily life! The promises linked with these names greatly deepened my faith and I found my relationship with the LORD growing and becoming really founded on my God, the Rock! I pray that this study will greatly bless you and help you grow in your love and trust of our LORD!

*"Then they that feared the Lord  
Spake often one to another  
And the Lord hearkened and heard it.  
And a book of remembrance was written  
Before Him for them that fear the Lord  
And that thought upon His name." Mal. 3:16*

*"Because I will publish the name of the LORD:  
ascribe ye greatness unto our God." Deut. 32:3*

*"Your Name and Your Renown  
are the desire of our hearts!"  
Isa. 26:8*