

Names of God, Pt 7 – Jehovah Shalom

Names of God Series

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Preached on: Wednesday, September 10, 2008

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We have been spending our Wednesday evenings studying the wonder of our great God as revealed in his names. Of course, our intent is not simply to know more about God, but to truly come to know God. And now that I have flashed these various names here on the screen, allow us to do a bit of review.

Somebody remind me of the name אֱלֹהִים (el-o-heem'). It means eternal, triune Creator. You will remember from Genesis chapter one אֱלֹהִים (el-o-heem') is the one who created the heavens and the earth.

How about יְהוָה (yeh-ho-vaw')? The self existing one, as introduced to Moses at the burning bush in Exodus chapter three. יְהוָה (yeh-ho-vaw') is from the Hebrew verb to be or to live. It is simply a statement of God's existence.

How about the name אֵל שַׁדַּי (ale shad-dah'- ee)? God almighty, אֵל שַׁדַּי (ale shad-dah'- ee) is the God who can intervene in his own creation, cause an old man and a barren woman to conceive. In Genesis 18 the question was posed to Abraham and Sarah, "Is anything too hard for אֵל שַׁדַּי (ale shad-dah'- ee)?"¹

How about אֲדֹנָי (ad-o-noy')? Lord or master. In calling God our אֲדֹנָי (ad-o-noy'), we are surrendering to his authority and to his mastery of our lives. In the New Testament the Greek equivalent is κύριος (koo'-ree-os) meaning Lord or master. And in calling Jesus Christ our Lord and master we are surrendering to his authority and mastery in our lives.

How about the name יְהוָה יִרְאֶה (yeh-ho-vaw' yir-eh')? The God who sees or the God who provides, Genesis chapter 22. Abraham was to sacrifice his only son Isaac on Mount Moriah and when Isaac asked his father, "Behold, I see the fire, I see the wood, but I don't see the lamb," Abraham answered, "God sees, God will provide himself a lamb."

And, of course, I remember mentioning that we most often claim the name יְהוָה יִרְאֶה

¹ Genesis 18:14.

(yeh-ho-vaw' yir-eh') when we are in need of financial provision. However the greatest provision that God has given us is his Son the Lamb of God.

יְהוָה רַפָּא (yeh-ho-vaw' raw-faw'), the God who heals. That was our study last week from Exodus chapter 15. Israel was three days into the wilderness and found themselves without water or should I say found themselves with only bitter water. And God used the object lesson of the bitter water there at Marah to introduce himself to his people as the God who heals the bitterness of their hearts.

And you will remember that I defined bitterness as harbored hurt. It is not wrong to hurt. But if you harbor that hurt it becomes a cancer within you that will destroy you and defile those around you, Hebrews 12:15.

I explained that most often bitterness is caused by two things. Either, one, I had it and God took it away or I wanted it and God said no. And, perhaps, that can be the seeds of resentment and bitterness in your own life. But יְהוָה רַפָּא (yeh-ho-vaw' raw-faw') is the one who can heal those hurts.

This evening יְהוָה שָׁלוֹם (yeh-ho-vaw' shaw-lome'). שָׁלוֹם (shaw-lome') means peace, יְהוָה (yeh-ho-vaw') our peace, or God our peace. The Hebrew word שָׁלוֹם (shaw-lome') translated peace 170 times in the Old Testament. The derivatives of the Hebrew verb שָׁלַם (shaw-lam') are translated to be whole, to be healthy, to be at peace, translated such approximately 400 times in the Bible and שָׁלוֹם (shaw-lome') is really one of the most meaningful and most used expressions in the Hebrew language.

And you might liken the term שָׁלוֹם (shaw-lome') to the Hawaiian aloha. It means hello. It means goodbye. It means how are you doing? It means see you later. It means God bless you. It means thank you. It means all of those good things and it implies completeness and health and welfare and prosperity, security and peace. It denotes the perfect condition of Utopia and it is the sense of calmness and stillness and rest and safety. שָׁלוֹם (shaw-lome').

Of course, we know that there is no שָׁלוֹם (shaw-lome'), there is no peace in the Middle East. There is no peace in downtown Minneapolis, either, I would suppose.

According to the former president of the Norwegian Academy of Sciences, historians from England, Egypt, Germany and India have come up with some startling information. Since 3600 BC the world has only known 292 years of peace. During this period of time there have been 14,351 wars, large and small in which 3.64 billion people have been killed. The value of the property destroyed in these wars would pay for a golden belt around the world 97.2 miles wide and 33 feet thick.

Since 650 BC there have also been 1656 arms races, only 16 of which have not ended in war. The remainder ended in the economic collapse of the countries involved.

But never mind global conflict and never mind international wars, the reality is that many people admit that there is little peace in their own personal lives. And, in fact, even here this evening you might be experiencing conflict in your home or in your marriage or on the job or perhaps even among another here in this place.

Pastor Dave and I counseled a gentleman today who is in conflict with another party and there is no peace between him and another and even in his own heart and life. And so may I introduce you this evening to יהוה שלום (yeh-ho-vaw' shaw-lome'), God our peace?

But where and when do we go to learn of יהוה שלום (yeh-ho-vaw' shaw-lome')?

Remember our premise for our series here on Wednesday evenings. God has progressively revealed himself to his people by introducing himself with and identifying himself by different names at different times. God's names were given to man by God himself during a specific time of man's need so that we might know that God is our all in all. And the same is true with the name יהוה שלום (yeh-ho-vaw' shaw-lome'). And we discover God as יהוה שלום (yeh-ho-vaw' shaw-lome') in the book of Judges. And I invite you to turn there with me beginning in Judges chapter number two.

In your Old Testament the book of Judges, let's begin in Judges chapter number two verse number seven.

Speaking of the children of Israel, the Bible says:

“So the people served the LORD [יהוה (yeh-ho-vaw')] all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD which He had done for Israel.”²

Remember, I have told you before that Israel did not apostatize because they forgot the Word of God so much as so when they forgot the works of God.

Continue in verse 11.

Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals [the gods]; and they forsook the LORD God [יהוה רערנסוי (yeh-ho-vaw' ad-o-noy')] of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; and they followed other gods from among the gods of the people who were all around them, and they bowed down to them; and they provoked the LORD to anger. They forsook the LORD and served Baal and the Ashtoreths. [the male and the female gods of those countries] And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel. So He delivered them into the hands of plunderers who despoiled them; and He sold them into the hands of their enemies all around, so that they could no longer stand

² Judges 2:7.

before their enemies. Wherever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for calamity, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn to them. And they were greatly distressed. Nevertheless, the LORD raised up judges who delivered them out of the hand of those who plundered them. Yet they would not listen to their judges, but they played the harlot with other gods, and bowed down to them. They turned quickly from the way in which their fathers walked, in obeying the commandments of the LORD; they did not do so. And when the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed them and harassed them. And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they reverted and behaved more corruptly than their fathers, by following other gods, to serve them and bow down to them. They did not cease from their own doings nor from their stubborn way.³

And such were the times of the judges. And we might understand the history of Israel during the time of the judges like this. And this diagram illustrates the cycle that Israel repeated over and over and over again. And you are familiar with this, but first Israel served the Lord. But then, alas, Israel fell into sin and idolatry. Israel became enslaved. Israel then would cry out to the Lord so God would raise up a judge and that judge would deliver Israel.

And over and over and over again during the times of the judges, in fact, for all of Israel's history, this cycle was repeated and a summation of Israel's attitude during the days without a judge can be found in Judges chapter 21. If you want to sneak there just quickly, the end of the book of Judges, Judges 21 verse 25.

“In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”⁴

And yet it was during the times of the judges that God raised up one judge. His name was Gideon and it was during the days of Gideon that God introduced himself as **שְׁלֹמֶה יְהוָה** (yeh-ho-vaw' shaw-lome'). It was during a time of conflict, during a time of strife, during a time of unrest and confusion that God raised up Gideon and revealed himself to Gideon and Israel as **שְׁלֹמֶה יְהוָה** (yeh-ho-vaw' shaw-lome').

Judges chapter number six.

And allow me to read some extended portions of Judges six beginning in verse number one.

Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD. So the LORD delivered them into the hand of Midian for seven years, and the

³ Judges 2:11-19.

⁴ Judges 21:25.

hand of Midian prevailed against Israel. Because of the Midianites, the children of Israel made for themselves the dens, the caves, and the strongholds which are in the mountains. So it was, whenever Israel had sown [that is, seed for crops], Midianites would come up; also Amalekites and the people of the East would come up against them. Then they would encamp against them and destroy the produce [the crops] of the earth as far as Gaza, and leave no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep nor ox nor donkey. For they would come up with their livestock and their tents, coming in as numerous as locusts; both they and their camels were without number; and they would enter the land to destroy it.⁵

Now I want to personalize Israel's history for us here. I don't want to spiritualize it, but I want us to make application in this way. how do we break out of and escape the same cycle that Israel suffered?

Number one, I would suggest recognize your woes. In typical, predictable fashion, Israel had forsaken God. Prosperity and pride and perversion had put them under God's judgment at the hand of their enemy neighbors and in this case it was the Midianites.

Now you need to know that the word "Midian" means strife. Remember that. The name Midian means strife and the Midianites caused Israel strife. The Midianites forced Israel from their homes, forced Israel into the hills and the caves and every year at harvest time the Midianites invaded Israel's fields, ravished their lands so that Israel was without food and livestock to sustain them. And God's people were living in fear. They were stressed. They had no peace.

And at times like this, folks, we need to be willing to honestly and openly admit to God our fears and our frustrations and our stress and our strife. We need to recognize our woe and say, "God, I need your help now. My job is crushing me. My home is grieving me. My circumstances are a burden."

But for seven years Israel suffered under the strife before they recognized their own suffering so that in verse six:

"So Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites, and the children of Israel cried out to the LORD."⁶

That is number two, recognize what you want or what you need.

Seven years. Verse number one says that they were delivered into the hand of Midian for seven years. After seven years Israel cried to the Lord for help.

⁵ Judges 6:1-5.

⁶ Judges 6:6.

Don't ask me why they waited for seven years. But sometimes we are as stubborn and as slow to ask for help, too. And many times we have not because we ask not and we try to find every other solution but simply calling upon God to meet our need.

And what is it that we all want, after all? It is world peace, right? Of course, that is the answer that every Miss America pageant contestant gives, world peace. But I would guess this evening that what you want more than world peace is personal peace, familial peace.

If you have children, I have four of them, and then this evening I came home, had a quick bite to eat and I thought I would just catch 10 minutes of the news in solitude and I ended up taking care of multiple children while my wife was preparing herself to come this evening. And I had no peace.

We long for personal... I don't care what is going on across the ocean. Just give me some rest, some quiet, some calm, some peace.

Look at verses seven through 10.

And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried out to the LORD because of the Midianites, that the LORD sent a prophet to the children of Israel, who said to them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'I brought you up from Egypt and brought you out of the house of bondage; and I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians and out of the hand of all who oppressed you, and drove them out before you and gave you their land. Also I said to you, "I am the LORD your God..."⁷

I am יהוה (yeh-ho-vaw'), your God. You remember that that is how God introduced himself to Moses and to Israel. "I am the self-existent one, the יהוה (yeh-ho-vaw'), your God."

"... 'do not fear the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell.' But you have not obeyed My voice."⁸

Number three, receive his Word.

Folks, it is imperative that we live in obedience to God's Word, his revelation to us. If we are going to escape or break the cycle that Israel experienced, we must be people who obey God's voice. But do we not obey God's voice because we forget what his voice said? I doubt it. I think we forget what his hand has done. And the same was true for Israel. Because they forgot what God's hand had done, they failed to obey what his voice had said. We need to receive his Word and obey his Word.

⁷ Judges 6:7-10.

⁸ Judges 6:10.

Verse number 11. And this is the story that perhaps we are most familiar, Judges six verse 11.

Now the Angel of the LORD came and sat under the terebinth tree which was in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon threshed wheat in the winepress, in order to hide it from the Midianites. And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him, and said to him, "The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valor!" Gideon said to Him, "O my lord, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, 'Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?' But now the LORD has forsaken us and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites."⁹

We remember God's Word, but we have forgotten God's work, all of those miracles which we heard about. They are urban legends at this point.

Verse 14.

Then the LORD turned to him and said, "Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have I not sent you?" So he said to Him, "O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." And the LORD said to him, "Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man." Then he said to Him, "If now I have found favor in Your sight, then show me a sign that it is You who talk with me. "Do not depart from here, I pray, until I come to You and bring out my offering and set it before You." And He said, "I will wait until you come back." So Gideon went in and prepared a young goat, and unleavened bread from an ephah of flour. The meat he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot; and he brought them out to Him under the terebinth tree and presented them. The Angel of God said to him, "Take the meat and the unleavened bread and lay them on this rock, and pour out the broth." And he did so. Then the Angel of the LORD put out the end of the staff that was in His hand, and touched the meat and the unleavened bread; and fire rose out of the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread. And the Angel of the LORD departed out of his sight. Now Gideon perceived that He was the Angel of the LORD. So Gideon said, "Alas, O Lord GOD! For I have seen the Angel of the LORD face to face."¹⁰

Number four, respond in worship.

The narrative in a large part concludes then in verses 23 and 24.

⁹ Judges 6:11-13.

¹⁰ Judges 6:14-22.

“Then the LORD said to him...”¹¹

Well, let’s go back to verse 22, first. I want to identify some of the names here in verse 22.

Gideon says, “Alas, O Lord GOD.”¹²

That is **רַעַרְנְסִי יְהוָה** (ad-o-noy’ yeh-ho-vaw’). You will see the capital G capital O capital D. That is **יְהוָה** (yeh-ho-vaw’). The capital L and then lowercase o r d, LORD is **רַעַרְנְסִי** (ad-o-noy’), master **יְהוָה** (yeh-ho-vaw’) or Lord **יְהוָה** (yeh-ho-vaw’).

“‘For I have seen the Angel of the LORD face to face.’ Then the LORD said to him, ‘Peace be with you...’”¹³

שָׁלוֹם (shaw-lome’).

“‘Peace be with you; do not fear, you shall not die.’ So Gideon built an altar there to the LORD, and called it The-LORD-Is-Peace [literally **יְהוָה שָׁלוֹם** (yeh-ho-vaw’ shaw-lome’)] To this day it is still.”¹⁴

יְהוָה שָׁלוֹם (yeh-ho-vaw’ shaw-lome’).

This is, in fact, the one place in the Scriptures where we find the name **יְהוָה שָׁלוֹם** (yeh-ho-vaw’ shaw-lome’). And it was God’s revelation of himself to Gideon as the God of peace.

In the circumstance of strife, in the strife of life, God appeared to Gideon as **יְהוָה שָׁלוֹם** (yeh-ho-vaw’ shaw-lome’). When facing the Midianites... What does Midian mean? Strife. When facing the strife of life, God introduced himself to Gideon as the God of peace.

Now how does the story end? Turn to chapter eight verse 28.

Perhaps you remember the story as Gideon took just a handful of men in the end and laid siege on the Midianites. But chapter eight verse 28.

“Thus Midian was subdued before the children of Israel, so that they lifted their heads no more. And the country was quiet for forty years in the days of Gideon.”¹⁵

¹¹ Judges 6:23.

¹² Judges 6:22.

¹³ Judges 6:22-23.

¹⁴ Judges 6:23-24.

¹⁵ Judges 8:28.

Might I suggest that the country was at peace for 40 years after the defeat of Midian?

By way of quick conclusion I want to give you some Scriptures topically, some Scriptures that identify the person of the peace from God, the position of peace with God, the practice of peace in God.

First the person of peace from God.

Isaiah nine verse six.

“His name shall be called... Prince of Peace.”¹⁶

Of course, a pathetic reference to the Messiah and the fullest expression and realization of יהוה (yeh-ho-vaw') is in the person of Jesus Christ and one of the great names of the Messiah was to be Prince of Peace.

Before his birth Zacharias announced Jesus as the one who would visit his people to guide our feet into the way of peace, Luke one verses 78 and 79.

At his birth a multitude of heavenly host sang, “Peace on earth.” And Jesus was born to die in the city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem, the Messiah’s city means city of peace or possession of peace. That is the person of peace.

But what about the position of peace with God?

Romans chapter five verse one.

“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”¹⁷

And the spiritual reality is that we are objects of God’s wrath, Ephesians 2:3. We are at enmity or strife with God. But Jesus, Colossians 1:20, made peace through the blood of his cross. And so that positionally we can have peace with God.

The person of peace is Jesus Christ. The position of peace with God is through Jesus Christ. And then the practice of peace—and you might want to capture some of these Scriptures—Isaiah 26:3.

“You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.”¹⁸

Of course Philippians four, you know it well.

¹⁶ Isaiah 9:6.

¹⁷ Romans 5:1.

¹⁸ Isaiah 26:3.

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.”¹⁹

So that what might happen?

“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding...”²⁰

You can't even explain it.

“...will guard [or keep] your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”²¹

The practice of peace.

I have read even this past week that only eight percent of the things that people worry about are legitimate. Ninety-two percent of what we worry about is imaginary. It never happens. So if you are going to worry, only worry about the eight percent that you need to worry about and if you are worried about what part is the eight percent, then I guess you are back to worrying about it all.

The practice of peace in God.

Psalm four. David, I believe, the psalmist says:

“I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; For You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.”²²

2 Thessalonians 3:16.

“Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way.”²³

יהוה שלום (yeh-ho-vaw' shaw-lome'), God our peace.

Folks, I have no idea the strife that you might be experiencing in your world tonight. Perhaps there is a Midian who is pillaging and plundering you. Where do you go for peace? May I suggest that our אלהים (el-o-heem'), our אל שרי (ale shad-dah'- ee), our יהוה (yeh-ho-vaw'), our רענסי (ad-o-noy'), our יהוה רבא (yeh-ho-vaw' raw-faw'), the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of heaven and earth, the God who is revealed for us in the Scripture, introduced himself to Gideon at a specific time of need in Israel's history, a time when they were experiencing strife and God introduced himself as יהוה שלום (yeh-ho-vaw' shaw-lome'), God our peace.

¹⁹ Philippians 4:6.

²⁰ Philippians 4:7.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Psalm 4:8.

²³ 2 Thessalonians 3:16.

Of course, in the New Testament that is personified in the person of Jesus Christ.

Let's pray.

Father God, we come to you this evening and address you as our יהוה שלום (yeh-ho-vaw' shaw-lome') as God our peace. And, Lord, we recognize that because of sin, because of the fall and the curse that this world has not known peace in all of human history. But, God, we recognize this evening also that you are the God of peace. We recognize that you sent your only Son Jesus Christ to bring peace, peace with you and then peace in our own hearts. And, Lord, I would ask that you would drive us back to your name and to your character when we look of the quiet and the calm and the still. Lord, I pray that we might be people of peace reflecting your character. Take us home how we pray with safety and with your blessing as we look to you for this in Jesus' name. Amen.