

God has a Name – Adonai

4/28/24

Genesis 15:1-9

Sunday AM

Do you remember the struggle to name your children? Meg/I spent hours considering names for our kids. We looked thru countless books, websites, and family trees. We asked questions like – do we want to use a family name, a Biblical name, or a name w/ meaning?

Why all the hassle? B/c a person's name is important.

Johnny Cash “cashed” in on this idea in the song “A Boy Named Sue.” In the song an absentee father named his son “Sue” so he'd learn to defend himself.

Names are important b/c they identify who we are – they help shape our personality/identity – and help to foster our character and connection w/ others.

In some contexts, I'm Pastor Joey or Dr. Rodgers. My wife calls me honey, while my children call me dad. Of course, whenever my mom called me by my full name when I was a kid – Joseph Italo Rodgers, I knew my name was 'mud'. When I was ordained, my sister asked if she was to call me reverend – and I told her that she could call me the most, high right reverend humble servant of God, or Joey (she chose O brother).

When it comes to God's name, His name is more than a title, it's a statement of His personhood/character – a revelation of His being.

Thru-out Scripture, God used many names to reveal Himself to us so that we might know and trust Him.

This AM, I want us to embark on a study of God's name to discover who He is and who He promises to be in our lives. I want us to gain an understanding of the very nature/character of God. But before we jump into His name, let's first discuss why study His name.

We're **COMMANDED** to Honor His Name

*You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. Exodus 20:7*

In the 10 Commandments, the 3<sup>rd</sup> command calls us to honor His name. This is more than not using His name in a cussing tirade – *it means to revere/honor His name by giving Him the respect due Him b/c you know Him.*

We're **COMPELLED** to Praise His Name

*I will exalt you, my God and King; I will praise your name forever and ever. Every day I will praise you and extol your name forever. Psalm 145:1-2*

By knowing His name, we're enabled to worship/trust Him more effectively b/c we know who He is and who He wants to be in our lives. It's a simple principle – the more you know and understand someone, the more you're enabled to enjoy and respond to who they are and what they can do.

We're **CHALLENGED** to Trust His Name

*The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe. Proverbs 18:10*

God's name is a fortress that protects His people. What's interesting is that God has multiple names w/ each name depicting who He is and what He can and will do. The key is learning His name(s) so that we might learn to trust Him for who He claims to be.

God gave us His name to help us to **KNOW** Him and **TRUST** Him. He gave us His name to **REVEAL** to us His person/character to **RELATE** to us so that we might know/walk w/ Him.

**WTM** – Let's dive into the 1<sup>st</sup> name. It's the name *Adonai*. **Adonai** is used some 434x in the O.T. and over 750x in the N.T. and is translated Lord – in caps.

**Adonai** means – *God is the Lord of all* – that **He is the master, ruler, and owner of everything** – implying that *nothing* escapes God or catches Him by surprise as He *knows* all, *sees* all, and *controls* all speaking to His sovereign Lordship/rule over all creation.

*The earth is Adonai's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for Adonai founded it on the seas and established it on the waters. Who may ascend the mountain of Adonai? Who may stand in Adonai's holy place? The one who has clean hands and a pure heart, who doesn't trust in an idol or swear by a false god. They will receive blessings from Adonai and vindication from God their Savior. Such is the generation of those who seek Adonai, who seek your face, God of Jacob. Lift your heads, you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? Adonai strong/mighty, Adonai mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, you gates; lift them up, you ancient doors, so the King of glory may come in. Who is He, this King of glory? The El Shaddai – Adonai is the King of glory. Psalm 24:1-10*

## I Biblical **ILLUSTRATION**

The 1<sup>st</sup> use of Adonai occurs in Genesis. In Genesis 12, Abram is called to leave his country to follow God – and he obeys God until Egypt where he lies to protect his wife. From there, Abram/Lot move on and are so blessed by God that they have to separate. Of course, Abram is called on to rescue Lot from his struggle w/ S/G. By Genesis 15, things have settled down and appear good. So, while Abe knows God is large and in charge, he begins to question God about His promise to make him a great nation b/c he still doesn't have an heir – so, Abram calls out to **Adonai**.

After this, **Adonai** came to Abram in a vision: “Don't be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward.” But Abram said, “Sovereign **Adonai**, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who'll inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus? You have given me no children, so a servant in my household will be my heir.” **Adonai** said, “This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your flesh/blood will be your heir.” He then took Abram outside and said, “Look at the sky and count the stars – if you can count them.” He said, “So shall your offspring be.” Abram believed **Adonai** and it was credited to him as righteousness. God also said, “I am the **Adonai**, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it.” But Abram said, “Sovereign **Adonai**, how can I know I will gain possession of it?” So, Adonai said, “Bring me a heifer, a goat, and a ram – each 3 yrs old, along w/ a dove and a young pigeon.” Genesis 15:1-9

**From here** – God cut a covenant w/ Abram promising him that He'd honor His blessing.

**Notice** – Abe called God the sovereign **Adonai** w/ His lips, but in his heart, he seemed to be filled w/ doubt. So, God took him outside, showed Abe the heavens – and told him to count the stars – all to make a point.

When was struggling to finish college b/c of a lack of funds and personal frustration, my grandmother pulled me to the side and gave me a present – a picture frame w/ a note reading – this is for your diploma. This gesture changed everything bringing things into view.

**God says** – Abe I placed the stars in the heavens, do you think your childlessness is insurmountable to me?

Abe was suffering from **ME-ology**. Me-ology is when we can't see beyond ourselves b/c we've made life only about us. When Abe didn't understand God's plan and made it all about himself, he balked at the Creator. So, God was forced to take him thru a process to teach him that He is the **Adonai** – the Lord of all.

God often has to take us thru a similar process to bring us to the reality that He's the Lord of all? In this case, God was teaching Abe that He owns and controls it all – our part is to trust/obey Adonai in everything.

**Truth** – *since God has possession of me, I must be in submission to Him.* Since He is Lord, I must live under His leadership. Since He's the owner of everything, I'm a steward of the blessings He's entrusted to me. I exist for Adonai; Adonai doesn't exist for me.

The first duty of every soul is to find not its freedom but its Master. *P.T. Forsythe*

**God took Abraham** – our forefather in the faith, thru a process to show him who's really the boss – and if necessary, He'll do the same w/ you and me too.

If you look thru the O.T., anyone who ever did anything great for God had to learn how to submit to **Adonai**. They had to make Him their master. Moses, Joseph, David, Gideon, Daniel, even Samson, had to come to terms that God owns it all – He is large and in charge – and that they had to trust/obey Him.

**Truth** – you'll never call Him Lord if you're unwilling to live in submission to His ability/authority.

## II Foundational **INSTRUCTION**

What does it mean that God is our **Adonai** and **LORD**?

A He is Our **MASTER**

The litmus test for determining if we're following **Adonai** is asking – Have I surrendered everything to God by willingly trusting/obeying Him in all things?

**IOW** – will I submit to His AUTHORITY over my life by surrendering my will for His will? Will I align under His authority or fight against it?

*He who dwells in the shelter of the El Elyon will rest in the shadow of the El Shaddai. I will say of Adonai, "He is my refuge and my fortress, My God Elohim in whom I trust." Psalm 91:1-2*

**DYK** you're pre-programmed/hard-wired to submit to something/someone. You're built for worship. It is a guarantee that you will bend your knee/bow your heart to someone/something – you can't help it. So, you're either going to be mastered by God or by some (g)od.

The defining test of whether a person belongs to Christ is a willingness to bow to His authority. *MacArthur*

B He is Our **OWNER**

Ownership recognizes **POSSESSION**. It realizes that as believers in Jesus, we possess nothing but are now fully possessed by the Almighty b/c He purchased us.

*Do you not know that your body is the temple of the H.S., who is in you – and you are not your own; you have been bought at a price. 1 Corinthians 6:19*

**Meaning** – the moment we surrendered to Christ in salvation, we also signed over the title deed to our lives – and now, we no longer belong to ourselves – we belong to Him. He is our owner/boss. As a result – he gets to call the shots while we get to follow His lead

*I have been crucified w/ Christ and I no longer live, Jesus now lives in me. The life I live in the flesh, I live by faith in the son of God who loves me and who gave His life for me. Galatians 2:20*

**So now** – b/c God is our owner, everything we have or think we possess, actually has just been entrusted to us making us stewards of God's blessings. Whether it's some gift, talent, ability, or possession – every good and perfect gift is from above to be used for God's glory in/thru our lives.

He is our master/owner – and 3<sup>rd</sup>, He's our Promise.

C He is Our **PROMISE**

As our Adonai – we're in a **COVENANT** relationship w/ our Creator. We have entered into a blood oath where we promise to trust/follow Him and He promises to be our God who'll never leave/forsake us.

As Lord/Master – **Adonai** promises to be a friend who sticks closer than a brother. He promises to be present w/ us thru thick/thin – on the mountaintops of life, in the valleys – and everywhere in b/w.

*Hear my cry, Adonai; listen to my prayer. From the ends of the earth I call to you, I call as my heart grows faint; lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For you have been my refuge, a strong tower against the foe. I long to dwell in your tent forever, and to take refuge in the shelter of your wings. Psalm 61:1-4*

### III Practical **IMPLICATIONS**

God is serious about being **Adonai**. It's not a game to Him b/c our what hangs in the balance. Look at Mt. 7.

*Not everyone who says to me Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only those who do the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform miracles?" Then I will tell them, "Depart from me you evil doer, I never knew you!" Matthew 7:21-23*

**Connect the dots.** Jesus was saying that *lip service* will never be enough – God requires our *life surrender*.

What's most disturbing to me is the word "many." Jesus says, "*Many will come....*" Jesus was saying that there will be lots of good, even religious people in churches who think they're saved, but are not. Even worse, there are people outside of the church who know a little about God but think that if they're good enough – they'll be okay. But they won't be.

*Jesus said, "Knowing the correct password – like saying 'Master, Master,' isn't going to get you anywhere w/ Me. What's required is serious obedience – doing what my Father wills. I can see it now – at the final judgment, thousands strutting up to Me and saying, 'Master, we preached the Message, we bashed the demons, our God-sponsored projects had everyone talking.' And do you know what I am going to say? 'You missed the boat. All you did was use me to make yourself important. You don't impress me one bit. You're out of here.' (Message)*

Jesus says there's a difference b/w *lip-service* and *life surrender*. It's easy to confess God w/ our lips yet deny him w/ our lives – to recite a creed, instead of live the Christian life – to do good things, instead of change the way we think/act. Jesus was saying that hollow words/empty deeds aren't enough. The key to acceptance before God is surrendering to Him as your **Adonai** and living out what He's asked you to do.

God is ready to assume full responsibility for the life wholly yielded to Him. *Andrew Murray*

It's amazing what Adonai can and will do w/ a life totally surrender to His Lordship.

When you call God Adonai, you're acknowledging His leadership and ownership as your Lord, Master, and Ruler. While this should cause you to approach God w/ great reverence, it can also evoke emotions of deep gratitude b/c you recognize His loving ownership over you. You can abandon your will to Adonai b/c you know He commands you for your good. You can thank Him for the times He has brought you thru difficulties, protected you, or even corrected you for your benefit. *Adrian Rogers*