

Yahweh & Jehovah

The Names of God series #1

by Chris Famisaran

Good morning, everybody. Hope and pray you are all well. Glad to see you all here.

Let's pray. Father in heaven, thank you for the opportunity to gather together as we now begin a new series on the names of God, Lord. Thank you for who you are. Be with us in Jesus' name, amen. 2018, Roslyn Picard, an MIT professor and a follower of Jesus, helped invent a simple life-saving product called Embrace. What is Embrace about? It's essentially like a smartwatch and it helps those who have epilepsy. Now, this thought came out a couple of years ago, but at some point, and maybe still today, over 3,000 people lose their lives to epilepsy in the United States. And most of the common reasons is because of just its asphyxiation. And so what if somebody could design something that could help prevent or at least notify that they're about to have a seizure. But yet some seizures are so deep that a person's body can completely shut down and is not even able to signal the brain. Now there's one non-invasive intervention that can help. And with this watch with Embrace, it can help either send you a signal or to notify somebody. You have to be able to, for instance, the intervention that needs to take place needs to happen within a matter of minutes for the person to survive a seizure. And so somebody has to come to the rescue of this individual's who's having a seizure. So the Embrace sends an alert to you and then eventually to maybe a neighbor. Because if you live by yourself, who can help you? Hopefully your neighbor. Only the nearest person can help you out. And in order to do so, you need to be able to know who your neighbors are. You need to know your neighbors names. How many of you know your neighbors names? Some of them, not all of them necessarily. Or maybe you try to avoid your neighbors as much as possible. Amen. I'm still guilty of that sometimes, so I will speak with honesty. Or maybe you get new neighbors all the time. They may be there for a year and you kind of try to say hi and then they just move. So in order for us to have a possible full life. Maybe it's good to know your neighbors and not only that, know their names.

Names, are names important? Absolutely. Names are important because it's part of our identity. Parents, when you named your children, did you just open a book and just say, Craig or Amy, and that was it? deep thought into your names. Moms, did you think of names for years? Maybe starting as a child, when I have a child, I wanna name her Jennifer. I wanna name him Alexander, right? So names are not to be trifled with. Names are important. Are you named after somebody? So for instance, I'm named after my Uncle Chris, my Uncle Christopher. And not only that, some people maybe they name their names based on the circumstances. At the time, they were experiencing great joy, so they named their child Joy. In the Bible, there are some people who have very specific names. Unfortunately for Esau, he was named Esau because why? He was hairy. That's what Esau means. How unfortunate. Hey Hairy. Or his brother, Jacob. What does that mean? To follow. Okay. God couldn't give him a little bit better names.

Now, today we're going to be talking about the name of God, specifically that of Yahweh. And here are some of the passages that we're going to look at today. Hopefully we can get to all of them. If not, at least, you know, this is what we're going to be focusing on today.

Now, by the way, Yahweh, it comes up a lot in the Bible, but let's get to that. So Yahweh, what does Yahweh mean? It means to be or he who is. or I am and we'll get into that next week. Okay, but Yahweh means to be or He who is. How many times do you think Yahweh comes up in the Bible? How many? Ten? How about more than 6,000 times? OK. In the Hebrew Bible, by the way, the Old Testament. Also, fun fact, did you know that in the original Hebrew alphabet, there were no vowels. They only had consonants. The original Hebrew alphabet only had consonants. Of all the languages I've had to study, this was the most difficult, painful. And not only that, Hebrew, how do you read it? Do you read it from left to right? No, you read it right to left. It's backwards. This is one time I really struggled. OK. So if you were to look at the Bible and you were to read it, this is what Yahweh would look like. It would look like YHWH. And here are the Hebrew consonants (Yod He Waw He), Yod, Hey, Vav, Hey. In fact, let's do it all. Everybody, Yod, Hey, Vav, Hey. You just spoke Hebrew. Let's signify Yahweh. Yahweh is also known as a tetragrammaton.

Now, here's a thing though about the term, the name of God, specifically Yahweh. The Jewish believers revered and thought of God so eloquently, so highly, that they would never even speak the term Yahweh. Can you imagine that? So we need to talk about _____ and the wonderful works _____ that has done for us. That'd be kind of challenging, right? So what did they do? Well, they substituted two other words at times, especially when it came to reading. Okay. So they would instead use another term that was close to it of Adonai. So Jewish believers, okay, they revered, they respected God's name and considered it so sacred, Yahweh, that they would not even utter it instead using Adonai, which is also translated into Lord or Master. In the Greek, it's Kyrios. And Adonai as well, how many times has it come up? It's come up a lot, but there's other terms too. Adonai, it doesn't just refer to God, even Joseph, it's applied to him. But it's also used of God in Joshua 3, Zechariah, the Psalm 97, Micah. It's found in over 22 books of the Old Testament.

Now, Another name that I should have included here is also Elohim. And it's an ordinary word of God in the Old Testament. Okay. So oftentimes though, when you read Elohim, it's the plural form, but when it's referring to God, it's singular. Okay. And it appears over 2,500 times, except for also every book, except for the Song of Solomon, Lamentations, Obadiah, and Esther. Now. One of the things I love about Yahweh is we consider that Yahweh is God's personal name.

Let's go to Genesis chapter 2. I want to go to Genesis chapter 2. We're going to look at a couple of passages where Yahweh is mentioned. And I want to start at verse four. Okay, we all there? Okay, starting at verse four, let's read the creation account. This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, when the Lord God made the earth and the heavens. Now, what's unique as well about how the Lord, in your Bible, is it all capitalized? Some Bibles capitalize God's name here, okay? And that's intentional. Now, no shrub had yet appeared on the earth and no plant had yet sprung up, for the Lord had not sent rain on the earth and there was no one to work the ground. But streams came up from the earth, watered the whole surface on the ground, and then the Lord God made a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. And the man became a living being. Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the East, an Eden, and there he put the man he had formed. The Lord God made all kinds of trees to grow out of the ground, trees that were pleasing to

the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. A river running through watering this garden flowed into Eden. From there, it separated into the headwaters. Actually, let's just jump down to verse 15. The Lord God took man and put him in the garden, put to work and take care of it. And the Lord God commanded the man, you are free to eat from any tree in the garden, but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil for from it, when you eat it, you will certainly what? You'll die. Okay. But the Lord God. Yahweh Elohim said, It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him. Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky and brought them to the man to see what he would name them. And whatever that man called each living creature, that was its name. So the name. So the man gave names to all the lies sock, the birds of the sky, all the wild animals. But for Adam, no suitable helper was found. So the Lord God caused the man to follow. into deep sleep and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh and then the Lord God made a woman from the rib. He had taken out of the man and he brought her to the man. The man said, this is now bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh. She shall be called woman for he was taken out of man. That is why a man leaves his father and mother and united to his wife and they become one flesh. Okay. So.

What are some of the characteristics of Yahweh in this passage? Yahweh is personal. How personal can you be when Yahweh breathes into Adam or Adom? Right? And if we also read in this passage, does God just create Adam and Eve and disappear? No, God communed with Adam and Eve regularly. But Yahweh is not only personal, Yahweh also provides. Because did He just leave Adam and Eve by themselves? No. He gave them responsibility actually to help manage and to care. What was one of Adam's first responsibilities? To name all of the animals, right? So God is personal. God provides. God gives Adam responsibility, and God recognized that Adam was alone. So therefore Eve comes into the picture and they can live life together. Yahweh is relational. And we see from the very beginning that we have God, we have Adam and Eve, essence of community. I know I've said this before. What did God want? He wanted to be with others. And at the very end of Revelation, what is the picture that we're left with? God with what? God's people.

Now, there are so many things that we could go dive deeper to, but we just don't have enough time. So, yet we see that Yahweh to be, He breathed into Adam life. Now, Adam was not a God, but He created Adam. He made something to be.

If we jump over now, I want to go to Genesis 15. Here's another account where Yahweh reaches out to another individual by the name of who? Abram. He's not Abraham yet. That will happen later. All right, Genesis 15, are we there? Okay, after this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision. Don't be afraid, Abram, I am your shield, your very great reward. But Abram said, sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless? The one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus. What's the problem with Abram? He has no kids. He has no one to give an inheritance. And Abram said, you have given me no children. So a servant in my household will be my heir. And then the word of the Lord came to him. Okay, the Lord Yahweh Adonai. The man will not be your heir, but a son is your own flesh and blood will be your heir. He took him outside and said, look up into the sky and count the stars. If indeed you can count them. And then he said to him, so shall be your offspring. What is Yahweh Adonai telling Abram? He's gonna have a lot of kids, but there's a promise. And if we continue and read the story, does the promise, is it fulfilled? Absolutely, okay. So starting at, let's go back to verse six. So Abram believed the Lord and was credited to him as what?

Righteousness. In verse seven, he says, I am the Lord who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it. But Abram said, sovereign Lord, how can I know that I will gain possession of it? So the Lord said to him, bring me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old with a dove and a young pigeon. And Abram brought all of these to him. He cut them into, arranged them into halves. Across the birds, however, he did not cut in half. And the birds of prey came down on the carcasses, but Abram drove them away. As the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him. The Lord said to him, know for certain that 400 years of your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, that they will be enslaved and mistreated here. What is God telling him? What is Yahweh telling him now? That in the future, his descendants will be what? They will be enslaved. And where were they enslaved? Egypt. But did God leave them there? No, because next week we're going to talk about Moses, where the I Am also sets them free. Verse 14, but I will punish the nation they serve as slaves and afterward they will come out

with great possessions. You, however, will go to your ancestors in peace and be buried at a good old age. And the fourth generation, your descendants, will come back here. for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure. When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking pyre pot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces. On that day, the Lord made what? A covenant with Abram and said to your descendants, I will give this land from the Wadi of Egypt to the great river of the Euphrates, the land of the Canaanites, Kadamites, Hittites, Perazites, Raphites, Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites, and Jebusites." What a mouthful, amen? The promise here that we can take is that Yahweh, Adonai, is one who fulfills Yahweh's promises, amen? We have a God who fulfills God's promises. But also, I love this too. He says, let's go back to verse one. God is not just a promise keeper. And it says in verse one, do not be afraid Abram, I am your what? Your shield. And so Yahweh, Adonai is not just a shield, but Yahweh is also protector. Another beautiful promise and another side of God to see that Yahweh. is someone that we can entrust our lives to, to not be fearful. So God kept his promise.

Yet to some degree though, because out of the... This was the first time that God had appeared blatantly to Abram. In a way, it's beautiful because God is mysterious. We don't always know what God's going to do. Amen? And that's okay. I think sometimes a little mystery is good. But yet God revealed God's self with strength and vigor and kept his promise.

Now another thing that maybe some people ask is Jehovah related to Yahweh? The best I understand is Jehovah is a Latinization of Yahweh. They took the vowels of Adonai and applied it to Jehovah. And that's why and to with the J and that's how they come up with Jehovah. Got it? Got it.

So are the names of Yahweh and Jehovah the same? Well, technically it's Yahweh. But later on to help understand Latinization, they called it Jehovah.

So Back in 2014, what did Amazon release? Anybody know? Alexa. They released the virtual assistant, Alexa. How many of you have Alexa? Don't give your hands up. Now, unfortunately, however, many women and young girls are, across the nation are, they are lamenting this name because Their name, they came up with it first, they were born with this name, and now has been hijacked by Alexa. And when something like that happens, what usually follows? Ridicule. Teasing. The

Washington Post did a survey based on the Social Security Administration's names that were released. They found, I think that it was in 2016, over 6,000 baby girls were named Alexa. But in the years since 2016, the name Alexa has greatly dwindled. Now, Alexa Morales was contacted by the Washington Post about her predicament, and she says, when I hear my name, it doesn't bring good thoughts. It's like it's tensing. Morales eventually also started to go by Lex as a way to distance herself from the Amazon product. It's almost like you guys have so much money and so many people working for you that not one person could think, maybe we should change the name to a little more generic so we don't infringe on somebody's name. The thought, Alexa Smith also asserts, I've heard all the jokes at this point. Somebody thought it was even funny just to call me Siri at work. That was rude. Now, when Amazon was contacted, they offered this statement. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and we condemn it in the strongest possible terms. We designed our voice assistant to reflect qualities we value in people. Being smart, considerate, empathetic, and inclusive. As an alternative to Alexa, we offer several other words customers can choose from. Echo, computer, Amazon, and Ziggy. Has your name been hijacked before and it's now not what it needs to be? Imagine any woman named Karen. I feel for you, okay? Because that name has been misused and abused. I know several Karens and they're wonderful people. Why are you laughing at me? Now, is it wrong to call somebody that? Well, is it wrong to tease people? Yes, we should not tease people. We shouldn't mock people. It's never appropriate to mock other people, especially when it comes to their names.

Now, let me ask you this. How many times do you mock God's name? Jokingly, trying to be funny. Yet what does Exodus 20 verse seven, the third commandment say? Don't misuse my name. You know, your parents, do you ever take their name in vain? Oh, Fred or Joanna. No, because it's ridiculous. Right. But yet we're so quick sometimes in our thoughts, maybe not, it doesn't come out verbally, but sometimes in our thoughts, we maybe disrespect God's name. If we truly love God and recognize God as our Lord and Savior, are we going to dishonor God's name? Remember the reverence and the respect that the Jewish believers had. They did not even want to say the name Yahweh. They could read it in their heads, but they dared not disrespect it because that is how valuable, how they valued and respected and revered and were awed by God. My question. Do I treat God's

name in my thoughts and speech with reverence and respect? Now, not to be a Debbie Downer, but I think it's sometimes so easy for us. Just let things fly, let things slip. Even though we may not say it, it could still be in our thoughts. So is my word, are my words and my thoughts pleasing and respectable of God's name?

This week, pray and acknowledge God as your Lord and Savior through various different names such as Lord and Adonai. Change up your prayers a little bit. Maybe use Elohim. There are many other names we're going to be using down the road in the next six weeks. So I look forward to journeying with you.

Next week, we're going to talk about Exodus 3, God as the I Am.

Let us pray. Father in heaven, thank you Lord for another beautiful Sabbath day that you have blessed us with. Help us to go forth to Lord revere you with honor of love. And thank you Lord for you are a God, you Yahweh are a God of promise. You are personal, you are not distant Lord. You are providential, you are caring. And as you also said to Abraham, you are our shield. May we never forget that. Help us Lord to be the faithful ambassadors that you've called us to be. Forgive us Lord of our shortcomings. Help us to see all that you're doing. Lord, we give you all of our troubles, all of our concerns to you. Help us to be faithful to you in Jesus' name. Everybody said, Amen.

Grace and peace everyone.