

Sermon: The God Who Sees Me

Text: Genesis 16

Discussion Questions:

- Today is week #2 of Nametag November here at King Street. Building on last week's discussion—why is it so important to work on learning people's names?
- Our focus today is on the fact that we know God's name. Perhaps it's better said that we know God's NAMES (plural). How many different names can you think of that the Bible uses to describe God? [for a little friendly competition—break into groups, and see which group can come up with the most names...& no cheating, this has to come from memory!]
- Which name of God do you appreciate the most? Which name have you never quite understood? Is there a name that was just mentioned that you had never heard before?

Examination:

Read **Matthew 6:9-13**.

- This, of course, is the Lord's prayer.
 - In teaching us how to pray, Jesus begins (v. 9) by giving us a name to use when addressing God.
 - What is that name—and what is the significance of that name?
 - This isn't the first time in Scripture that God is referred to as a "Father" (see 1 Chron. 29:10; Jer. 31:9). But Jesus is definitely setting the tone for a far more intimate relationship with God. Why is this so important?
 - Read Romans 8:14-17, and discuss how this name "Abba" might be the most personal and significant of all of the names of God.
 - What does it mean for the name (or names) of God to be hallowed?

Read **Exodus 20:7**.

- This, of course, is the third of the Ten Commandments.
 - Talk through the various explanations you've heard regarding what God means by this command. Now decide as a group what you, in your heart, believe it means.
 - Now ask yourself: "OK—if that's what it means—what does that mean?" How will this change the way you behave the rest of today? From now on?
 - What should your response be—what WILL your response be?—when this command is broken by someone else in your presence? Does it matter how you respond? How does your response "hallow" the name of God?

Read through this list of the various names of God—and discuss what each one means to you:

ELOHIM [el-oh-heem]: God “Creator, Mighty and Strong” (Genesis 17:7; Jeremiah 31:33) – the plural form of Eloah, which accommodates the doctrine of the Trinity. From the Bible’s first sentence, the superlative nature of God’s power is evident as God (Elohim) speaks the world into existence (Gen. 1:1).

EL SHADDAI [el-shah-dahy]: “God Almighty,” “The Mighty One of Jacob” (Genesis 49:24; Psalm 132:2,5) – speaks to God’s ultimate power over all.

ADONAI [ah-daw-nahy]: “Lord” (Genesis 15:2; Judges 6:15) – used in place of YHWH, which was thought by the Jews to be too sacred to be uttered by sinful men. In the Old Testament, YHWH is more often used in God’s dealings with His people, while Adonai is used more when He deals with the Gentiles.

YHWH / YAHWEH / JEHOVAH [yah-way / ji-hoh-veh]: “LORD” (Deuteronomy 6:4; Daniel 9:14) – strictly speaking, the only proper name for God. Translated in English Bibles “LORD” (all capitals) to distinguish it from Adonai, “Lord.” The revelation of the name is first given to Moses “I Am who I Am” (Exodus 3:14). This name specifies an immediacy, a presence. Yahweh is present, accessible, near to those who call on Him for deliverance (Psalm 107:13), forgiveness (Psalm 25:11) and guidance (Psalm 31:3).

YAHWEH-JIREH [yah-way-ji-reh]: “The Lord Will Provide” (Genesis 22:14) – the name memorialized by Abraham when God provided the ram to be sacrificed in place of Isaac.

YAHWEH-RAPHA [yah-way-raw-faw]: “The Lord Who Heals” (Exodus 15:26) – “I am Jehovah who heals you” both in body and soul. In body, by preserving from and curing diseases, and in soul, by pardoning iniquities.

YAHWEH-NISSI [yah-way-nee-see]: “The Lord Our Banner” (Exodus 17:15), where banner is understood to be a rallying place. This name commemorates the desert victory over the Amalekites in Exodus 17.

YAHWEH-SHALOM [yah-way-shah-lohm]: “The Lord Our Peace” (Judges 6:24) – the name given by Gideon to the altar he built after the Angel of the Lord assured him he would not die as he thought he would after seeing Him.

YAHWEH-ROHI [yah-way-roh-hee]: “The Lord Our Shepherd” (Psalm 23:1) – After David pondered his relationship as a shepherd to his sheep, he realized that was exactly the relationship God had with him, and so he declares, “Yahweh-Rohi is my Shepherd. I shall not want” (Psalm 23:1).

YAHWEH-SABAOTH [yah-way-sah-bah-ohth]: “The Lord of Hosts” (Isaiah 1:24; Psalm 46:7) – Hosts means “hordes,” both of angels and of men. He is Lord of the host of heaven and of the inhabitants of the earth, of Jews and Gentiles, of rich and poor, master and slave. The name is expressive of the majesty, power, and authority of God and shows that He is able to accomplish what He determines to do.

EL ELYON [el-el-yohn]: “Most High” (Deuteronomy 26:19) – derived from the Hebrew root for “go up” or “ascend,” so the implication is of that which is the very highest. El Elyon denotes exaltation and speaks of absolute right to lordship.

Application:

To hallow a thing is to make it holy or to set it apart to be exalted as being worthy of absolute devotion. How might you hallow the name of God, regarding Him with complete devotion and loving admiration this coming week? What are some other ways you can elevate the Name of God to a position of great significance in your mind and heart? How can you encourage those around you not to take God’s name lightly this week—but to rejoice in it and be made more aware of who God truly is?