

The Wonder of His Name

*And those who know Your name will put their trust in You,
For You, O Lord, have not forsaken those who seek You.
Psalm 9:10*

Written by Jennifer Adams

How It Works:

Each week, we will be digging into the Word of God to discover what it says about the various names of God. However, the goal is not to simply acquire more knowledge. Instead, we want to take the truths we learn and the revelations we receive, and allow the Holy Spirit to guide us in understanding how they apply practically to our lives here and now. I encourage you to start each study session with prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to teach you and reveal truths to you.

Your homework each week will be to study some specific names of God. The study is divided into four sections which are described below:

1. Observe It - In this section, you will be reading specific Scriptures regarding the particular name of God and making observations about what you read. This is not the place for interpreting Scripture or pulling out applications (this will come later!). Instead, you are simply reading and recording what you find. Often, we can miss incredible truths written clearly on the page in our rush to get to the application. So, don't hurry through this part!
2. Experience It - While studying the names of God, you will discover that many of these names were given by men and women of the Bible after they had experienced God in a specific way. When the truth that we know in our head about God collides with our experience of Him, it changes everything! In this section, you will be looking at how the characters in the Bible experienced God as well as the ways that you personally have experienced Him.
3. Express It - This section will focus on specific application for your life. What does this name of God mean for you? How can you apply the truths to your life? And be specific! Don't just give generic "church" answers that sound good on the page but don't actually impact how YOU trust God, obey Him, and interact with others. I am also going to challenge you beyond application of what the name means for you to how you can express it. In Genesis 1:27, we read that God created man in His image. As such, we have been created to reflect His image to the world around us. In fact, in II Corinthians 3:18 we read that *"But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit."* Each name of God reveals a different aspect of His character and glory, and as you study them I encourage you to ask the Lord how you can reflect that in your own life. Obviously we will never perfectly reflect our Savior, but we should be continually moving closer and closer to His likeness.
4. Pray It - This is the final step for each name, and I encourage you not to skip over it! Take time to allow God to direct you and strengthen you and minister to you. Remember that prayer is simply a conversation, it is you talking to God and then giving Him the space and opportunity to speak to you.

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The homework is structured so there are two levels of engagement. Option 1 is for those who don't have a lot of time for homework during the week. This option should not take long, but will still allow you to participate in the group discussion at the next session. Option 2 is for those that have the time and want to do more in-depth homework.

Option 1: Complete only the Group Discussion questions located throughout the Homework. These questions are highlighted so you can find them easily.

Option 2: Complete all the homework.

Homework - Week 1

My middle child has a very curious mind, which lends itself to lots of questions. When those questions are about God, who He is, and how He works, I sometimes find myself struggling to come up with an answer that will satisfy his curiosity. The truth is that we all have questions about God. The majesty and splendor of who He is lies beyond our comprehension, and we will never this side of heaven understand everything there is to know about God. Yet, I don't think that means we stop seeking and asking that He would reveal more of Himself to us. Because it is that revelation that draws us closer to Him, and it is in that closeness that we reflect His glory to the world around us. So, I hope you will awaken some childlike curiosity in your heart as we begin this study, and come ready to dive into the various names of God and what they mean for you today.

In this study, we are going to focus specifically on names of God found in the Old Testament. Some of them are names that God uses to identify Himself, and others are names that man gives God after a particular encounter with Him. Each name provides a unique glimpse into the character of God, and brings revelation to how He functions and operates.

Look up the following verses and record the benefits that come from knowing God's name.

Psalms 5:11

Psalms 9:10

Proverbs 18:10

Daniel 11:32b

We also find throughout Scripture countless references to calling on the name of God. Read the verses below and indicate the results of calling on God's name.

Lamentations 3:55-57

Zechariah 13:9

Romans 10:13

When we call on the name of God, we are not simply using his official title to reference Him. Instead, we are calling on the very essence of who He is and invoking His character, attributes, power, and presence into our situation. God doesn't need the reminder of who He is, but I venture to say that we do! So, I challenge you to start using these specific names in the weeks ahead, and see if it doesn't strengthen your faith and draw you even closer to God.

Elohim

Strong Creator, Powerful God

Observe It

The first name of God recorded in the Bible is found in the very first verse (Genesis 1:1). Read this verse and record below what it tells you about God. Simply observe and state the facts (who/what/when/why/where/how).

In this verse, God uses the name Elohim which means “Strong Creator God”. This name refers to a God who is eternal and transcendent (not bound to the limitations of this earth). He is a sovereign God who has the ability to create something from nothing.

Experience It

God didn’t need anything to create the entire universe in Genesis 1. As Elohim, all He needed was Himself. So, why do we often expect Him to work according to our human logic and reasoning? He doesn’t need any raw materials to work in our lives, and there is nothing we can bring Him or provide in our own strength that will get the job done. Are you facing a situation that seems hopeless with no way out? Do you feel like there is nothing left for God to work with? The good news is that you serve a God who is more than able to create something beautiful out of nothing! His name is Elohim.

How have you experienced God as the Strong Creator in your life? Have you seen Him bring something good out of a situation that seemed hopeless? Be specific.

Express It

In Ken Hemphill’s book *The Names of God*, he says: “*The understanding that God is Elohim, the Creator and Sustainer of all that exists, gives us confidence to face life's difficulties. As we place our trust in Him through His Son, Jesus Christ, we know that He who created us can sustain us. This wonderful truth, when fully comprehended, helps you overcome fear and anxiety in everyday living.*”

What implications does the truth of God as Elohim (strong Creator God) have for your life today? How specifically can you apply it?

Pray It

Spend some time praying about what you learned in your study of Elohim. Ask God to increase your understanding and experience of this part of His character.

Yahweh (Jehovah) **Self-Existing One / Self-Revealing One**

In Isaiah 42:8, God says “*I am Yahweh, that is My name...*”. It is generally agreed by scholars that the proper name of the one true God is Yahweh or Jehovah. The two names are often used interchangeably, since Jehovah is simply a transliteration of the Hebrew name Yahweh (or YHWH). It is the most common name for God found in the Old Testament and is used more than 6,800 times.

Observe It

Have you ever noticed when reading your Bible, that sometimes the word Lord is in all capital letters (LORD) while other times it just has the first letter capitalized (Lord)? There is a reason for this! Whenever you see “LORD,” this stands for Jehovah or Yahweh, while “Lord” refers to “Adonai” (we will study this name next). So, pay attention while reading this week and look for those times you see LORD vs Lord.

The first mention we find of the name Jehovah is in Genesis 2:4. Read this verse and record your observations about the passage (Who/What/When/Where/Why/How).

The name Jehovah comes from the Hebrew verb “to be” which is tied to the idea of life (“to live”). It points to the truth that God is self-existent and that life is found in Him. This means that He is the only thing that exists that wasn’t caused by something else. Nothing existed before Him and nothing will exist after Him. He alone is God!

While we see Jehovah repeated over 100 times in Genesis, it is not until Exodus that God gives a more complete revelation of the name. Read Exodus 3:1-15 and record your observations about who Jehovah is (see verses 13-15).

Throughout Scripture, we see the relational aspect of Jehovah. In Exodus 3, God refers to Himself as “the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob”, a reminder to the people of the relationship that God had with their forefathers. Read the following verses and observe the common phrase used for Jehovah (LORD).

Exodus 6:7 / Leviticus 18:4 / Joshua 8:7

He is not just the LORD God, but He is the LORD our God! What comfort there is in knowing that He is a personal God that desires relationship with us.

Read Exodus 6:2-8 and record what it tells you about Yahweh.

The name Jehovah is connected to God's covenants and promises that He makes with His people, and represents a covenant making and covenant keeping God. He remembers the promises He has made, and He is faithful to fulfill them!

We also see the name Jehovah used consistently in passages regarding revelation. Time and time again, it is Jehovah who communicates with man and reveals Himself to His creation. Yet another confirmation that our God is not only alive and active, but He longs to communicate and reveal Himself to us!

Read the following verses and record some of the additional attributes given for Jehovah.

Lev. 11:44

Psalms 11:7

Isaiah 43:10-11

Malachi 3:6

Experience It

In Exodus 3, we see God refer to Himself as I AM, and in John 8 we see Jesus also refer to Himself as I AM (see John 8:24, 28, 58). The original word used here is present tense, which signifies continuous activity. It's not just about what He has done in the past and what He promises to do in the future, but we can also be assured that He is active and moving right now in our world and in our lives. Whatever your present need is, He is the "I AM" provision for that need. If we would truly grasp and believe that truth, it would be a game changer!

Have you experienced God actively working in your life recently as I AM? What was the need and how did He meet it? Explain.

How have you experienced Jehovah as your personal God? What does that look like for you?

Express It

What implications does the truth of God as Jehovah have for your life today? How specifically can you apply it? Do you need a new and fresh revelation of Him in your life?

Pray It

Spend some time praying about what you learned in your study of Jehovah. Ask God to increase your understanding and experience of Him as the relational and intimate God who keeps His promises.

Adonai

The Lord and Master

Translated most often as “Lord” in our Bibles, Adonai is the name of God that refers to Him as our Lord and Master. It occurs more than 400 times in the Bible and identifies God as the owner of creation.

Observe It

The first mention of the name Adonai is in Genesis 15. Read Genesis 15:1-8 and notice the two mentions of Adonai (“Lord”) in verses 2 and 8. Record your observations about the passage (who/what/when/where/why/how).

The New Testament continues the theme of God as our master and us as His servants. Read the passages below and record what they say about this relationship.

Luke 6:46

John 12:26

Galatians 1:10

Experience It

The relationship of master and slave in the Old Testament looked different than what we tend to think when we hear those words today. In Biblical times, a purchased slave belonged to his master and was like a member of the family with rights to the master’s protection, help, and direction. A master not only provided for the servant’s basic needs, but the master also provided all the resources needed for the servant to carry out his duties and assignments.

What has been your experience of God as your Lord and Master? Has He been a loving and faithful Master? Do you find it easy to obey and submit to His Lordship? Explain.

Have you found that God always supplies the resources you need to complete the assignments He has given you? Give one or two examples.

The reference to God as Master and Lord has dual meaning. It acknowledges God’s ownership and possession of His creation (you and me), but it also requires submission from those who call Him Lord. While it can be easy to recognize His Lordship with our lips, it is the call to submit our plans, dreams, and entire lives to Him that so often causes us to pause.

Have you experienced a time when it was hard to submit an area of your life to God? If so, what kept you from submitting? If you finally did submit, what was the result?

Is there a specific area/circumstance in your life that you need to surrender to Adonai, your Master? Explain.

Express It

What are one or two personal applications you can make in your life based on the Scriptures you have read about Adonai? How is the Holy Spirit asking you to respond? Be specific.

Pray It

Spend some time praying about what you learned in your study of Adonai. Ask God to increase your understanding and experience of Him as Lord and Master, and pray that you would be a servant quick to submit and obey your Master's commands.

Homework - Week 2

El-Shaddai

God Almighty, All-Sufficient One

When I hear the name El-Shaddai, the first thing that comes to mind is the song by Amy Grant. And if you were in or around church in the 80's, you will immediately identify! While many of us may be familiar with this particular name of God, I think you will be encouraged and challenged as we dive into its rich meaning and application found throughout Scripture.

Observe It

The first mention we find of the name El-Shaddai is in Genesis 17:1. Read Genesis 17:1-8 and record your observations about the passage. Don't just skim through the verses, but take time to read and discover what it says.

Who:

What:

When:

Where:

Why:

How:

This particular passage was not the first time that God had made promises to Abraham. Record the promises given in the following Scriptures:

Genesis 12:1-3

Genesis 13:16

Genesis 15:1-6

Notice the passage of time from when God first made the promise to Abraham (Genesis 12:4) to the promise we are looking at today (Genesis 17:1). How many years have passed?

That is a long time to wait for God's promise to be fulfilled! I don't know about you, but I tend to get antsy when promises don't see some action in what I deem to be a "reasonable" time. Read Genesis 16 and record what happens while Abraham and Sarah are waiting for God's promise to be fulfilled.

All of this history is crucial if we are going to fully grasp the magnitude of God's revelation as El Shaddai. The name El Shaddai is most often translated as "God Almighty" and occurs 48 times in Scripture. Hebrew scholars have also translated it as "God All-Sufficient;" signifying the one who nourishes, supplies, and satisfies. In fact, a very similar Hebrew word (*shad*) is translated as "breast" 24 times in the Old Testament. (see Isaiah 60:15-16 and Isaiah 66:10-13) In Nathan Stone's book, *Names of God*, he says El-Shaddai is "understood as that El who is all-sufficient and all-bountiful, the source of all blessing and fullness and fruitfulness." ¹

Look at the following passages and identify what is connected with El-Shaddai (God Almighty):

Genesis 28:3

Genesis 35:11

Genesis 48:3-4

Genesis 49:24-25

Another reference to Shaddai is Psalm 91:1 which says "*He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.*" In the Spirit Filled Life Bible, there is a footnote that says Almighty (Shaddai) is believed to come from two participles meaning "the all-sufficient God, eternally capable of being all that His people need." What incredible comfort there is in knowing that we serve a God who can meet any and every need we will ever have. Not only does He have the power and means to meet all of our needs, but He delights in pouring out on us!

Experience It

In Genesis 17, why do you think God revealed Himself to Abraham as El-Shaddai (God Almighty / The All-Sufficient One)?

In order for Abraham and Sarah to fully understand and experience God as the All-Sufficient One, they had to come to a place of recognizing their insufficiency. There was no way they could fulfill God's promises and plan in their own strength. Unfortunately, their attempts to "make it happen" resulted in frustration and pain for not only themselves but future generations. Isn't that so often the case for us as well?

¹ Nathan Stone, *Names of God*, 54

Can you think of a time in your life when you recognized your insufficiency and experienced God as El-Shaddai? What did that look like? On the contrary, maybe your attempts to be self-sufficient kept you from experiencing God in this way? Explain.

Is there a specific area/circumstance in your life where you need to experience God as El-Shaddai? Are you struggling to believe that He truly is All-Sufficient for your circumstance right now? Explain.

Express It

If we believe the truth that God is El-Shaddai (powerful, mighty, and all-sufficient), we will express that in the way we live. For example, it should affect the way we pray and the way we respond to situations. Looking at your life, how can you specifically apply this truth? Be specific!

While we obviously cannot be all-sufficient to the people around us, there are times when God uses us to practically meet the needs of others. We become conduits of the blessings that God has given us, and He in turn uses us to bless others. This can be a beautiful reflection of El-Shaddai, the source of all blessing and fullness and fruitfulness. Is there a specific way you can reflect El-Shaddai in your circle of influence? Be specific!

Pray It

Spend some time praying about what you learned in your study of El-Shaddai. Ask God to increase your understanding and experience of this part of His character.

Jehovah-Jireh

The Lord Will Provide

Provision. We have all found ourselves in a place where we desperately needed provision. I don't think it would be a stretch to say that our need for provision probably drives us to our knees in prayer more than any other request. One of the most familiar stories in the Old Testament is the backdrop for this particular name of God.

Observe It

The name Jehovah-Jireh is found once in the Old Testament in Genesis 22:14.

Read Genesis 22 and record your observations below:

Who:

What:

When:

Where:

Why:

How:

What questions do you have about the passage? What do you not understand? *(Don't be afraid to ask questions! Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand. Do some research, look up cross-references, and read some commentaries. You never know what treasure you might discover as you seek God for further understanding and clarity about His Word.)*

Context and background is vitally important when studying Scripture. Read the following Scriptures and record how each passage sheds additional insight into this particular story:

Genesis 15:1-6

Genesis 21:1-6

Romans 4:18-22

While the specific name Jehovah-Jireh is not used in the New Testament, there are a number of Scriptures that reference God as our provider. Read the passages below and record what they say about God and His provision:

Philippians 4:10-20

Ephesians 3:14-21

Matthew 6:25-34

II Peter 1:2-4

Experience It

In Genesis 22, how did Abraham personally experience God as Jehovah-Jireh?

Can you think of a time in your life when you experienced God as Jehovah-Jireh? In what specific ways did He provide?

Is there a specific area/circumstance in your life where you need to experience God as Jehovah-Jireh? Explain.

Express It

What are one or two personal applications you can make in your life based on the Scriptures you have read about Jehovah-Jireh? Be specific!

As God's children created in His image, we are called to reflect His character. How can you reflect this specific part of God's character in your own life and with those around you? Be specific!

Pray It

Spend some time praying about what you learned in your study of Jehovah-Jireh. Ask God to increase your understanding and experience of this part of His character, and pray that He would give you wisdom to know how to express it to those around you.

Homework - Week 3

Jehovah Shalom *The Lord is Peace*

In a world filled with increasing chaos, violence and noise, we find ourselves craving peace: peace in our homes, peace in our cities, peace in our relationships, and peace in our hearts and minds. Yet no matter where we look or what we try, there is only one Source of perfect peace. Let's spend some time looking at Jehovah Shalom and be encouraged that His peace can be our peace.

Observe It

Jehovah Shalom is found once in the Bible in Judges 6:24. Read Judges 6:1-24 and record your observations about the passage. Don't just skim through the verses, but take time to read and discover what it says.

Who:

What:

When:

Where:

Why:

How:

What were the circumstances that made peace seem like an impossibility?

How was Gideon able to build an altar to Jehovah Shalom in Judges 6:24? Had his circumstances changed? What had changed?

While the specific name Jehovah Shalom is only mentioned once in the Old Testament, we see numerous references to God and Jesus being our source of peace throughout the New Testament. Read the following Scriptures and record what they say about peace:

John 14:25-27

John 16:31-33

Hebrews 13:20-21

Philippians 4:6-7

Experience It

In Judges 6, how do you think Gideon experienced God as Jehovah Shalom?

We often think of peace as the absence of trouble and conflict, yet in John 16:33 we read *"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."* Jesus promises that there is peace to be found in Him, yet also reminds us that we will have trouble. How can these two things coexist? Read Romans 15:33 and II Thessalonians 3:16 and record the common phrase repeated in both verses.

When we stand confidently on the truth that God is always with us, we can experience peace no matter what we face. Peace is found in His presence! Can you think of a time in your life when you experienced God as Jehovah Shalom? What did that look like?

Is there a specific area/circumstance in your life right now where you need to experience God as Jehovah Shalom? Explain.

Express It

What are one or two personal applications you can make in your life based on the Scriptures you have read about Jehovah Shalom? Be specific!

Peace is not just something that we receive from God, but also something we are to practice in our relationships. Read Matthew 5:9 and record who is referenced in this passage.

How can you be a peacemaker this week? Be specific! (See also Romans 12:18-21, Romans 14:19, Mark 9:50, II Cor. 13:11)

Pray It

Spend some time praying about what you learned in your study of Jehovah Shalom. Ask God to increase your understanding and experience of this part of His character.

Jehovah Sabaoth
The Lord of Hosts/The Lord of Powers

Observe It

The name Jehovah Sabaoth is found more than 270+ times in the Bible, most frequently in Jeremiah and Isaiah. However, the first mention of this name is in I Samuel 1:3 (see also verse 11).

Read I Samuel 1 and record your observations below:

Who:

What:

When:

Where:

Why:

How:

Look at verses 7-8 and verses 18-19, and contrast below the differences in Hannah.

What did Hannah do between verses 9 and 18 to cause this change?

Another reference to Jehovah Sabaoth is found in the story of David and Goliath. Read I Samuel 17:45-48 and note below how David describes his God.

Read the following Scriptures and record additional details and insights they give to the name Jehovah Sabaoth:

Amos 4:13

Isaiah 6:3

Jeremiah 27:4-5

Jeremiah 31:35

The name Jehovah Sabaoth can be translated Lord of Hosts, Lord Almighty, the Lord who commands armies, and the Lord the Able One. It is often used in the context of warfare, armies and fighting, and the hosts can refer to a multitude of men, heavenly angels, or the starry hosts. The important thing to note is that Jehovah is Lord over all of it! It doesn't matter what battle we are facing, we can be confident that Jehovah Sabaoth is with us and all creation is under His control.

Experience It

In I Samuel 1, how did Hannah personally experience God as Jehovah Sabaoth?

In I Samuel 17, how did David experience God as Jehovah Sabaoth?

Can you think of a time in your life when you experienced God as Jehovah Sabaoth? In what specific ways did He deliver you?

Sammy Tippit tells a story about an experience he had in Romania where he came to know God as Jehovah Sabaoth, the Lord of Hosts. He says, *"It's when we feel so small and that our enemies are so strong that God reveals Himself to us as Jehovah-Sabaoth. It's in those overwhelming moments that we come to know Him as the Sovereign God who rules over all the celestial armies of heaven. Draw near to Him in your day of weakness. He will be your strength because He is truly Jehovah-Sabaoth, the Lord of hosts."* Is there a battle you are facing today? Maybe you are looking at some insurmountable odds or you are experiencing what seems like an unrelenting assault by the enemy. How do you need to experience God as Jehovah Sabaoth right now?

Express It

What are one or two personal applications you can make in your life based on the Scriptures you have read about Jehovah Sabaoth? Be specific!

While we may not have command of all the hosts like Jehovah, there are times that God calls us to fight for one another. We can stand in the gap for others through prayer and intercession (see Ezekiel 22:30, Isaiah 59:16, and James 5:16). There is also the story in Exodus 17, when Aaron and Hur held up Moses' hands because he could no longer hold them up himself. Their willingness to stand in the gap for Moses resulted in the Israelites winning the battle that day. Who can you "stand in the gap" for today? Who do you know that is battle-weary and could use some reinforcements? Write down their name below and then pray, drop them a note, intercede, and be willing to hold up their hands!

Pray It

Spend some time praying about what you learned in your study of Jehovah Sabaoth. Ask God to increase your understanding and experience of this part of His character, and pray that He would give you wisdom to know how to express it to those around you.