

## Jehovah, the Personal Name of God

By Pastor Zack M. Guess

We have a very precious passage of Scripture to consider in this article. It is a lofty and theological passage, but it is very, very practical. Proverbs 18:10 says, "The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." The word translated "LORD" is **Jehovah**. In this article every time Jehovah is referred to, our form will be LORD. In our King James version of the Scriptures, when Jehovah is translated, it always appears with a capital "L" and with the "o," "r," and "d" in small capitals. There are other words which are translated "Lord," and when they appear they always have a capital "L" and a small "o, r, d." The difference can be seen in Psalm 8:9, "O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" The first "LORD" is a translation of **Jehovah**. The second "Lord" is a translation of **adonai**. God has many different names, each of which reveals some aspect of His marvelous being, but He has chosen Jehovah as His personal name. When God appeared unto Moses in the burning bush, Moses asked Him what he should say to the children of Israel when they asked him about God, "What is his name?" God answered in Exodus 3:15 "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." This is the special, personal name by which God was pleased to reveal Himself unto His chosen people. In the Hebrew language Jehovah was written in four consonants, with no written vowel points. Thus it was called the **tetragrammaton**. This name was so sacred to the ancient Hebrews that they would neither speak it nor write it. When it appeared in Scripture, they would substitute another word for it. They were scrupulously trying to obey the Third Commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain." Now, the Jews were too superstitious about this and went beyond the Scriptures, yet we could do with some of their attitude today. We use the name of our blessed LORD much too loosely and irreverently. The people of God early learned to rely on God and on the marvelous name by which He revealed Himself to them. They understood that the LORD was a covenant-keeping God Who would always keep His promises to them. They gained great comfort in calling on this wonderful name in times of discouragement and distress. A verse which demonstrates this trust in the name of the LORD is Psalm 9:10, "And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee." Another verse which shows this is Psalm 20:7, "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God." We can today still find great comfort in trusting in the name of our blessed LORD. Early in our marriage my dear wife, Judy, and I decided to make Isaiah 26:3,4, one of the themes of our life together. It reads, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength:"

### Some Who Trusted

#### David

There are many examples in the Bible of those who found great help and comfort in calling on the name of the LORD. One time David found himself in what seemed to be an impossible situation. He and his fighting men had been absent from home for awhile. When they arrived there, they discovered that the Amalekites had invaded their homes, burned them and taken all their families captive. David and his men were so overcome with grief that they lifted up their voices and wept "until they had no power to weep." They just "cried their eyes out." Have any of you readers ever been in deep enough trouble and distress to do this? This was bad enough, but then David's men were in such distress that they considered stoning him. David was really in a mess! What

did he do? 1 Samuel 30:6 says, "But David encouraged himself in the LORD his God." When he had done this, the LORD gave him the wisdom and the strength to know what to do, and he and his men were delivered from their troubles. There may well be times when our trouble will seem to be so great that there is no way to get out of it. We must do as David did and encourage our hearts in our covenant-keeping God.

No doubt David knew to call on the LORD because he had done it before, when he faced another problem that seemed to have no satisfactory solution. Goliath had the entire army of Israel paralyzed with fear, including their leader, King Saul. David went, with no armor, to fight this mighty man of war. As he came near the enemy he declared in 1 Samuel 17:45, "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."

### Hezekiah

Many years after this King Hezekiah found himself in a seemingly hopeless situation. The armies of Sennacherib, king of the mighty Assyrian Empire, had come to besiege Jerusalem. He had laid waste many nations mightier than Israel. His emissaries began to insult the Jews and to also insult their God. The enemy spokesmen began to try to get Jerusalem to surrender, telling them of all their conquests of other people and that it would be of no use to them to fight. King Hezekiah was desperate. He did not know what to do. The circumstances looked hopeless. He took a blasphemous letter in which the enemy had insulted God and His people into the house of the LORD and spread the letter before Jehovah. This mighty Jehovah God delivered in a powerful way. He sent one of His angels that night to kill 185,000 Assyrians. The enemy went home dragging their tails behind them, and Sennacherib was killed by one of his own sons while he was worshipping his false gods. This wonderful account, found in 2 Kings, chapter nineteen, is a marvelous example of one running into the strong tower of the name of Jehovah and finding safety.

### The Early Church

Not only in Old Testament times have God's people found safety in the wonderful name of the LORD. The early church found that "the God who lived in the olden times, is just the same today!" As the apostles were preaching the gospel in the temple in Jerusalem, they were apprehended and threatened by the rulers of the Jews. These rulers tried to frighten them with threats of dire consequences if they persisted in preaching. They returned home and told all their brothers and sisters what had happened. What was the reaction of the early church? Did they cower and become silent? No, they called on Jehovah. They found their safety in the strong tower of His mighty Name. As it says in Acts 4:24, "And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is ☐⊕" As they called on His name He gave them great boldness to speak in that name.

### Use This Name in Prayer

There are several combinations of the name, Jehovah, in the Old Testament. Each of them reveals another characteristic of the wonderful One this name represents. As we consider these combinations let us learn how to draw strength from them as we look at our original text of Proverbs 18:10, "The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." Let us learn to run into the strong tower of the name of Jehovah in prayer. I have practiced

this and drawn great strength and comfort in doing so. Often, when I have a particular need, I address God in prayer, using the particular name that seems to be appropriate for the situation. As we study this, it will be very apparent that this practice was followed by many of the Old Testament saints.

#### *Jehovah-jireh*

*Jehovah-jireh* means "Jehovah Who sees and provides. The name is used in the famous passage in Genesis 22:14, "And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen." God saw what the need was, and He provided it. In this case it was a ram for a sacrifice to take the place of Isaac on the altar that was needed. Moreover, God has pledged to meet all the needs of His children, spiritual as well as material. We serve the God of Whom it is said in Matthew 6:8 "for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him." Not only does He know what we need; He is **willing** and **able** to meet those needs. He is our rich, wise and loving Father. He is wise enough to know what we need, rich enough to be able to supply all our needs, and has the loving disposition to meet all our needs.

There is nothing lacking in our lives that He will not supply. This is very well summed up in 2 Peter 1:3, "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue☐⊕" Do you have needs? Flee away to the strong tower of *Jehovah-jireh*.

#### *Jehovah-roi*

*Jehovah-roi* is Jehovah my Shepherd. This is the name that David used in Psalm Twenty-three. When I think of a shepherd, I think of three things. First a shepherd **leads**. David said, "he leadeth me beside the still waters." Again, he said, " he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." Do you need leadership in any area of your life? Run to the strong tower of *Jehovah-roi* in prayer and seek this leadership. A shepherd also **feeds** his sheep. The children of God, who are referred to as sheep in the Scriptures, would be famished without a regular supply of food for their souls. The good Shepherd feeds them as He gives them understanding of His word. After all, that word is their spiritual food. Christ, Himself, said that "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Do you need some spiritual food? Has the word of God become rather meaningless to you? Go to Jehovah, your shepherd in prayer. Seek Him in His word. Ask Him to feed you.

A good shepherd also provides **protection** for his sheep. Sheep are essentially defenseless animals. They do not have the canine teeth and the sharp claws of predators. They must completely depend on their shepherds for protection. We have the very best in protection from our Shepherd, the Lord Jesus. Speaking of Himself, He said in John 10:11, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." Do you need protection? Is there some temptation from Satan that is about to overwhelm you? Flee to the strong tower of *Jehovah-roi*.

#### *Jehovah-rapha*

*Jehovah-rapha* is Jehovah, the Healer. He referred to Himself this way in Exodus 15:26. He does all kinds of healing, both natural and spiritual. Are you physically sick? Has it ever occurred to you to follow the directions given by the Lord in James 5:14-16? Have you ever called for the elders of the church and asked them to pray for you? God has not obligated

Himself to heal all our physical ailments in every case. Sometimes He calls on us to glorify Him by patiently bearing our sufferings. However, the first thing we should do if we do get sick, is to apply to our *Jehovah-rapha* and fervently petition Him to heal us if it be His will.

There are other, even more important, kinds of healing that we need. Sometimes we need to be healed of a broken heart. The Devil wounds us, tempts us to sin against our wonderful God. Then our consciences are sorely wounded and our hearts are broken. Where can we find help? From *Jehovah-rapha*. Psalm 147:3 says of Him that "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds."

It is good for us to know that we are spiritually sick and in need of healing. There are multitudes of sinners who are unconcerned about their condition. They do not realize what great sinners they are, and they are not really aware of God's awful wrath against sin. However, they are in much worse condition than are those who are constantly mourning their wretched, sinful condition. Speaking to the self-righteous Pharisees, Jesus said, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." A well man, or a man who thinks he is well, will not go to a doctor. However, a desperately sick person will get to the best doctor that he can find, as fast as he can. The best Doctor is *Jehovah-rapha*. Have you consulted with Him lately about your case? You may be very, very ill. You may have the awful leprosy of sin. He can heal **all** diseases. Go to Him in fervent prayer today. Is there some secret, besetting sin that plagues you? He can heal you.

He has promised in Psalm 103:3 to heal all our diseases. I believe that this means literally all, both physical and spiritual. When is this going to take place? We read about it in Revelation 21:4, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

#### *Jehovah-shammah*

*Jehovah-shamma* means Jehovah is there. This name is used in Ezekiel 48:35, speaking prophetically of the spiritual Jerusalem which Ezekiel saw in his prophecy. The prophet said "and the name of the city from that day shall be, The LORD is there. Now, all Bible students know that God is **omnipresent**, that is, He is everywhere present and nowhere absent. So what does this mean about Jehovah being there? God has always chosen to manifest Himself in a special way in certain places. As John Gill comments on this verse in Ezekiel:

the Lord is there, or dwells there; which is to be understood of his presence in it; not in a general way, as he is in all places, and with all his creatures, continually, constantly, and everywhere working in a providential manner; but of his gracious presence in a special way and manner: in this sense Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, are in the Gospel church.

The LORD chose to manifest His presence in this special way to Jacob, as he was fleeing from Esau. Jacob had the beautiful dream of the ladder which reached from heaven to earth. As he woke from this dream, he said: "Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not—this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." Jehovah was obviously in that place in a special way. It is significant that this is the first mention in Scripture of the expression, "house of God."

The LORD was also to manifest Himself in this special way when the tabernacle was completed. When the last of the work had been done, it is recorded in Exodus 40:35, "And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle." The tabernacle was referred to as the house of the LORD in Exodus 34:26.

When the temple was completed and took the place of the tabernacle, this special presence of the LORD was again manifested. We read in 1 Kings 8:11, "So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD."

In the New Testament era God also chose to manifest Himself in a special way. We read in Acts 2:2 "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." This was God's church. Not the building, but the people of God, constitute His church. He came to dwell with this special presence with His church and He will remain with her until time is no more. It is interesting that He referred to His church in the same way that He referred to the tabernacle and the temple, those other places where He chose to manifest His special presence. He called the tabernacle, the temple, and the church "the house of God." 1 Timothy 3:15 speaks of "the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

If we would experience the special presence of *Jehovah-shammah* we must be in God's house. This should be the chief desire of a child of God. Worshipping Jehovah in His house should be the number one priority of God's people. In the Old Testament times David expressed this longing in Psalm 27:4, "One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple." May we in New Testament times long to spend our lives in the house of *Jehovah-shamma*.

#### *Jehovah-tsidkenu*

*Jehovah-tsidkenu* (pronounced, sid.kay.nu) is Jehovah is our righteousness. He is called this in Jeremiah 23:5,6 "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." This is glorious news to a sinner. No one can face the LORD in peace if he is not righteous. We have no righteousness of our own. Even our best works are tainted with sin. Isaiah says that "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags☐⊕" Christ earned perfect righteousness by His perfect active and passive obedience to God's law. He imputed this righteousness to His people so that His righteousness becomes their righteousness. Paul spoke of this in 2 Corinthians 5:21, when he said, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." This is a glorious truth. Redeemed saints will stand before the Most Holy God clothed in the perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ!

The righteousness is given them as they are identified with and related to Jesus Christ. Just as a wife is related to and bears the name of her husband, so the Lord's people, as the bride of Christ, are called by His name. We read in Jeremiah 33:16, "In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness." God's people constitute His bride, they bear his name, hence Jerusalem here, representing all the people of God, and being referred to in the feminine gender as His bride,

bears His name of *Jehovah-tsidkenu*.

This glorious truth is elaborated in the New Testament. In 1 Corinthians 1:30 it is said "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. . ." Christ is here said to be our righteousness. That perfect conformity to the law of God which is inherent in Him is imputed to us. Thus, His righteousness is our righteousness! Before he was born from above Paul thought that he had an adequate righteousness of his own. When he saw what a great sinner he was, however, he abandoned that false idea. He wanted to be "found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith ☐⊕" What effect will the knowledge that we are the happy recipients of the perfect, God-satisfying righteousness have on us? It will cause us to greatly desire to live as righteous a life as we possibly can. 1 John 3:7 tells us "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous."

When you feel your sinfulness and almost despair when you see the blackness of your heart, run into the strong tower of *Jehovah-tsidkenu* and find relief. This is what the song writer did when he wrote the following words:

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness;  
I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name.

When He shall come with trumpet sound, Oh, may I then in Him be found;  
Dressed in His righteousness alone, faultless to stand before the throne.

#### *Jehovah-shalom*

The next wonderful name that we must examine is *Jehovah-shalom*, which is Jehovah, our peace. This was the name that Gideon gave Him. Gideon had asked for a sign from the Lord and the Lord had appeared to him. When Gideon realized that he had seen the angel of Jehovah, Who was none other than Jesus Christ in His pre-incarnate state, he thought that he was going to die. Judges 6:23 24 tells us, "And the LORD said unto him, Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die. Then Gideon built an altar there unto the LORD, and called it Jehovah shalom ☐⊕" It is true that we find our only peace in being identified with *Jehovah-shalom*. There is no kind of real peace apart from Him. He is our peace considered naturally, spiritually, temporally, and eternally.

How is possible that a sinner could ever be at peace with God? God is of "purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." God cannot just sweep sin under the rug and still be God. The glorious answer is, of course, that "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." (Psalm 85:10). This happened on the Cross. The only way that we could have peace with God is because Christ paid the debt of sin. Our sins are gone and there is nothing to hinder our having peace with Him. As Paul said in Romans 5:1, "we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ ☐⊕" Speaking of Christ in Ephesians 2:14, Paul said, "he is our peace." Colossians 1:20 says that Christ "made peace through the blood of his cross. ☐⊕"

Since we have peace **with** God through Christ, we can experience the peace **of** God. This is such a glorious peace that Paul refers to it as " the peace of God, which passeth all understanding ☐⊕" We experience this wonderful peace as we run by prayer and meditation on the Scriptures into the strong tower of *Jehovah-shalom*. We must not trust our feelings which are not stable. We must not depend on our selves in any way because we are always imperfect failures in ourselves. What

we must do is to believe what God says in His word about the Lord Jesus being our peace. Paul's prayer for the children of God was recorded in Romans 15:13, where he says, "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."

*Jehovah-meqaddeshkem*

Another name by which our blessed Lord is known is *Jehovah-meqaddeshkem*. This name points us to "Jehovah, Who sanctifies you." This word is used in Exodus 31:13, where the LORD said that He would sanctify the nation of Israel so that they would bear a relationship with Him that no other nation would occupy. They were a special nation to Jehovah. The word "sanctify" means "to set apart as special; to consecrate." God's elect children are sanctified in many ways. First, they were sanctified by the Father in the decree of election, before the world began. That is why Jude speaks to those who "are **sanctified** by God the Father." God's children were also set apart by the Son of God, as He died for His elect on the cross. He did not die indiscriminately nor indefinitely for the entire human race. He died definitely and effectually for His chosen ones. Hebrews 10:10 says "By the which will we are **sanctified** through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Notice that this verse does not speak of something that was potentially done. It speaks of something that was definitely accomplished. God's children are also special to God, the Holy Spirit. Peter speaks in 1 Peter 1:2 of those who were set apart "through **sanctification** of the Spirit." The triune Jehovah, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all involved in the sanctification of the entire elect family of God. God's people are **very special** to Him!

As always, these great doctrinal truths have very real implications in our actual lives. Knowing that we have been set apart by the God Who created heaven and earth, it behooves us to live in accordance with our status. We are in the world, but we are not of it. God has called us to live separated lives. We are not to think, act, speak, or, in most instances, even to dress like the world. Our goals and ambitions must be different from those who have not been set apart by God. The apostle Paul exhorted us in 2 Corinthians 6:17, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye **separate**, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you☉" Peter, likewise, exhorts us, "But as he which hath called you is **holy**, so be ye **holy** in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye **holy**; for I am **holy**." (1Pet. 1:15,16).

How are we going to achieve this practical sanctification? We are going to accomplish it by constantly reading, studying, meditating on, and obeying the word of God. There is no sanctification by any other method. This is God's designed way. Jesus Christ, in His sacred High Priestly prayer, prayed "**Sanctify** them through thy truth: thy word is truth." Speaking of the church, Paul said that Christ would "**sanctify** and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word☉" Speaking of the part that obedience plays in this process, Peter says "Seeing ye have **purified** your souls in obeying the truth☉" (1 Peter 1:22).

The only kind of individual that God is going to use in His service is that individual who is striving to live the sanctified life. Paul made this clear in 2 Timothy 2:21 when he said "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." As we try to live God-honoring lives of sanctification, we will find many occasions to call on *Jehovah-mequaddeshkem* for His help.

*Jehovah-elyon*

*Jehovah-elyon* is Jehovah-Most High. This is a wonderful designation of our Lord from which



to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth." Sometimes it may appear that our enemies are so powerful that we will surely fall. Then we must rally around *Jehovah-nissi* in prayer and depend on Him to lead us to victory. "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him."

We can conquer all the enemies of our souls as we rally around Him. As the wonderful verse so beautifully encourages us:

Onward, Christian soldiers, Marching as to war,  
With the cross of Jesus going on before:  
Christ the royal Master leads against the foe;  
Forward into battle, See His banners go.

*Jehovah-tsabaoth*

This is our final name combination with Jehovah and it is one of the most comforting and inspiring. *Jehovah-tsabaoth* is the LORD of Hosts. He is designated by this name in 1 Samuel 1:3. A "host" is a great number or multitude. God has at His instant command innumerable numbers of incredibly powerful heavenly beings. Speaking of the expression, LORD of hosts, G. T. Manley, in an article in *The New Bible Dictionary*, says that the hosts "are all the heavenly powers, ready to do the LORD's command."

We cannot imagine how powerful nor how numerous are these heavenly armies. Psalm 68:17 says, "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place." Speaking of the great power of these heavenly beings David said in Psalm 103:20, "Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that **excel in strength**, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word." In 2 Samuel 24:17 one angel destroyed seventy thousand men by sending a pestilence upon them. When the wicked king, Sennacherib, came against Israel with what looked like an invincible force, God sent one of His angels against him. This single angel killed 185,000 of the Assyrians in a single night. (2 Kings 19:35). There is a reference to this in 2 Chronicles 32:21 where it is written "And the LORD sent an angel, which cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria☐⊕"

Our dear Lord Jesus told Peter in Matthew 26:53, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" When the Lord Jesus Christ comes at the end of the world He will be accompanied by these mighty hosts of heaven. As Paul said in 2 Thessalonians 1:7,8 "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with **his mighty angels**, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ☐⊕"

Sometimes we tend to go into discouragement and even despair when we see our numerous and powerful enemies arrayed against us. We see our weakness and we think all is lost. It is then that we need to pray to *Jehovah-tsabaoth*, realizing that He has much more than adequate power to defeat our enemies. One time Elisha and his servant were surrounded by enemies and there was no visible means of escape. The servant went into a panic. "And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. (2 Kings 6:17). My dear Christian friends let us pray that our spiritual eyes may also be opened that we may see that "they that be with us are more than they that be with them."

