

# Alpha & Omega



# A Study on the Names of God

a contemplation on Identity and Self Worth  
based upon **whose**, rather than who, we are

# {Neighborhood}

S T U D I E S

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There is something in every **Name of God** which may breed faith in our souls.

Whether we know him as Jehovah, Elohim, Shaddai, or Lord, or by whatsoever other name he has been pleased to manifest himself, that title becomes the ground of our confidence, and is the means of fostering faith in his people's minds, when they come to understand its meaning.

To a trembling people the Lord enlarges on his wonderful names. I think he also does it to excite our wonder and our gratitude. He that loves us so much is Jehovah: he that can create and destroy; he that is the self-existent God; he, even he, has set his heart upon his people, and loves them and counts them precious in his sight. It is a marvelous thing.

The more one thinks of it, the more shall he be overwhelmed with astonishment, that he who is everything should love us...<sup>i</sup>

- Charles Spurgeon



## WEEK 1

Elohim

Creator

Jehovah/Yahweh

## Self-Existent One

## WEEK 2

# Jehovah Jireh

## The LORD will Provide

## Jehovah Nissi

# The LORD is our Banner

## WEEK 3

El Roi

## God Who Sees

## Jehovah Rapha

## The LORD Who Heals

## WEEK 4

Jehovah Raah

# The LORD is Shepherd

Jehovah Shalom

# The LORD is Peace

## WEEK 5

## Jehovah Sabaoth

## The LORD of Hosts

El Shaddai

All Sufficient One

## WEEK 6

El Elyon

Most High God

Abba

Father

## WEEK 7 (optional)

## Reflection



# Alpha & Omega

## A devotional on the Names of God

& a study on Identity and Self-Worth based upon *whose*, rather than who, we are

What's in a name?

A lot.

For some, everything.

We identify with a name. We are known by a name. Names are an important part of the history that we associate with ourselves. Everyone has a name. Even if some get them a little slower than others.

In our family, we're not very good at naming. Naming can be stressful – because whoever gets what we decide has it forever. And who are we to know if the kid is a Liam or a William – trendy cool or classic conservative. So, there's that added to the fact that we can't agree. So much so, we might have left the hospital 3 out of the five times we visited Baylor Labor & Delivery without a name for new little additions to our brood. But with lots of supportive suggestions (even from the Birth Certificate folks who took it upon themselves to call each week on one of our boys) and encouragement, we got there.

Because no one goes through life without a name. Really. Everyone is called something.

A name lasts and travels with us and connects us. A name acts as the on-ramp to relationship. Just the saying of a name aloud prompts response. There's even an effect in cognitive psychology that reveals the power within a name.

*The basic idea is if you're at a party and there can be hundreds of people around but someone will mention your name at the other end of the room and you'll hear that. It'll come up, rise up above the din and somehow you'll still hear that name despite the fact that it's a very noisy room. And that's because this name means so much to us and it rises up and it catches our attention in a way that a lot of other stimuli don't.<sup>ii</sup>*

Dale Carnegie famously said, "The sweetest sound in any language is the sound of one's own name."

Why? Maybe because it might have something to do with our need to belong, be loved and be known.

But, unlike people, God doesn't need to hear his Name. All creation knows His Name. His Name is known beyond borders, dimensions, even time as we know it. God's Name is above all names. Every knee bows to His Name.

He is the only being whose Name is a verb with no beginning and no end.

*Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?"*

*God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"*

*Exodus 3:13-14*

God's Name bears saying, knowing, studying and repeating not for his, but **for our sake**. Because, truth be told, we desperately need to hear and know the name of God. Our natural craving to hear our name, to be seen, to be known might have much more to do with understanding and sinking into *whose* we are rather than striving to figure out *who* we are.

But how can we fully grasp *whose* we are without knowing who that is.

And, God, our Creator, has named us without a single struggle to find the right name because He knows us. Could it be that our inborn need to be known that drives us to the only One who does - the One who knows us better than we can even begin to know ourselves.

Knowing God reaches for and requires more than knowing about Him (informational knowledge) to knowing Him personally. We can have about/informational knowledge without personal knowledge. And, so often we get our information about God from second-hand sources – through sermons, articles, commentaries, sound-bites – which absolutely isn't at all bad. But if left only to that, we find we can be very knowledgeable, but relationship only occurs through first-hand, personal knowing.

You can have informational knowledge without personal knowledge, but you cannot have personal knowledge without informational knowledge – which is why spending time knowing God, His Name deeply impacts our personal relationship with Him.

You can know the Bible without knowing God; but  
you cannot know God without knowing the Bible.

- Tim Keller

But, personal-knowing can be a scary proposition. It's hard to believe and to rest in truly being known – that includes the good, the bad, ugly and possibly embarrassment,



shame, and even pride. From the time we can walk, we step on to life's treadmill and set forth on journeys to make a name for ourselves – straining to arrive, to finally do enough (as if that can be attained) in order to be okay.

Is it possible to grasp that in God's economy *enough* doesn't exist? That mercy and grace and peace and love reign powerful through His Name. That we were never meant to do or be enough because in light of God's grace and mercy we already are. Is it possible to comprehend the love of Abba Father that surpasses (beyond imagination) any love and acceptance known on earth? Probably not on this side of eternity. But we can take steps to begin to understand that, as the Apostle Paul tells us:

*...in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.*

*For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

*Romans 8:38-39*

In order to be able to trust, in order to be able to live in the freedom for which Christ set us free – we must spend time learning about, contemplating, getting to know and understand God's Name that He reveals to us, so that we might believe Him when He speaks.

*But now, this is what the LORD says –  
he who created you, Jacob,  
he who formed you, Israel:  
“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
I have summoned you by name; you are mine.*

*...  
For I am the LORD your God,  
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior;  
I give Egypt for your ransom,  
Cush and Seba in your stead.  
Since you are precious and honored in my sight,  
and because I love you ...”  
Isaiah 43: 1-5*

*Precious – to God? Yes.*

*Honored in God's sight? Yes.*

*Loved – by God? Yes.*

And named – eventually revealed in the most beautiful and intimate way – promised by God:

*"Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give that person a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it."*

Revelation 2:17

Could it be true? Are we really known and loved? Do we actually belong?

Absolutely – seen and known.

*Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.*

*When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today."*

A sinner, a winner in the ways of the world (position and wealth – what everyone wants), yet despised by man, lonely, in need, hoping to simply glimpse the One who heals – was seen and known and welcomed (by name) by Christ.

Just as God sees and knows and welcomes us.

## How

In order to know and be able to trust God, we need to consider and to contemplate Him. One place to do that is in Scripture where his Name and accompanying character traits are revealed

Compelled by so many reasons to read the Bible, we still shy away. It can be intimidating, confusing, even condemning. We might have a history with trying to read Scripture that has made it a to-do to be checked off a list in order for us to be okay/good which can make reading a burden rather than a blessing.

But, rather than let hurdles keep us from experiencing the fullness of what is offered through the Old and New Testament pages, let's dive in together and further discover the mystery of God through the study of his Name – that unlike any other name known to man has many names. And each name declares his attributes of Truth so that we may know that there is no other like Him, that He alone is safe, that He alone is protector and provider and endlessly more.

The Bible is so much more than a manual on how to live an upright life; it is actually a love story. It's the story of a Creator – with goodness beyond measure – who seeks after

and saves his creation. So much did the Creator desire to have deep and intimate relationship, he gave his all to redeem his beloved. (That's us, by the way!)

His love for us is undeniable, though largely misunderstood by us. How can such love be real? Love that comes with no strings; love that isn't earned. Unconditional love – really, no condition. For nothing like it exists on earth.

Alpha & Omega focuses on gaining a deeper understanding of God through the study of his names. We will cover 2 names per week plus consider what God declares about himself. This exercise only scratches the surface but will hopefully inspire us to lean into God – his mercy and grace – rather than be overwhelmed by pressures to do and to be in order to measure up.

Then, as a fun bonus or even beach or mountain read (because what could be better than contemplating God surrounded by creation) consider going deeper through further study in books like Dr. Tony Evans' *The Power of God's Names* or Precepts Ministry founder Kay Arthur's *Lord I Want to Know You* or many of great works written to help us contemplate the names of God.

But for now, we'll spend the next few weeks diving in ourselves. Though *Alpha & Omega* is set up to be six weeks, feel free to extend it to twelve (considering one name per week rather than two) or to keep going by looking for more and applying the tips & tools below.

### Tips & Tools

One of the first steps to reading and understanding Scripture is to spend time in it. So, get ready – because prolonged honest-interaction with Scripture promises to change a life.

Not based on something we do, but because God promises us:

*"Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things."*  
Jeremiah 33:3

*"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. **You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you,**" declares the LORD...*  
Jeremiah 29:11-14a

*and by the way, He always (ALWAYS) does what He says he's going to do.*

*For the word of the LORD is right and true;  
he is faithful in all he does.  
Psalm 33:4*

*"...if we are faithless,  
he remains faithful,  
for he cannot disown himself."  
2 Timothy 2:13*

Each day of this devotional includes basic prompt questions. Answers can be short or long, whatever is a blessing to you. The prompt questions are meant to invite us into the process. This is a chance for us to interact with Scripture as we read it, asking the Lord to teach us along the way. Then journal/answer the prompts in the space provided, in the margins or however works best.

In the same way there are many translations of the Bible (including a Names of God translation on [biblegateway.org](http://biblegateway.org) – but, the best of which is the one you're reading!), there are lots of ways to study it. The goals of our effort as we contemplate God's Name are:

- First and foremost **to inspire us to read and to engage with God's Word**. So don't let the method take over or draw us away from personally engaging with Scripture, lingering in it and asking the Lord to teach us about Him and about how to live life with eyes anchored on Him.
- **To provide a framework** for us to engage in Scripture whether we're studying alone or with a group.
- **To offer some creative ways to help make Scripture come alive** and reveal its relevance to everyday life – today. Because our Lord, who is "the same yesterday and today and forever," (Hebrews 13:8) resides in the midst.

For the purposes of this study, we will rely heavily on Scripture informing Scripture – so please start there. But if there's something you bump into where a little more information would be helpful, by all means LOOK further. We have access to terrific guidance from outside sources. **Dr. Constable's Sonic Light, Bible.org, Got Questions** are just a few.

Teach me your way, LORD,  
that I may rely on your faithfulness;  
give me an undivided heart,  
that I may fear your name.  
I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart;  
I will glorify your name forever.  
For great is your love toward me;  
you have delivered me from the depths,  
from the realm of the dead.

Psalm 86:11-13

## Each Week

*Alpha & Omega* is a six-week study covering twelve of God's names. Each week includes five days of study. Of the five days, four focus on contemplating designated Names of God (2 per week) and one day to consider what God says about Himself – a passage of Scripture spoken by Him, through a Prophet or directly to a person.

Each day includes the following:

- **Begin with PRAYER:** "Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word." (Psalm 119:18).
- **Read the passage.** So, start by reading – not just reading by seeing the words, but going a step further and *thinking* about them. Park preconceived ideas, see beyond what may be familiar. Ask God to open our eyes and ears to be able to see and hear what is available. The Bible is truly God's "living word" – you never know what beautiful nuggets of truth are literally at your fingertips.

After reading, use the lines provided to journal what you observe/learn. Prompt questions are included. They are simply prompts that begin with context: the 5 W's: who, what, when, where & why. It doesn't have to be detailed – and some might be hard to distinguish – just a quick broad overview to help us understand what's going on:

- **Who:** Who are the players involved? Who is the audience? Who is speaking? Who is the author? The audience? ...
- **What:** What are they talking about? Is it a Psalm/song of praise or a story (like one about Namaan's healing that we will study when we consider Jehovah-Rapha), or a directive? It could be several things.
- **When:** what period of time/what was happening
- **Where:** the place, surroundings
- **Why:** the purpose - is it a promise, a command, a caution,...

Followed by a variety of broad questions that will hopefully spur more questions. Just so you know, the *when* and *where* are often obscure – so don't let anything get you bogged down.

The day's reading is followed by:

- **Special Overlay:** More than anything, our hope is that we will all fall in love with Scripture – truly the greatest love story ever told: God's love for us – and that we will fall in love with our Creator (**Elohim**). Each and every day, through all the steps of inductive study and whatever other ways we interact with the passages, may our eyes and ears be ever open to see and hear God's words **about Himself**.

Why not keep a running list of what we learn about God in each day's reading?

Who He Is: God is: faithful, trustworthy, a sanctuary, the same yesterday/today/forever, ...

The things He does (explicit/implied): God: hears, knows my name, is LORD, never wavers, always says what He means and means what He says, speaks ...

The things He says, literally: "But now, **this is what the LORD says ...**"

- **Scripture Search:** prompts for those who want a little extra OR search out further Scripture, having to do with that day's Name or topic/passage that comes to mind. But only if you have time and want to take more steps. Don't feel like you have to bite off more than you can chew. This study is for you. It's not an opportunity to prove something or to outshine – it's simply an opportunity to learn about God.

**Read to know God.** This incredible *living word* is God's Word. There is so much to know about him and He has put himself forth from Genesis to Revelation.

**We study the Word of God to know the God of the Word** and "to be transformed by the renewing our mind" (Romans 12). The goal is not to complete the tasks but to *know Him* and live in light of His Word, will and ways.

And, as we study, let's always be **mindful of applications:**

- What does this text teach me about God?
- What does this text tell me to do?
- What truths (or promises) do I need to claim?
- What thought(s) will I carry throughout the day?

Remember, this time in Scripture is for YOU. It's meant to be a blessing, not a burden. If it's too much, do only what you can do. It's not a race or a *good-student* exercise. It's simply an opportunity to grow in our knowledge of God – walking through Scripture **together**.

Each week, we will have the opportunity to gather and discuss in person, but if you can't be there – connect at [neighborhoodstudies.com/blog](http://neighborhoodstudies.com/blog) where the weekly discussions corresponding with each lesson will be posted.

### **Linger and Enjoy**

As we read Scripture to know God, we'll learn about all the ways that HE is faithful. We'll see over and over that He never leaves us to walk alone – and that He knows us *by name*, because *we are his*.

*"... I am your shield, your very great reward." (Genesis 15:1)*

*'For I,' declares the LORD, 'will be a wall of fire around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.'" (Zechariah 2:5 NASB)*

*"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."  
(Isaiah 41:10)*

*"And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:20)*

Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive. Ask the Lord to reveal Himself in new and meaningful ways. Journal below your thoughts, hopes, apprehensions, and prayers over the next few weeks.

*Show me your ways, LORD,  
teach me your paths.  
Guide me in your truth and teach me,  
for you are God my Savior,  
and my hope is in you all day long.  
Remember, LORD, your great mercy and love,  
for they are from of old.*

Psalm 25: 4-6

We're excited and hope you are too. This is a *come-as-you-are* party, simply as you are. No worries about what you bring (or don't bring) to the table. Together, let's ask the Lord to keep our hearts anchored in Him, to teach us and to help us in our unbelief.

*"...But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us."*

*"If you can'?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for one who believes."*

*Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe;  
help me overcome my unbelief!"*

(Mark 9:21b-24)

More than anything **HAVE FUN**. Enjoy and sink into all the wonderful things (even when some may be hard to swallow) the Lord has to share and teach us about himself. And more than anything, sink into our identity as daughters of The King, our Elohim.

(And please forgive any typos - we're guessing there might be a few ☺)

When you know God by studying His name  
—Creator, Healer, Protector, Provider, and  
many others — you'll gain power to stand  
strong. You'll find strength for times of trial,  
comfort for pain, and provision for your soul's  
deepest needs.

- Kay Arthur



## BIBLE OVERVIEW: The Old & New Testaments

Just for grins, here's a quick Bible overview to get us started.

If we went to the book store, we would see the books arranged by subject and type of literature. Our Bible works in a similar way. It is one book, yet like a store houses many books that are arranged by subject and type. The Bible's arrangement begins with two major books: the Old Testament (before Christ) and the New Testament (from Christ's birth – on.)

### Old Testament

The Old Testament is made up of 39 individual books written by twenty-eight different authors and spans the period of two thousand years. It begins with creation and tells the story of the Jewish people up to the time of Christ.

Within the **Old Testament**, are several books. The *historical books*, arranged chronologically, the *poetic books*, and the *prophetic books*. The prophetic books *proclaimed* the word of God both for the future and for the present. These books were penned before, during and after the time of the Jewish nation's exile from the land promised to them by God.

Even then, keep an eye out for the story behind the story – the bigger picture love story written by God to each of us, the underlying and woven throughout story of salvation and redemption.

The books fall within certain periods of time:

- **The Patriarchs** covers the Lord's setting apart a people/nation through which redemption would come. Genesis chapter 12 records the covenantal promise made by God to Abraham. A promise fulfilled by Christ through the line of Abraham:

“I will make you into a great nation,  
and I will bless you;  
I will make your name great,  
and you will be a blessing.  
I will bless those who bless you,  
and whoever curses you I will curse;  
and all peoples on earth  
will be blessed through you.” (Genesis 12:2-3)

- **The Exodus/Law** covers the period of the Jewish nation in which God leads them out of captivity in Egypt and into the land promised to the Patriarchs.

- **Judges** covers the period of time when the Lord led and governed the Jewish nation. God worked through *Judges* who were not only leaders, but also warriors and prophets.
- **The Kings** cover an expansive time in the Jewish nation's history chronicled in 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings, 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles as well as most of the poetic and all of the prophetic books. The prophetic books, located at the end of the Old Testament, are designated as major and minor simply based on size. They have further designation associated with the time of their authorship.

[Time periods: Pre-Exile – before the Israelites were taken over by other nations and exiled from their land (PreE); during the Israelite's Exile (E), and Post-Exile (PostE).]

- **The Silent Years** refers to the time between the Old and New Testaments during which the Lord did not speak to the Jewish nation. This ended with the coming of John the Baptist, the Messiah's forerunner.

The following chart will hopefully help give some perspective on the Old Testament's timing:

Historical: the history of the Israelites	Poetry –fits into the context of the historical books	Prophets: Major & Minor (based on length of book) written during the time of 1 & 2 Kings/Chronicles
<b>Genesis</b> – “The Beginnings” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- of man (Gen 1)</li> <li>- of sin (Gen 3)</li> <li>- of God's plan of redemption (Gen 12 – from Abraham will come the seed through whom everyone will be blessed – Our Savior, Jesus)</li> <li>- of the patriarchs/fathers of faith</li> </ul>	<b>Job</b> – timing is during Genesis	<b>Isaiah</b> (PreE)
<b>Exodus</b> – “to leave” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Moses</li> <li>- Deliverance from evils of Pharaoh</li> <li>- Introduction of the Law</li> <li>- The Wanderings</li> </ul>	<b>Psalms</b> – written during the time of 1 & 2 Samuel, Kings & Chronicles	<b>Jeremiah</b> (PreE)
<b>Leviticus</b> – “the Law”, expands upon the Law and how we should live so his people can be set apart, so that life might go well with them.	<b>Proverbs</b> – wise words of life written mostly by Solomon (King David's son)	<b>Lamentations</b> (PreE)

<b>Numbers</b> –counting of the people	<b>Ecclesiastes</b>	<b>Ezekiel (E)</b>
<b>Deuteronomy</b> – “second law”, a restating of the Law and the story of the Israelites	<b>Song of Solomon</b>	<b>Daniel (E)</b>
<b>Joshua</b> - faith leads to obedience which leads to blessing		<b>Hosea (PreE)</b>
<b>Judges</b> – disbelief leads to disobedience which leads to consequence - then to repentance & redemption over & over		<b>Joel (PreE)</b>
<b>Ruth</b> – story of a faithful woman in the period of Judges		<b>Amos (PreE)</b>
<b>1 &amp; 2 Samuel</b> – beginning of the Jewish kings		<b>Obadiah (PreE)</b>
<b>1 &amp; 2 Kings</b> – history of the kingdoms		<b>Jonah (PreE)</b>
<b>1 &amp; 2 Chronicles</b> – history of the kingdoms repeated		<b>Micah (PreE)</b>
<b>Ezra</b> (exile/post exile)		<b>Nahum (PreE)</b>
<b>Nehemia</b> (exile/post exile)		<b>Habakuk (PreE)</b>
<b>Esther</b> (exile)		<b>Zephaniah (PreE)</b>
		<b>Haggai (PostE)</b>
		<b>Zechariah (PostE)</b>
		<b>Malachi (PostE)</b>

The Period between the Old and New Testaments is designated by 400 hundreds “years of silence” – as far as the Lord outwardly communicating with the Jewish people. The silence was broken by the Lord’s covenantal promise (from Genesis 12) coming to fruition through an unlikely event that involved a faithful, young girl.

### New Testament

The **New Testament** is made up of 27 individual books written by nine different authors. It records Jesus’ birth, ministry, death & resurrection as well as the ministry of His disciples. It also includes the prophetic book of Revelation, written by John. The New Testament covers a time period of less than a hundred years. It is made up of **Historical Books** (up until 60 AD), the **Pauline Epistles** (written between 48-67 AD) and the **General Epistles** (written between 48 and 95 AD).

Historical Books (by author)	Pauline Epistles	General Epistles
Mathew	<b>Galatians</b> (48 AD)	<b>James</b> (48 AD, author James, half brother of Jesus)
Mark	<b>1 &amp; 2 Thessalonians</b> (50 AD)	<b>1 Peter</b> (62 AD, author Peter)
<b>Luke</b>	<b>1 &amp; 2 Corinthians</b> (53 AD)	<b>2 Peter</b> (62 AD, author Peter)
<b>John</b>	<b>Romans</b> (53 AD)	<b>Hebrews</b> (67 AD, author unknown)
	<b>Ephesians</b> (60 AD)	<b>Jude</b> (AD 67, author Jude, brother of James, half brother of Jesus)
	<b>Colossians</b> (60 AD)	<b>1 John</b> (95 AD, author John)
	<b>Philemon</b> (60 AD)	<b>1 John</b> (95 AD, author John)
	<b>Philippians</b> (60 AD)	<b>1 John</b> (95 AD, author John)
	<b>1 Timothy</b> (62 AD)	<b>Revelation</b> (95 AD, author John)
	<b>Titus</b> (62 AD)	
	<b>2 Timothy</b> (67 AD)	

We hope that's helpful. Now let's start at the Beginning (Elohim, Creator) as we dive into knowing God by learning more about a few of His names.

God, the living God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, sets forth his own name and title, that there may be no mistake as to who he is. "I am the LORD (Jehovah)," saith he, "and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." (Isa 42:8) He also sets forth his name at large, for the comfort of his people. Is it not written, "They that know Thy name well put their trust in Thee" (Ps 9:10)?

There is something in every name of God which may breed faith in our souls. Whether we know him as Jehovah, Elohim, Shaddai, or Lord, or by whatsoever other name he has been pleased to manifest Himself, that title becomes the ground of our confidence, and is the means of fostering faith in his people's minds, when they come to understand its meaning.

- Charles Spurgeon

# Alpha & Omega – Week 1

## Elohim

Creator

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. <sup>4</sup>God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup>God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning – the first day.

Genesis 1:1-3

*Genesis 1:1 says, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." It literally says, "In the beginning Elohim, Elohim created the heaven and the earth." That's the Hebrew word from two root words: El, which means strength and unlimited power. And the last part of is allah, which means to keep a promise. Elohim is also a plural noun. I believe that right here on the threshold of the Bible we see an indication of the nature of God, as shown in the Holy Trinity - God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. All three were present in creation (see John 1:3). Aren't you glad we find the Savior in chapter 1, verse 1? Aren't you glad we find the Holy Spirit in chapter 1, verse 1? Aren't you glad we find the Father in chapter 1, verse 1 of the Word of God?*

- Adrian Rogers

The first name of God we see in Scripture is found in Genesis 1 – **Elohim**, The All-Powerful One, Creator. God alone is the all-powerful creator of the universe. He spoke creation into existence and breathed life into all creatures – above and below the waters that were anchored by land and sky and light and dark – ruled over by man the only being created in God's image.

**Elohim** is repeated in almost every verse of Genesis 1, introducing not only creation but a plural noun in relation to it. The basic meaning behind the name *Elohim* is one of strength or power of effect.

Elohim is the infinite, all-powerful God who shows by His works that He is the creator, sustainer, and supreme judge of the world. (Ken Hemphill)

**Day 1:** Begin with prayer, "Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word."

**Read Genesis 1:1 – 2:2.**

Though the story is likely familiar, try to read it with fresh eyes, taking note of what we can learn about God as all-powerful Creator.

Ask God (Creator) to reveal himself in new and pertinent ways in order to inform your life and day today. Prayerfully read, pausing to think and notice, taking a few moments to jot down observations that can be simple or complex; questions or ideas, maybe even answers to questions pondered before. Observations might even be ah-ha moments or *how many times have I read this and have never seen* (fill in the blank), ... etc. What do you notice? What stands out to you? What would you like to consider further?

Begin with the 5 w's – *Who, What, When, Where and Why*.

What happens when God speaks? What can we learn about God and order. Is there anything about God's chosen order of creation that surprises you or further informs upon further consideration?? How can we see His provision through Creation (whether his name Jehovah Jireh, Provider, has been revealed or not has no bearing on the fact that He is).

What can we learn about relationship and purpose as we are introduced to the Trinity who are three yet one? Where do we see each at work in creation?

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**Special Overlay:** While reading the passage, make a list of what the Lord reveals about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied). How does the fact that Elohim represents a plural noun inform the Name? What character traits does God reveal about himself in Creation?

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For from him and through him and for him are all things.  
To him be the glory forever!  
*Romans 11: 36*

Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive.



**Day 2:** Read Psalm 91

I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress,  
my **Elohim**, in whom I trust."

In Psalm 91, begin with the 5 contextual w's – *Who, What, When, Where and Why*. Sometimes it can be a challenge in the Psalms to nail all of these down – especially this one with no stated author or date. [Some scholars attribute authorship to Moses as he authored Psalm 90 (not all the Psalms were written by David or during the Kings time period) and many of the phrases align with his style. Some attribute it to David.] But time spent considering context can always help as we apply Truth to our life today.

Elohim is God, the Maker of the universe and the Supreme Creator of all life. Elohim emphasizes God's power and strength as demonstrated in His creating something from nothing – literally the heavens, the earth and all that is in them. Creator sets him above all, in all and over all – how might that Truth inform our day today? What specific phrases reveal the power of God as Creator? How might we allow these to inform our identity?

And...What aspects of Creation that we encounter day in and day out are alluded to in Psalm 91? How do they offer practical reminders of God, Elohim, every day?

(Ex: v *Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty:*

As we see shadows throughout the day might we be reminded of God's protection, the light as well as the objects that reveal shadows – part of creation spoken into existence at the beginning of time all subject to Elohim ...)

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**Special Overlay:** While reading the passage, make a list of what the Lord reveals to you about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied).

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**Scripture Search:** For more (and there is so much more beyond what we can fit here) check out Deuteronomy 10:12-22 (specifically v. 17) and make note of what we can learn about Elohim, specific attributes of God – his power, his authority, his love, ...

There is no one like *Yahweh*—your one true **Elohim** and *Adonai*. He is the great, powerful, and awe-inspiring God.  
(Deut. 10:17)

While you're there, stop by Deuteronomy 5:6 to see what the Lord God has to say about himself:

I am the LORD your **Elohim**, who brought you out of slavery in Egypt.

A statement that offers even greater significance when we apply that to the larger story always present throughout Scripture, He is our Elohim who brought us out of the slavery of sin.

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. (Galatians 5:1)

Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive.

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Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive.

# YHWH

(Jehovah, Yahweh)

Self-Existent One

Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?"

God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.'

This is my name forever,  
the name you shall call me  
from generation to generation."

Exodus 3:13-14

*God's name is almost always translated LORD (all caps) in the English Bible. But the Hebrew would be pronounced something like "Yahweh," and is built on the word for "I am."*

*So, every time we hear the word Yahweh, or every time you see LORD in the English Bible, you should think: this is a proper name (like Peter or John) built out of the word for "I am" and reminding us each time that God absolutely is.*

*...God never had a beginning. God will never end. If he did not come into being he cannot go out of being, because he is being.<sup>iii</sup>*

*- John Piper*

YHWH (Jehovah, Yahweh) is the most frequently used name of God in the Bible, commonly translated LORD, in all caps, and used by God to define himself in Exodus 3.

According to Mark Driscoll, "In the Old Testament the most sacred name for God is Yahweh. Yahweh is a distinctly proper name for the God of the Bible. Because it is

sacred, it is never used to refer to any pagan gods; neither is it used in regard to any human. It is reserved solely for the one true God alone. The name Yahweh appears some 6,823 times in the Old Testament, as he is the focus and hero of the Scriptures.”<sup>iv</sup>

Yahweh is the personal and intimate name given to those crying out to be saved from their bondage: “Who should I say sent me?” Moses asked when sent by God who had heard the Israelite’s cry to free them from slavery. – “This is what you are to say to the Israelites, ‘I AM has sent you to them.’”

If *Elohim* is God's creative and powerful name, then *Jehovah* (YHWH) is God's personal name. It is His self-revealing name because this name comes to us directly off of the question, “What is (your) name?” Essentially, when we study the name *Elohim*, we study the God who is the Creator. We can talk about His power, presence and prowess. Yet when we talk about *Jehovah*, we are talking about His person, His character.

- Dr. Tony Evans

**Day 3:** Begin with prayer, “Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word.”

**Read Exodus 3.**

Consider the contextual 5 W’s (who, what, when, where & why) – feel free to peek back for a quick skim of Exodus 1 and 2 to know about the when and where if you’d like. In Exodus 3, what can we learn about Moses? What specifics can we learn about God? About His:

- power over nature
- holiness
- knowledge of people & events
- what he sees and knows
- power over earthly kingdoms
- promises

One of the Lord’s countless attributes is faithfulness. We learn in 2 Timothy 2:10 that regardless of what we do or don’t do, “He remains faithful, for he cannot disown himself. if we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot disown himself.”

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**Special Overlay:** While reading the passage, make a list of what the Lord reveals to you about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied).

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**Scripture Search:** God foretold the plight of the nation of Israel in Genesis 15:12-20 – before the nation had been conceived. And read Exodus 12: 31-42. What can we learn about God’s promises? About relationship? About his power, sovereignty, authority and timing? How can these things inform our day today – all of today including the good and the bad?

Ask God (I AM) to reveal himself in new and pertinent ways in order to inform your life and day today. Prayerfully read, pausing to linger and learn with fresh eyes.

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**Day 4:** Begin with prayer, “Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word.”

**Read Exodus 33-34:16, 29-35**

Consider the 5W contextual questions (who, what, when, where & why.) To help with when, we pick up the story after God has liberated the nation of Israel from slavery and tyranny in Egypt and after they had, in their fear, abandoned God for a golden calf idol while Moses was with God receiving the Law:

*Yahweh finished speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai. Then he gave him the two tablets with his words on them, stone tablets inscribed by Elohim himself. (Exodus 31:18 NOG)*



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**Special Overlay:** While reading the passage, make a list of what the Lord reveals to you about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied).

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**Scripture Search:** Consider further Exodus 24:29-35. What happens when Moses spent time with God? Did Moses will himself to be radiant? If Moses' radiance is not of himself but a reflection of God's glory, how does this show itself in nature (Creator revealed)? If God is the same today, yesterday and always – how does/can this play with us out today? How might this inform Jesus's words in Matthew 11:27-30? How might Paul's encouragement to the Romans 15:13 inform and encourage us?

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him,  
so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*  
Romans 15:13

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Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive.  
Pray that He open our eyes throughout the day to see the people walking next  
to us and ways to love them well.

# God Speaks of Himself

“For I am the **YAHWEH** your **Elohim**, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior...”

Isaiah 43:3a (NOG)

**Day 5:** Throughout Scripture the God speaks about his plans as well as himself. Read Isaiah 44. What does He reveal about himself? Though we might not worship physical idols, what idols do we have in our lives? How do we craft, position, manipulate life? What can we learn from this passage about those things? Ask God to open your eyes to specific areas or aspects in your life that have taken on idol-nature. What does God reveal about himself that offers freedom? What else is the Lord teaching you about himself?

Make a list of what the Lord revealed to you about Himself – bullet points. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied.)

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Think back over the week.

- What have these texts taught me about God?
- What truths (or promises) do I need to claim?
- What verse(s) have special meaning?
- What thought(s) will I carry throughout the day/week?

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Then, spend time in prayer, asking the Lord to search your heart and to mold it into a heart that is after His own heart. (1 Samuel 13:14)

THOUGHTS/NOTES

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# Alpha & Omega – Week 2

## Jehova Jireh

The LORD will Provide

So Abraham called that place **The LORD Will Provide**.  
And to this day it is said, "On the mountain of the LORD  
it will be provided."

Genesis 22:14

*Abraham's reasoning was based upon his experience with God over the years. God had continually proven to be his provider and protector. ...Abraham did not understand why he was told to sacrifice his son nor how God would accomplish His promises if Abraham obeyed, but he did know Who had commanded it. He did know that God was holy, just, and pure. He did know that God was able to raise the dead. On the basis of these certainties Abraham obeyed God, contrary to human wisdom, but squarely based upon godly reason. Godly reason has reasons. We may not know how or why, but we do know Who and what. That is enough!*

*- Bob Deffinbaugh*

The first time we see God's name – **Jehova Jireh**, The LORD will Provide, is in Genesis 22 at the foot of Mt Moriah when Abraham unequivocally tells those with him, "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you." How that could be the case was a mystery since their destination involved obeying a command that would leave the boy unable to return. Abraham didn't know how, but he knew Who commanded and Who had promised a nation more vast than the stars in the sky and the sands on the earth. So, Abraham reasoned that together they would return.

Abraham was the first person to say out loud God's name: Jehovah (Self-Existent One) Jireh (Provider) The meaning of **Jehova Jereh** is literally The Lord Who Will See To It.

"This is what we long for when we have a need that is personal and special; One who will see to our needs and provide for us. This is what Jehovah-Jireh means; the LORD Who will see to it that my every need is met."<sup>v</sup>

“Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith being fully persuaded that God had proven to do what he promised.” (Romans 4:20)

**Day 1:** Begin with prayer, “Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word.”

**Read Genesis 22:1-19.**

Though the story is likely familiar as well as hard to read. Try to read it with fresh eyes, open to learning about God, asking Him to help us understand.

Begin with the 5 w's – *Who, What, When, Where and Why*. How does Abraham respond when God calls his name (both times)? Why would the command and his response have been especially hard for Abraham (see: Genesis 15:1-6, Romans 4:18-22). What did Abraham know about God in order to respond the way that he did? (Hebrews 11:17-19) What do we learn about God through Abraham? through Isaac? What's going on in your life where the Lord's name Provider can inform circumstances, stress, expectations or pressures?

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**Special Overlay:** While reading the passage, make a list of what the Lord reveals about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied).

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**Scripture Search:** This text involves complicated concepts. Yet at the core of the story is concept of Faith. What do we learn about faith through Abraham. Why is it important that we understand? Did Abraham think he would really have to take the life of his son? Read Hebrews 11:1-19 (and further if you'd like). What is the common thread for all those commended for their faith? How does faith play a role in joy and peace in good times or bad? Why could Abraham listen and obey – even when obedience tested all he could see with his eyes?

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We see this name for the first time in Genesis 22:1. "Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham," I would underline "tested." Genesis 22 is a test; it is a test of Abraham's faith. Listen, precious one, faith is not faith until it is tested. You can say, "I believe, I believe, I believe," but when you see that you believe is when you are called to believe in things that you have not seen, things that you have not yet grasped, but things that God has said are true. You grab hold of them, and you hang onto the word of God, no matter what the circumstances, no matter how you feel. You grab hold of the word of God, and you hang on to it—that is faith. Faith is the evidence of things hoped for. It is the conviction of things not seen. Without faith (Hebrews 11:6) it is impossible to please God. Those who come to Him must believe that He is, (Who is He? He is Jehovah. He is the self-existent One.) and He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him, who come to Him as *Jehovah-jireh*, the LORD who will provide. So it is a test.

- Kay Arthur

For Abraham it was a test, but how does this story point forward to the story of Jesus and the offering of Calvary? See Genesis 22:2, 5, 6-9. The Lord went through with what appeared to be a morally wrong command given to Abraham – which we know that God cannot be immoral for He is Holy. God cannot be counter to who He is, his character. What can these things teach us about Him?

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Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive.

"She began by reminding me of the scriptural injunction that the ox grinding the corn must not be kept from enjoying the grain. Did I think God felt less about His human workers? Hadn't I better examine myself to be sure I was not nursing a Sacrificial Spirit? Wasn't I claiming to depend upon God, but living as if my needs would be met by my own scrimping?"

— Brother Andrew, *God's Smuggler*

**Day 2:** Read Exodus 16

Begin with the 5 contextual w's – *Who, What, When, Where and Why*. Where do we find Moses and the nation of Israel? What burning need is facing them? Where and how did God meet them in this need? What can we learn about **Jehovah-Jireh** – The LORD Will Provide? About God hearing and knowing? What can we learn about ourselves. How can all of this be applied to the story behind the story – the one of ultimate salvation and freedom from slavery, spiritual and eternal. How might that Truth inform our day today? What specific phrases reveal the power of God as Provider? Would God's provision be described as lacking, sufficient or perfect? sometimes, often, or every day? How might we allow this to inform our situation.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

**Special Overlay:** While reading the passage, make a list of what the Lord reveals to you about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied).

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**Scripture Search:** Read Joshua 5:9-12 (below)

*"Then the Lord said to Joshua, 'Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.' So the place has been called Gilgal to this day.*

*On the evening of the fourteenth day of the month, while camped at Gilgal on the plains of Jericho, the Israelites celebrated the Passover. The day after the Passover, that very day, they ate some of the produce of the land: unleavened bread and roasted grain. The manna stopped the day after they ate this food from the land; there was no longer any manna for the Israelites, but that year they ate the produce of Canaan."*

After 40 years wondering in the dessert, guided every day by the Presence of the Lord (cloud by day, pillar of fire by night), the nation of Israel stood ready to enter the promised land, the land of freedom and abundance. Does God's provision change? What does? If we take this to a deeper level and apply it to the freedom for which Christ set us free (Galatians 5:1), how might that inform our days?

*Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. "For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world." Then they said to Him, "Lord, always give us this bread." Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst." John 6:32-35*

**What can we learn about Jehovah-Jireh in Revelation 2:17?**

*"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the **hidden manna**, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it."*

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Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive.

# Jehovah Nissi

The LORD is our Banner

Moses built an altar and called it The LORD is my Banner. He said, "Because hands were lifted up against the throne of the LORD, the LORD will be at war against the Amalekites from generation to generation."

Exodus 17:15

*The hands and rod of Moses were held up in the same way that soldiers hold up their flags in the time of battle. As these flags bear the insignia of their country, the soldiers are said to fight under that banner. The Israelites fought under the direction of God, Jehovah-Nissi. It was under the Lord's banner and with His aid they fought, and in His name and strength they conquered.<sup>vi</sup>*

- Ken Hemphill

**Jehovah Nisse** is translated from Hebrew as "The LORD is our Banner", appearing only once Scripture in Exodus 17:15.

*The lifting up of the staff secured to the warriors the strength needed to obtain the victory, from the fact that by means of the staff Moses brought down this strength from above, i.e., from the Almighty God in heaven; not indeed by a merely spiritless and unthinking elevation of the staff, but by the power of his prayer, which was embodied in the lifting up of his hands with the staff, and was so far strengthened thereby, that God had chosen and already employed this staff as the medium of the saving manifestation of His almighty power.<sup>vii</sup>*

**Day 3:** Begin with prayer, "Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word."

**Read Exodus 17:8-16.**

Consider the contextual 5 W's (who, what, when, where & why). What can we learn about God? his knowledge? His guidance? His leadership? His power. How can we apply what we see about relationship and purpose as it relates to the

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**Day 4: Read 2 Chronicles 20:1-30**

Quickly map out context (5 W's). What can we learn about God from Jehosaphat? What does God reveal about Himself. How do we see God's provision, power and protection at play?

What enemy threatens to overwhelm you today? How might God's names Jehovah Jireh and Jehovah Nissi act as your provider and banner?

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**Special Overlay:** While reading the passage, make a list of what the Lord reveals to you about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied).

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Have faith in the LORD your God and you will be upheld..." (2 Chronicles 2:20b)

**Scripture Search:** There are many more stories about God's mighty power and victory throughout Scripture. If you have time and are interested, check out any of the three accounts recorded on Hezekiah's deliverance from Sennecherib. 2 Kings 18–20, Isaiah 36–39, and 2 Chronicles 29–32.

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Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive. Pray that He open our eyes throughout the day to see the people walking next to us and ways to love them well.

# God Speaks of Himself

See, I am the only *Elohim*.

There are no others

Deuteronomy 32:19a

**Day 5:** Throughout Scripture the God speaks about his plans as well as himself. Read Isaiah 45:1-8. What can we learn about the Lord as Banner, Provider and King, over every earthly king (Cyrus's story continued from Isaiah 44 from last week).

Make a list of what the Lord revealed to you about Himself – bullet points. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied.)

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Think back over the week.

- What have these texts taught me about God?
- What truths (or promises) do I need to claim?
- What verse(s) have special meaning?
- What thought(s) will I carry throughout the day/week?

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THOUGHTS/NOTES

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# Alpha & Omega – Week 3

## El Roi

The God who Sees Me

She gave this name to the LORD who spoke to her: “You are the God who sees me,” for she said, “I have now seen the One who sees me.”

Genesis 16:13

*The doctrine of God's omnipresence, is a great central truth of Scripture. God is present, near me, next to me — and this God sees me and knows me through and through! At this point faith begins, and while it may go on to include a thousand other wonderful truths, these all refer back to the truth that **God is**, and **God is here!***

- A.W. Tozar

**El Roi** – The God who Sees Me – first crossed the lips of someone who felt everything but seen. To be seen and known and loved lie at the core of human desire. We each have the deepest longing for these woven within our souls. The needs play off each other and trick us into believing that we are none of those things – seen, known or loved. Which is where Hagar found herself, mistreated and rejected – alone. So she ran, fully convinced that not only would no one care or miss her, but that no one would even notice. And if they did, a celebration would be at hand.

But she could not run from God. None of us can. For God sees and knows all.

**Day 1:** Begin with prayer, “Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word.”

**Read Genesis 16.**

Begin with the 5 w's – *Who, What, When, Where and Why*. As with many stories, especially those referring to ancient culture, complicated seems to be an understatement. We catch the story of Abraham after God has declared his intentions to bless Sarai with a son through whom the nations would be blessed (Gen. 15) and after years had passed. With neither Abraham nor Sarah in the spring-chicken category, they try to figure things to the best of their understanding. Enter Hagar – the perfect surrogate, until she gets pregnant. In what ways do we see human nature play out in Sarai? in Abraham? in Hagar? – How do their reactions reflect their core pain or issues? What do we learn about God's timing? What about his Promise? Did Hagar feel seen? Did Sarai? Does feeling seen (or known or loved) have any bearing on the reality that they/we are? How is that addressed in the text?

In what ways is it significant that God revealed his name **Ei Roi** to Hagar who in turn was the first person to claim it and to say it aloud?

## What else?

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



**Special Overlay:** While reading the passage, make a list of what the Lord reveals about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied).

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**Scripture Search:** Read 2 Chronicles 16 – a story of King Asa who finagled a way to get what he wanted. What did Asa do? Who was he trusting? Why did the prophet (seer) condemn his action? What do we learn about God in this passage? What do we learn about His character as it relates to El Roi?

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Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive. Jot down thoughts or even questions.

God sees everything at once and knows what you are called to do. Our part is not to play God, but to trust God - to believe that our single, solitary life can make a difference

- Zig Ziglar

**Day 2:** Read Psalm 139

Begin with the 5 contextual w's – *Who, What, When, Where and Why*. Though the name El Roy is not used in this Psalm, what specifics can we learn about God's sight and knowledge and protection? What are some similarities with this Psalm and Genesis 16? What is revealed in this Psalm about God's sight? about His protection? about His knowledge? Is there anywhere (or any time, for that matter) He isn't? How can the Truths celebrated in this Psalm inform your life, even your day today? Which need to be on repeat? Why?

Have you ever felt like Hagar, ready to quit and run and hide? How might this Psalm and God's tender care in Genesis 16 inform the pressures, stress or circumstances in your life?

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**Special Overlay:** While reading the passage, make a list of what the Lord reveals to you about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied).

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**Scripture Search:** John 4: 1-26

Like Hagar, another woman felt rejected, abandoned and alone – sinking into her un-seen. Who saw her – and saw so much more than outward appearance. What can we learn about God's sight? His love? His knowledge? His redemptive power? What does God seek? What do you think signifies "true worship"? What do we learn about God in this passage?

What else?...

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Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive.

# Jehovah Rapha

The LORD who Heals

There YAWEH issued a ruling and instruction for them and put them to the test. <sup>26</sup> He said, "If you listen carefully to YAWEH your Elohim and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am **Jehovah Rapha**."

Exodus 15:25b-16

*The verb from which Rophe is derived occurs sixty-seven times in the Old Testament. Though it often refers to physical healing, it usually has a larger meaning as well, involving the entire person.*

*Rather than merely healing the body, **Jehovah Rapha** heals the mind and soul as well. This Hebrew verb is also used in other ways—for example, God "heals" water, land, and nations, and he "repairs" an altar.*

*- Ann Spangler*

**Jehovah Rapha** – The LORD who Heals – is the name of God revealed just after the Israelites passed through the Red Sea and Pharaoh's army had been defeated. They came to Marah, but couldn't drink the water due to its bitterness. At which point they "grumbled against Moses, saying, 'What are we to drink?'" (Exodus 15:24).

Immediately after the Lord "healed" the waters of Marah, **He identified Himself** to them as **Jehovah Rapha**: "I am the Lord, who heals you" (Exodus 15:26). He doesn't just heal water; He heals people. The healing of the waters was a demonstration of God's power to overcome any impurity, contamination, or corruption. **Jehovah Rapha** has the power to heal physically (2 Kings 5:10), emotionally (Psalm 34:18), mentally (Daniel 4:34), and spiritually (Psalm 103:2–3). Neither impurity of body nor impurity of soul can withstand the purifying, healing power of *Jehovah-Rapha*.<sup>viii</sup> He heals all wounds - even wounds we don't know we have – for His Name's sake, because He loves us.

When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. "He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his wounds you have been healed." For "you were like sheep going astray," but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. (1 Peter 2:23-25)

**Day 3:** Begin with prayer, "Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word."

Read Exodus 15:20-27.

Consider the contextual 5 W's (who, what, when, where & why). What had happened right before the Israelites entered Marah? What do you think spurred their reaction to the bitter waters? In How did Moses react? What does his reaction reveal about his heart? What do we learn about God in these verses? about His power? His teaching? His Presence, knowledge, commitment?

Throughout history, circumstances often influence our attitude toward God – if the circumstances are good, we might be grateful or relieved; if they're bad, we might be angry at God or afraid. If God is the same today, yesterday and forever – how can Jehovah-Rapha inform our attitude in any circumstance?

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**Special Overlay:** While reading the passage, make a list of what the Lord reveals to you about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied).

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**Scripture Search:** Read Exodus 15: 1-21

This beautiful song about the Lord – His power, His majesty, His role, His protection, provision, ... and so much more – is an outpouring of recognition and praise for salvation. As you read it, think about God's power over sin and strife, over pressures and stress, over whatever issue in life needs healing and redemption (in the same way he defeated Pharaoh).

Listing God's attributes praised in this song could fill pages, but jot down as many as you'd like. May the Truth displayed through these attributes wash over us and drown out inequities and wounds in the mightiest way. Walk through and fill in the blank as described in this song: God is \_\_\_\_\_

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**Scripture Search:** God not only heals physical ailments and wounds. His healing has no boundaries. Read how he heals emotionally (Psalm 34:18 and surrounding verses), mentally (Daniel 4:34 and surrounding verses), and spiritually (Psalm 103:2–3 and surrounding verses).

Nothing is out of bounds for the purifying, healing power of *Jehovah-Rapha*. Even the ultimate healing of our soul through Christ's redeeming power on the cross.

In Galilee, Jesus went from town to town, “healing every disease and sickness among the people” (Matthew 4:23). In Judea “large crowds followed him, and he healed them there” (Matthew 19:2). In fact, “wherever he went—into villages, towns or countryside—they placed the sick in the marketplaces. They begged him to let them touch even the edge of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed” (Mark 6:56). Not only did Jesus heal people physically, He also healed them spiritually by forgiving their sins (Luke 5:20). Every day, in every way, **Jesus proved Himself to be Jehovah-Rapha in the flesh.**

- Ken Hemphill

Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive. Pray that He open our eyes throughout the day to see the people walking next to us and ways to love them well.

# God Speaks of Himself

***Yahweh*** asked Moses, “Is there a limit to ***Yahweh***’s power? Now you will see whether or not my words come true.”

Numbers 11:23

**Day 5:** Read Isaiah 41 – asking the Lord to open your eyes to see and hear what He has prepared for you to learn about him. Ask for healing from wounds that are apparent or hidden.

What does God teach us about His power? How does He care for those He loves? What idols do we construct today? How do they inform our lives? Do the ways of this world have anything on God? What does He say about that? What does the Lord say about fear that includes anxiety and worry? How does the Lord refer to himself? What do we learn about the world's ways in vv 21-24. What do we learn about God's way? ... what else?

Make a list of what the Lord revealed to you about Himself – bullet points. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied.)

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Think back over the week.

- What have these texts taught me about God?
- What truths (or promises) do I need to claim?
- What verse(s) have special meaning?
- What thought(s) will I carry throughout the day/week?

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# Alpha & Omega – Week 4

## Jehovah-Raah (Roi, Rohi)

The LORD my Shepherd

*Yahweh* is my *Rohi*.

I am never in need.

He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside peaceful waters.

He renews my soul.

He guides me along the paths of righteousness  
for the sake of his name.

Psalm 23: 1-3 (NOG)

*This metaphor is one of the most beautiful and comforting and yet most common of all in Scripture, when it compares his divine Majesty with a pious, faithful or—as Christ says—“good Shepherd,” and compares us poor, weak, miserable sinners with sheep. We can, however, understand this comforting and beautiful picture best when we consider the creature itself...*

*A sheep must live entirely by its shepherd's help, protection, and care. As soon as it loses him, it is surrounded by all kinds of dangers and must perish, for it is quite unable to help itself. The reason? It is a poor, weak, simple little beast that can neither feed nor rule itself, nor find the right way, nor protect itself against any kind of danger or misfortune. Moreover, it is by nature timid, shy, and likely to go astray. When it does go a bit astray and leaves its shepherd, it is unable to find its way back to him; indeed, it merely runs farther away from him. Though it may find other shepherds and sheep, that does not help it, for it does not know the voices of strange shepherds. Therefore, it flees them and strays about until the wolf seizes it or it perishes some other way...*

*Christ, however, is the good, friendly Shepherd who goes after a famished and lost sheep in the wilderness, seeks it there and, when he has found it, lays it on his shoulder rejoicing. He even “gives his life for his sheep.” He is a friendly Shepherd. Who would not be happy to be his sheep?<sup>x</sup>*

- Martin Luther

**Jehovah Raah** – The LORD my Shepherd – most famously reveals itself in Psalm 23 written by David . The name connotes relationship, attention, pastor, herdsman, companion, protector, connected and so much more.

**Day 1:** Begin with prayer, “Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word.”

**Read Psalm 23.**

Begin with the 5 w's – *Who, What, When* (even though the specific date of authorship has never been determined), *Where and Why*. Which might be for our benefit – so that such beautiful words apply to all our circumstances and situations rather than being tied to a certain time or date. Though this is a familiar Psalm to most – slow down and linger on each line, asking God to open your eyes to more. Did David understand tending sheep? (see 1 Samuel 17:34-37). How might this inform his Psalm? What does David understand about God as shepherd? What enemies do we face in life? David faced literal enemies as well as internal, cultural, societal, relational – how did the Lord as his shepherd inform them all? How does this Psalm and God as Shepherd inform our relationship with Him?

Write down all the ways Jehova-Raah cares for you revealed in this Psalm.

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**Special Overlay:** While reading the passage, make a list of what the Lord reveals about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied).

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**Scripture Search:** Read Psalm 28 . What do we learn about God in this passage? (write out specifics) What do we learn about His character as it relates to Jehovah-Raah?

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In this name I think we find a tenderness and a security that implies a relationship, that comes from a relationship. When we see this name, we see *Jehovah-jireh*, which means "the LORD will provide;" we see *El Elyon*, the God most high;" we see *Yahweh*, which is the name "Jehovah," the self-existent One. We have seen all these other names, and yet, with this name *Jehovah-raah*, it implies, like none of the other names imply, not demeaning them, but it implies a relationship, because here it is, "The LORD is my shepherd."

- Kay Arthur

Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive. Jot down thoughts or even questions.

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**Day 2:** Ezekiel 34. Consider the context (5 w's). How is God as shepherd different than the world's leadership? Do you ever feel lost? uncared for? Don't forget that our leaders on earth are people – gifted people who are just like everyone else (including us), fallible. But not God – what do we learn about God as our shepherd – so much more significant than simply leader? Our rescuer? Redeemer? Provider? How well does He know us?

... What else?

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**Scripture Search:** Read John 10: 1-18 .

**JESUS:** *"I am the good shepherd.*

*The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep".*

How does Jesus' proclamation provide *the rest of the story*? Though the God speaks of the nation of Israel in Ezekiel, how does that include us, the Gentiles? Read Romans 11:9-13:

*If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. As Scripture says, "Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame." For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile – the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."*

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Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive.

# Jehovah-Shalom

The LORD is Peace

When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the LORD, he exclaimed, “Alas, Sovereign LORD! I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face!”

But the LORD said to him, “Peace! Do not be afraid. You are not going to die.”

So Gideon built an altar to the LORD there and called it. *Yahweh Shalom*. To this day it is still in Ophrah, which belongs to Abiezer’s family.

Judges 6: 22-24

*Isaiah 48:17 beautifully reveals the relationship between obedience, authority, and peace. God has a right to all authority because of who He is. Allow me to share my outlook on His right to complete authority. He is God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, the supreme Author of all existence. He reigns over all, and in Him all things exist. He is the Lord, the Master and Owner of all living creatures. He is the covenant Maker and Keeper. He is holy. As Lord, He will never ask anything of us that is not right, good, and open to the light. He is perfect and undefiled. Lastly, He is Redeemer, the One who bought us from sin’s slave master so we could experience abundant life. He bought us to set us free. What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:31 NIV).*

*Take pleasure in knowing that God inspired His Word with great care and immaculate precision. He chose every word purposely. When He said we could have peace like a river, He wasn’t drawing a loose analogy. He meant it.*

- Beth Moore

In Ezekiel 34, God says, “I will make a covenant of peace with them...” which comes to fruition through the Good Shepherd, His one and only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. For God is not only the peace-maker, His name is peace revealed by Gideon in Judges 6 – Jehovah-Shalom.

In Hebrew, *shalom* is translated as completeness, soundness, welfare, peace, perfect, full, harmony, wholeness and the joining together of opposites. In part, this is why shalom is used as a greeting and farewell – the epitome of opposites. Dare we take it to the deepest, most significant place where the shalom of Christ: light in darkness, life over death.

**Day 3:** Begin with prayer, "Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word."

**Read Judges 6.**

Begin with the 5 w's – *Who, What, When, Where and Why*. Who is Gideon? What can we learn about him in this chapter? What can he teach us about God's meeting us where we are and well as God's expectations of us? What can we learn about God allowing good and bad things? Where is God in the midst? What can we learn about God's sovereignty, power, knowledge, promise, ...? What can we learn about the propensity of people? What can we learn about how God sees us vs how we see ourselves?

Do you know that within each of us, as singular as our fingerprint, God has woven giftedness and purpose? What was Gideon's? Did he believe it? What is yours? Who is the source of gifting and power? Why not ask God to show us what he has prepared in advance for us, for His glory and Name's sake.

Is there any reason to fear? be anxious? worry? (all of which are completely snuffed out by peace) Why or why not?

... What else?

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**Special Overlay:** While reading the passage, make a list of what the Lord reveals about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied).

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**Scripture Search:** Read Judges 7 and Philippians 4:4-14. What do we learn about God in this passage? (write out specifics) What do we learn about His character as it relates to Jehovah-Shalom?

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"In the Bible, shalom means universal flourishing, wholeness, and delight—a rich state of affairs in which natural needs are satisfied and natural gifts fruitfully employed, a state of affairs that inspires joyful wonder as its Creator and Savior opens doors and welcomes the creatures in whom he delights. Shalom, in other words, is the way things ought to be."

- Cornelius Plantinga, Jr.

*Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive.*

**Day 4:** Begin with prayer, "Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word."

**Isaiah 25: 6 – 26:8.**

Begin with the 5 w's – *Who, What, When, Where and Why*. What? (some of which might be hard to nail down – but find what you can). What can we learn about God's providence, salvation, sovereignty, safety, ... in these passages? What names of God are called out? How does Jehovah-Shalom who itself?

... What else?

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**Special Overlay:** While reading the passage, make a list of what the Lord reveals about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied).

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**Scripture Search:** Read Psalm 29. What do we learn about God in this passage? (write out specifics) What do we learn about His character as it relates to Jehovah-Shalom?

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Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive.  
Jot down thoughts or even questions.

Peace has come to mean the time when there aren't any wars or even when there aren't any major wars. Beggars can't be choosers; we'd most of us settle for that. But in Hebrew peace, *shalom*, means fullness, means having everything you need to be wholly and happily yourself.

One of the titles by which Jesus is known is Prince of Peace, and he used the word himself in what seem at first glance to be two radically

contradictory utterances. On one occasion, he said to the disciples, "Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword" (Matthew 10:34). And later on, the last time they ate together, he said to them, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you" (John 14:27).

The contradiction is resolved when you realize that, for Jesus, peace seems to have meant not the absence of struggle, but the presence of love.

- Frederick Beuchner

*May the Lord of peace give you his peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you.*

*2 Thessalonians 3:16*

## God Speaks of Himself

And Yahweh declares:...

“They will call on me, and I will answer them.

I will say, ‘They are my people.’

They will reply, ‘**Yahweh** is our **Elohim**.’”

Zechariah 13:9b (NOG)

**Day 5:** Read Isaiah 48:12-22 – asking the Lord to open your eyes to see and hear what He has prepared for you to learn about him. Ask for peace in the midst of trials, struggles, anxieties, fear, worry, ...

Who is speaking? On what authority? What does God teach us about His power? How does He care for those He loves? Does He see? know our name? care? rescue? What can we learn about our relationship with Him? our safety? Our peace?

Make a list of what the Lord revealed to you about Himself – bullet points. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied.)

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Think back over the week.

- What have these texts taught me about God?
- What truths (or promises) do I need to claim?
- What verse(s) have special meaning?
- What thought(s) will I carry throughout the day/week?

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# Alpha & Omega – Week 5

## Jehovah-Sabaoth

The LORD of Hosts

There was a certain man from Ramathaim, a Zuphite from the hill country of Ephraim, whose name was Elkanah son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. He had two wives; one was called Hannah and the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had none.

Year after year this man went up from his town to worship and sacrifice to the **LORD Sabaoth** at Shiloh, where Hophni and Phinehas, the two sons of Eli, were priests of the LORD.

1 Samuel 1:1-3

*Jehovah-sabaoth literally means the Lord Almighty. It speaks of the sovereignty of God over all the powers of the universe. The second stanza from Martin Luther's hymn "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" says, "Did we in our own strength confide, Our striving would be losing, Were not the right man on our side, The man of God's own choosing. Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He, Lord Sabaoth His name, From age to age the same, And He must win the battle." David understood the greatness of God when he went against Goliath with five smooth stones and a sling. David said to Goliath, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied." Oh, that each of us would have this same conception of God in our battles.*

- Adrian Rogers

**Jehovah Sabaoth** – The LORD of "Armies" or "Hosts", LORD Almighty. This name denotes His universal sovereignty over every army, both spiritual and

earthly. The Lord of Hosts is the king of all heaven and earth. (Psalm 24:9-10; Psalm 84:3; Isaiah 6:5).

*This name for God first appears at the close of the period of the judges. In the same sentence as "LORD of hosts" is a reference to Shiloh, where the Ark of the Covenant was kept. The Ark symbolized Yahweh's rulership, among other things, for He sits enthroned above the cherubim (1 Samuel 4:4; Psalm 99:1). Some have suggested that "LORD of hosts" reaffirms that God is the true Leader of Israel's armies, in spite of the low spiritual condition of the nation of Israel at the time of the judges. In 1 Samuel 17:45, as part of his pre-fight verbal sparring with Goliath, David invokes this name of God. In doing so, David was claiming that God is the universal ruler over every force whether in heaven or on earth.<sup>x</sup> (Ken Hemphill)*

**God** (Elohim our Creator) whose strength and power have no limit, who has no beginning or end (Yahweh), who is our perfect provider who meets our every need – always, in ways we could never ask or imagine (Jehovah-Jireh), who sees me and knows all my goings on (El Roi), who hems us in and goes before and behind us (Jehovah-Niss), who heals every wound (Jehovah-Rapha), who shepherds us (Jehovah-Raah) and makes us whole/complete in perfect welfare and peace (Jehovah-Shalom) – **God Almighty** is LORD of Hosts, victorious in all situations, especially those deeply seeded in our hearts (hearts battling feelings of jealousy, judgement, shame, inadequacy, fear, rejection. Two women – one feeling unloved, one completely inadequate and unworthy – Jehovah Sabaoth is his Name.

Power and authority over all things belong to God alone.

**Day 1:** Begin with prayer, "Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word."

**Read 1 Samuel 1.**

Begin with the 5 w's – *Who, What, When, Where and Why*. What can we notice about the people, place and time that are touched/affected by God's name Jehovah-Sabaoth. Where are they going? What are they doing? What battles are being waged in the souls of Hannah and Peninnah. What can we learn about God's Lordship over earthly, physical and spiritual issues? When was Hannah's face "no longer downcast" – before or after she got pregnant? What then is the source of Hannah's peace? What can we learn about the reach Jehovah Sabaoth? How might that inform our day(s)?

... What else?

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**Scripture Search:** Read 2 Samuel 6: 1-19. What do we learn about God in this passage? (write out specifics.) What do we learn about His character as it relates to Jehovah-Sabaoth?

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*Elohim* forms the mountains and creates the wind.  
He reveals his thoughts to humans.  
He makes dawn and dusk appear.  
He walks on the high places of the earth.  
His name is *Yahweh Sabaoth*.

Amos 4:13



**Day 2:** Begin with prayer, "Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word."

**Read Psalm 84**

*How lovely is your dwelling place,  
**Jehovah Sabaoth!***

<sup>2</sup> *My soul yearns, even faints,  
for the courts of the LORD;  
my heart and my flesh cry out  
for the living God.*

<sup>3</sup> *Even the sparrow has found a home,  
and the swallow a nest for herself,  
where she may have her young –  
a place near your altar,  
**Jehovah Sabaoth**, my King and my God.*

<sup>4</sup> *Blessed are those who dwell in your house;  
they are ever praising you.*

<sup>5</sup> *Blessed are those whose strength is in you,  
whose hearts are set on pilgrimage.*

<sup>6</sup> *As they pass through the Valley of Baka,  
they make it a place of springs;  
the autumn rains also cover it with pools.*

<sup>7</sup> *They go from strength to strength,  
till each appears before God in Zion.*

<sup>8</sup> *Hear my prayer, **Jehovah Sabaoth**;  
listen to me, God of Jacob.*

<sup>9</sup> *Look on our shield, O God;  
look with favor on your anointed one.*

<sup>10</sup> *Better is one day in your courts  
than a thousand elsewhere;  
I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God  
than dwell in the tents of the wicked.*

<sup>11</sup> *For the LORD God is a sun and shield;  
the LORD bestows favor and honor;  
no good thing does he withhold  
from those whose walk is blameless.*

<sup>12</sup> ***Jehovah Sabaoth**,  
blessed is the one who trusts in you.*

## What else...?

[illegible]

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**Scripture Search:** Read Isaiah 6: 1-7. What do we learn about God in this passage? (write out specifics) What do we learn about His character as it relates to Jehovah-Sabaoth? If you'd like, check out Psalm 24 considering the same things.

Who is he, this King of glory?  
**Jehovah Sabaoth** –  
he is the King of glory.  
Psalm 24:10

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Isaiah gave no description of the Lord, saying only "I saw the Lord." Apparently, it was His awesome majesty which impressed itself on the prophet's consciousness – a marked contrast to the almost total disregard of the Lord on the part of the people to whom the prophet spoke.

Isaiah's vision and description of the angelic attendants called *seraphim* is slightly more detailed. They each had six wings. But it was what they were calling out to each other that grabbed his attention: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of His glory" (Isa 6:3)

The temple was shakened and filled with smoke as a result of their proclamation. It was not the voice of God which made the temple rock and caused His majesty and glory to be veiled in smoke. It was the force and power of the attendants' *testimony to His holiness!*

The triple repetition "Holy, holy, holy!" conveyed the most intense expression of holiness. Perhaps to say "Holy, holier, holiest!" would achieve a similar result. At any rate, there was no doubt in Isaiah's mind about the subject of their worship and testimony: It was the holiness of the Lord Almighty – **Jehovah Sabaoth**. This name is descriptive of the One Isaiah saw. <sup>xi</sup>

- Jill Briscoe

# El-Shaddai

God Almighty, The All-Sufficient One

When Abram was 99 years old, the LORD appeared to him. He said, "I am **El Shaddai**. Walk faithfully with me. Live in a way that pleases me. <sup>2</sup>I will now act on my covenant between me and you. I will greatly increase the number of your children after you."

Genesis 17: 1-2

*"El" is the name of God that speaks of power; but what does "Shaddai" mean? Scholars do not agree. Some say it comes from a Hebrew word meaning "to be strong"; others prefer a word meaning "mountain" (Ed note: sadu) or "breast (shad).".... If we combine these several ideas, we might say that "**El Shaddai**" is the name of "the all-powerful and all-sufficient God who can do anything and meet any need."*

*But why would God reveal this name to Abraham at this time, at the close of thirteen years of silence? Because God was going to tell His friend that Sarah would have a son. The Lord wanted Abraham to know that He is the God who is all-sufficient and all-powerful, and that nothing is too hard for Him. God says "I will" twelve times in Genesis 17 (Ge 17:2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 16, 19, 20, 21); He is about to do the miraculous.*

*After Abraham's battle with the four kings, God came to him as a warrior and told him He was his "shield." When Abraham wondered about his refusal of Sodom's wealth, God told him He was his "exceedingly great reward" (Ge 15:1). Now when Abraham and Sarah were "as good as dead," God assured them that He was more than sufficient to bring about the miracle birth. God comes to us in the ways we need Him most.<sup>xii</sup>*

- Warren Wiersbe

**El Shaddai** – God Almighty, The All-Sufficient One, "yielding from himself the sustenance of all His creatures" (Spurgeon) – is one of God's names spoken of Himself by Himself. He is able and willing to handle every need we will or can ever have. Granted He does so in his own timing – as demonstrated in so many lives throughout Scripture – but even in the waiting, God perfectly sustains in His uniquely complete sufficiency. For there is absolutely nothing He cannot handle.

**Day 3:** Begin with prayer, “Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word.”

**Read Genesis 17:1-22.**

Though it might be tiring, still begin with the 5 w's – *Who, What, When, Where and Why*. What can we learn about God in this passage? his promises? his knowledge (even knowing out thoughts!) his steadfast commitment? His inconceivable majesty? His ownership?

How does God give? What does he ask of us and how does he allow us to respond? Why do you think God changed Abram's and Sarai's names? How can God's name, El Shaddai, inform our days today – as we wait, as we wonder, as we obey?

... What else?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on the right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

**Special Overlay:** While reading the passage, make a list of what the Lord reveals about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied).

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**Scripture Search:** Read Romans 4.

What do we learn about God in this passage? (write out specifics) What can we learn about his promise? about faith and relationship? About righteousness? How is this a little bit of the rest of the story from Genesis 17? How can this inform our faith, our righteousness, our relationship with God?

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**Day 4:** Begin with prayer, "Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word."

**Read Exodus 6:1-13.**

Though it might be tiring, still begin with the 5 w's – *Who, What, When, Where and Why*. What do we learn about when and to whom God reveals his Name? Why would he reveal Yawheh to Moses at this time? Why El-Shaddai to Abraham?

*"Then **Yahweh** said to Moses, "Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh. I will show him my power, and he will let my people go. I will show him my power, and he will throw them out of his country."*

*God spoke to Moses, "I am **Yahweh**. I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as **El Shaddai**, but I didn't make myself known to them by my name, **Yahweh**. I even made a promise to give them Canaan, the land where they lived as foreigners. Now I have heard the groaning of the Israelites, whom the Egyptians hold in slavery, and I have remembered my promise." Exodus 6: 1-5 (NOG)*

What do these passages reveal about God as Self-Existent One (Yahweh) and Self-Sufficient One (El Shaddai)? His Lordship over everything? How might the inform and encourage us today?

... What else?

And just a little extra food for thought as we consider El Shaddai: If we go back to Genesis when God's covenant promise was made to Abraham, we can also see the God himself foretold of the exact timing and circumstances in which Moses and Aaron found themselves:

*As the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him. Then the LORD said to him, "Know for certain that for four hundred years your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own and that they will be enslaved and mistreated there. But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions." Genesis 15: 12-14*

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**Special Overlay:** While reading the passage, make a list of what the Lord reveals about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied).

**Elohim** also said to him, "I am **El Shaddai**."

91

**Scripture Search:** Read Habakuk 3.

What do we learn about God in this passage? (write out specifics) What can we learn about his promise? about faithfulness? His power? His provision? His strength. How do these things impact our safety and well-being in any and every situation?

What else?...

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Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more  
than all we ask or imagine, according to his power  
that is at work within us, to him be glory in the  
church and in Christ Jesus throughout all  
generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

(Ephesians 3:20-21)

# God Speaks of Himself

**Elohim** also said to him, “I am **El Shaddai**.”

Genesis 35: 11 (NOG)

**Day 5:** Read Isaiah 43:1-13 – asking the Lord to open your eyes to see and hear what He has prepared for you to learn about him. Ask for peace in the midst of trials, struggles, anxieties, fear, worry, ...

Who is speaking? On what authority? What does God teach us about His power? How does He care for those He loves? Does He see? know our name? care? rescue? What can we learn about our relationship with Him? our safety? Our peace?

Make a list of what the Lord revealed to you about Himself – bullet points. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implicit.)

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Think back over the week.

- What have these texts taught me about God?
- What truths (or promises) do I need to claim?
- What verse(s) have special meaning?
- What thought(s) will I carry throughout the day/week?

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THOUGHTS/NOTES

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# Alpha & Omega – Week 6

## El Elyon

The Most High God

Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of **El Elyon**, and he blessed Abram, saying,

“Blessed be Abram by **El Elyon**,  
Creator of heaven and earth.

<sup>20</sup> And praise be to **El Elyon**,  
who delivered your enemies into your hand.”

Genesis 14: 18-20

*El Elyon speaks of the supremacy of God. He is above all. Now, what does El Elyon mean? The word means the strongest of the strong and the highest of the high. Hinduism and Pantheism speak of God as a part of the universe. But God is not a part of the universe. He is the transcendent God. He is above all. He is the Most High God. Jesus is our El Elyon. Colossians 1:16-17 says, "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." God is above all things. Jesus is our El Elyon.*

- Adrian Rogers

**El Elyon** – God Most High – is first used in Genesis 17 by the High Priest Melchizedek as he interacts with Abraham directly after Abraham had defeated an army in order to retrieve his nephew who had been captured. In the compound form (El Elyon), this name appears in the Old Testament twelve times – four of which are in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis.

**Day 1:** Begin with prayer, “Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word.”

## Read Genesis 14:17-15:1

Begin with the 5 w's – *Who, What, When, Where and Why?* A quick glance back at Genesis 14:1-16 might help. Who was the first person to reveal God's name Elyon? Who else was a part of this story? What can that teach us about God as El Elyon? Is there any people, place, time or territory above God's dominion? What can we learn about God's authority? ownership? power? promise? in this passage.

... What else?

[illegible]

**Special Overlay:** While reading the passage, make a list of what the Lord reveals about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied).

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**Scripture Search:** Read Daniel 3. What do we learn about God Most High in this passage? How do we see Isaiah 43:2 played out live and in person? What do we learn about God, his power, his Lordship, his Name? How does He inform our identity and worth?

What else?...

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**Day 2:** Begin with prayer, "Lord, open my eyes that I might see

**Read Psalm 46.** Such a beautiful Psalm – a declaration of strength and safety. Consider the context – 5 w’s, who what when where & why. One of the many wonderful aspects of the Psalms, is that we can often put ourselves right into the context – as if we are the who and our circumstance is the why, etc. Martin Luther connected with it to the point of being inspired to write “A Mighty Fortress is Our God.” What can we learn about fear? seeing? How far does God’s sovereignty reach? What is the purpose of “still.”

What else...?

Other names of God in this Psalm include:

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of **Elohim**,  
the holy place where **El Elyon** dwells. (v. 4)

**Jehova Sabaoth** is with us.

The **Elohim** of Jacob is our stronghold. (v. 7)

Come, see the works of **Yahweh**,... (v.8 NOG)

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**Special Overlay:** While reading the passage, make a list of what the Lord reveals about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied).

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**Scripture Search:** Read Revelation 22:1-17, just to give a little more information about the "river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where **El Elyon** dwells." (Psalm 46:4) What are names that Christ calls himself? How might they inform our identity and self-worth considering what he gave so that we might be called His? How do they equate to and/or compliment the names of God we've been contemplating? If you have time, look back to Genesis 2 and Psalm 1? What can we learn about God's plan? God's creation? authority? knowledge? ... so much more.

Jot down your observations and thoughts:

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Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

How unsearchable his judgments,  
and his paths beyond tracing out!

“Who has known the mind of the Lord?  
Or who has been his counselor?”

“Who has ever given to God,  
that God should repay them?”

For from him and through him and for him are all things.  
To him be the glory forever! Amen.

Romans 11:33-16

# Abba

## Father

Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “**Abba**, Father.” So, you are no longer a slave, but God’s child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.

Galatians 4:6-7

*It is life-changing to understand the full force of what it means to be able to call the one true God our “Daddy” and what it means to be joint-heirs with Christ. Because of our relationship with God, we know He no longer deals with us as enemies; instead, we can approach a holy God as our heavenly Father with “boldness” (Hebrews 10:19) and “full assurance of faith” (Hebrews 10:22). We have that confidence because of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit who “bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together” (Romans 8:16-17).*

*The benefits of being adopted children of God are many. Becoming a child of God is the highest privilege and honor that can be imagined. Because of it we have a new relationship with God and a new standing before Him. He deals with His children differently than He deals with the rest of the world. Being a child of God, adopted “through faith in Christ Jesus” is the source for our hope, the security of our future and the motivation to “walk worthy of the calling with which you were called” (Ephesians 4:1). Being children of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords calls us to a higher standard, a different way of life and a greater hope.*

*- J.I Packer*

**Abba**—Father. This name denotes personal relationship at the most intimate level made all the more sweet by the fact that not only are we God’s as His creation, but also as His children, adopted into His family.

“They will be called the Holy People,  
the Redeemed of the LORD;  
and **you will be called Sought After...**”

God is the Father of Jesus and the Father of those who follow Jesus.

## Read Romans 8:12-39

Begin with the 5 w's – *Who, What, When, Where and Why?* Take note and journal about specific promises in these verses. Who is the promise-keeper. What have we learned about God's faithfulness over these last few weeks? How do His Names inform us? What does his name Abba bring to the table. How do you see it play out in this passage? What do we learn about ourselves? What promises are hard for you to believe? Is God believable? How does God define your worth?

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**Special Overlay:** While reading the passage, make a list of what the Lord reveals about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied).

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**Read Matthew 6:25 – 7:12.**

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**Special Overlay:** While reading the passage, make a list of what the Lord reveals about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied).

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**Scripture Search:** Read Isaiah 62:11-63:6 AND Revelation 19: 6-16. What do we learn about God in this passage? Especially as it relates Abba and Jehovah Rapha (write out specifics.) What do we learn about His character as it relates to us and Abba Father, Redeemer, Savior?

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## God Speaks of Himself

I am *Yahweh*, and there is no other.

There is no other *Elohim* besides me.

I will strengthen you, although you don't know me,  
so that from the east to the west people will know  
that there is no *Elohim* except me.

Ezekiel 5:6 (NOG)

**Day 5:** Begin with prayer, "Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word."

**Read Isaiah 45:18-45**

Make a list of what the Lord revealed to you about Himself – bullet points. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied.)

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Think back over the week.

- What have these texts taught me about God?
- What truths (or promises) do I need to claim?
- What verse(s) have special meaning?
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# Alpha & Omega – Week 7

## (optional)

### Review

a week of still-remembrance  
& contemplation

**Wow!** What a great few weeks contemplating together God's Names – what they mean, when each was revealed, to whom and by whom. Thanks for going on this journey to know God by contemplating His Name together.

For this last week – let's spend some quiet time of reflection.

**Day 1:** Go back and review God's Names from Week 1.

**Elohim:** Creator, "In the beginning Elohim, Elohim created the heavens and the earth."

**YHWH** (Jehovah, Yahweh): Self-Existent One, "God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM (YHWH)'. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

Take time to read over your notes or revisit any passages or look through passages you might have missed. Ask the Lord to open your eyes and ears so that you might see and hear what you need to know about Him as Elohim and Yahweh today.

Jot down how the Name was revealed, where, when and by whom and the significance of these things. How has each Name impacted you? What would you like to remember? What questions do you have? Then ask and seek with full faith that He reveals himself at just the right time, in just the right way.

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THOUGHTS/NOTES – personal reflection

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**Day 2:** Go back and review God's Names from Week 2.

**Jehovah-Jireh:** The LORD will Provide. "So Abraham called that place The LORD will Provide. And to this day, it is said, 'On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided.'" Genesis 22:14

**Jehovah-Nissi:** The LORD is our Banner. “Moses built an altar and called it The LORD is my Banner. He said, “Because hands were lifted up against the throne of the LORD, the LORD will be at war against the Amalekites from generation to generation.” Exodus 17:15

Take time to read over your notes or revisit any passages or look through passages you might have missed. Ask the Lord to open your eyes and ears so that you might see and hear what you need to know about Him as El Roi and Jehovah-Nissi today.

Jot down how the Name was revealed, where, when and by whom and the significance of these things. How has each Name impacted you? What would you like to remember? What questions do you have? Then ask and seek with full faith that He reveals himself at just the right time, in just the right way.

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THOUGHTS/NOTES – personal reflection

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**Day 3:** Go back and review God's Names from Week 3.

**El Roi:** God who sees. "She gave this name to the LORD who spoke to her: "You are the God who sees me," for she said, "I have now seen the One who sees me." Genesis 16:13

**Jehovah-Rapha:** The LORD who Heals. “There YAWEH issued a ruling and instruction for them and put them to the test. <sup>26</sup> He said, “If you listen carefully to YAWEH your Elohim and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am **Jehovah Rapha**. Exodus 15:25b-16

Take time to read over your notes or revisit any passages or look through passages you might have missed. Ask the Lord to open your eyes and ears so that you might see and hear what you need to know about Him as El Roi and Jehovah-Rapha today.

Jot down how the Name was revealed, where, when and by whom and the significance of these things. How has each Name impacted you? What would you like to remember? What questions do you have? Then ask and seek with full faith that He reveals himself at just the right time, in just the right way.

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THOUGHTS/NOTES – personal reflection

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**Day 4:** Go back and review God's Names from Week 4.

**Jehovah-Raah (Roi, Rohi) :** The LORD is my Shepherd. “***Yahweh*** is my ***Rohi***. I am never in need. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside peaceful waters. He renews my soul. He guides me along the paths of righteousness for the sake of his name.” Psalm 23: 1-3 (NOG)

**Jehovah-Shalom:** The LORD is Peace. “But the LORD said to him, ‘Peace! Do not be afraid. You are not going to die.’ So Gideon built an altar to the LORD there and called it. ***Yahweh Shalom***. To this day it is still in Ophrah, which belongs to Abiezer’s family.” Judges 6: 22-24

Take time to read over your notes or revisit any passages or look through passages you might have missed. Ask the Lord to open your eyes and ears so that you might see and hear what you need to know about Him as Jehovah-Raah and Jehovah-Shalom today.

Jot down how the Name was revealed, where, when and by whom and the significance of these things. How has each Name impacted you? What would you like to remember? What questions do you have? Then ask and seek with full faith that He reveals himself at just the right time, in just the right way.

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THOUGHTS/NOTES – personal reflection

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**Day 5:** Go back and review God's Names from Week 5.

**Jehovah-Saboath: Jehovah Sabaoth** – The LORD of "Armies" or "Hosts", LORD Almighty. This name denotes His universal sovereignty over every army, both spiritual and earthly. The Lord of Hosts is the king of all heaven and earth. (Psalm 24:9-10; Psalm 84:3; Isaiah 6:5).

**El-Shaddai:** God Almighty, The All-Sufficient One, "yielding from himself the sustenance of all His creatures" (Spurgeon) – is one of God's names spoken of Himself by Himself. He is able and willing to handle every need we will or can ever have.

When Abram was 99 years old, the LORD appeared to him. He said, "I am **El Shaddai**. Walk faithfully with me. Live in a way that pleases me. I will now act on my covenant between me and you. I will greatly increase the number of your children after you."

Genesis 17: 1-2

Take time to read over your notes or revisit any passages or look through passages you might have missed. Ask the Lord to open your eyes and ears so that you might see and hear what you need to know about Him as Jehovah-Raah and Jehovah-Shalom today.

Jot down how the Name was revealed, where, when and by whom and the significance of these things. How has each Name impacted you? What would you like to remember? What questions do you have? Then ask and seek with full faith that He reveals himself at just the right time, in just the right way.

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THOUGHTS/NOTES – personal reflection

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**Day 6:** Go back and review God's Names from Week 6.

**El Elyon:** Most High God. "Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of **El Elyon**, and he blessed Abram, saying, "Blessed be Abram by **El Elyon**, Creator of heaven and earth. And praise be to **El Elyon**, who delivered your enemies into your hand." Genesis 14:18-20

**Abba:** Father. "Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, '**Abba**, Father.' So, you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir." Galatians 4:6-7

Take time to read over your notes or revisit any passages or look through passages you might have missed. Ask the Lord to open your eyes and ears so that you might see and hear what you need to know about Him as El Elyon and Abba today.

Jot down how the Name was revealed, where, when and by whom and the significance of these things. How has each Name impacted you? What would you like to remember? What questions do you have? Then ask and seek with full faith that He reveals himself at just the right time, in just the right way.

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THOUGHTS/NOTES – personal reflection

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## Names God Calls Himself

As you read Scripture – consider keeping a running list of names God refers to himself. Here are just a few. Feel free to add to it as you go through the passages we’ve studied or as you Scripture-search yourself to know more of the story. The love story God has written just for you because:

*“... you are precious and honored in my sight,  
and because I love you...”*

*Isaiah 43: 4a*

Redeemer, Holy One of Israel (Isa 42)	
Lord Almighty, Rock, Savior (Isa 43)	
Sovereign Lord, God of Truth (Isa 65)	
"I am Lord your healer" (Exodus 15)	
your King (Isa 42)	





Then, with all that, and very most importantly – consider and remember and believe:

Hello  
my name is

Daughter of the King

...The more one thinks of it, the more shall he be overwhelmed with astonishment, that he who is everything should love us...<sup>xiii</sup>

- Charles Spurgeon

*Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give that person a **white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it.***

- Revelation 2:17

## Endnotes:

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- <sup>i</sup> <http://spurgeongems.org/vols34-36/chs2167.pdf>
- <sup>ii</sup> <http://bigthink.com/in-their-own-words/whats-in-a-name-everything>
- <sup>iii</sup> <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/10-things-yahweh-means>
- <sup>iv</sup> Mark Driscoll; Gerry Breshears. *Doctrine: What Christians Should Believe* (Wheaton, IL, Crossway. 2010), 16.
- <sup>v</sup> <https://bible.org/seriespage/60-compound-names-jehovah-jireh-rapha-nissi>
- <sup>vi</sup> <https://www.gotquestions.org/Jehovah-Nissi.html>
- <sup>vii</sup> <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/exodus.pdf>
- <sup>viii</sup> <https://www.gotquestions.org/Jehovah-Rapha.html>
- <sup>ix</sup> *Psalms 1-72*, ed. Herman Selderhuis, [Reformation Commentary on Scripture](#), OT Vol. VII, pp. 187-88.
- <sup>x</sup> <https://www.gotquestions.org/Lord-of-hosts.html>
- <sup>xi</sup> Briscoe, Jill. *God's Name, God's Nature*, Victor Books, 1988.
- <sup>xii</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. *Be Obedient. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books*
- <sup>xiii</sup> <http://spurgeongems.org/vols34-36/chs2167.pdf>