

WINTER 2023-24

# YOU



**A NAME LIKE  
NO OTHER**

+ + +

**OWNING A FAITH  
THAT MATTERS**

# A PROMISE THAT WILL NEVER BE BROKEN

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It hurts when people break a promise. Some people make promises they have no intention of honoring. Others sincerely mean well, but circumstances interfere and they're unable to do what they said they promised they'd do.

God is not like us. When He makes a promise, He keeps it. Period. He is always faithful to His word. For example, He promises an abundant and eternal life to those who trust in His Son, Jesus Christ.

"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.... For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Rom. 10:9,13).

But we don't automatically enjoy the benefits of this wonderful promise. We must understand and believe Jesus died on the cross, taking our sin upon Himself, and then rose from the dead, making a new, eternal life possible for us. As we believe, we also acknowledge His lordship, turning from sin and surrendering our lives to Him.

God's promise is for you. If you would like a new life in Christ, repent of your sins and put your faith in Him. Admit to God you are a sinner and ask Him to forgive you. Turn from the sin that has kept you from God and accept Jesus' gift of forgiveness. Confess your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Express your repentance and faith by praying something like this:

*"Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I believe Jesus died on the cross to forgive me of my sins. I ask You to forgive me. I now accept Your gift of eternal life. Thank You for Your love, forgiveness, and a new life in Jesus Christ. From this day forward, I choose to follow You. In Jesus' name, Amen."*

Share your decision to follow Jesus with a pastor or those in your Bible study group. Get involved in a church that will help you grow in faith. Be baptized as an expression of your faith.

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# CONTENTS

5	A WORD FROM DR. MARK CROSTON
6	GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOU
7	FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO GO DEEPER
8	DISCIPLESHIP PLAN

## STUDY 1

### A NAME LIKE NO OTHER

10	INTRODUCTION
11	SESSION ONE THE IMPORTANCE OF GOD'S NAME Exodus 3:1-6,9-15
17	SESSION TWO THE MAJESTY OF GOD'S NAME Psalm 138:1-8
23	SESSION THREE THE LOVE EXPRESSED IN GOD'S NAME Psalm 103:1-5,8- 13,17-19
31	SESSION FOUR THE SALVATION EXPRESSED IN GOD'S NAME Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25
37	SESSION FIVE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD'S NAME Jeremiah 23:5-6; Romans 3:10b-13, 21-26
43	SESSION SIX THE PROTECTION OF GOD'S NAME Psalm 91:1-6,9-16

## STUDY 2

### OWNING A FAITH THAT MATTERS

52	INTRODUCTION
53	SESSION ONE LIFE-CHANGING FAITH Luke 5:1-11
60	SPECIAL FOCUS A CRY FOR JUSTICE Psalm 10:1-4,12-18
67	SESSION TWO YIELDED FAITH Luke 7:1-10
73	SESSION THREE EXPECTANT FAITH Luke 8:41-42,49-56
79	SESSION FOUR PRAYING FAITH Luke 11:1-13
85	SESSION FIVE CONFIDENT FAITH Luke 12:22-34
91	SESSION SIX MATURING FAITH Luke 17:1-10

## ARTICLES

29	WHAT'S GOD'S REAL NAME?
49	UNCOMFORTABLE TRUTHS
97	ENOCH: A PORTRAIT OF FAITH
114	WHY WE NEED A REVIVAL
148	AN INTEGRATED PRAYER LIFE

## LEADER PAGES

101	STUDY ONE A NAME LIKE NO OTHER
129	SPECIAL FOCUS A CRY FOR JUSTICE
135	STUDY TWO A FAITH THAT MATTERS

## ON THE COVER

Dr. Adron Robinson serves as Senior Pastor of Hillcrest Baptist Church located in the south suburbs of Chicago, Illinois; where he and Veronica, his lovely bride of 21 years currently reside. Under his leadership, Hillcrest is committed to loving the Lord, living the Word and transforming lives.

Pastor Adron holds a B.A. from DePaul University, a Master of Divinity and a Doctor of Ministry from Northern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is one of three African Americans to serve as president of the Illinois Baptist State Association and currently serves on the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Hillcrest uses the *YOU* curriculum in most of its adult Sunday school classes. We love the content and the culturally relevant application.



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## EDITORIAL

### MARK CROSTON

I am so very excited to welcome our new content editor for the *YOU* Bible Study, **Natasha Meniffee**. She is a native of Kentucky and brings a wealth of educational and church ministry experiences. Natasha is no stranger to the *YOU* Bible Study. Maybe you have seen her name as a *YOU* writer or met her at some of our Black Church events. Additionally, her church, First Baptist Winchester, Kentucky, has been using *YOU* for years! She is already making a positive impact on the *YOU* Bible Study.

This issue of the *YOU* Bible Study will dig into some helpful issues for our personal lives. We will be studying "Mentoring: Investing in Others;" and "Set Apart: A Life Lived for God." In addition to these studies get extra insights and teaching tips from our **YOU Blog** at [you.lifeway.com](https://you.lifeway.com) and listen to our Lifeway **YOU Podcast** on your favorite podcast app.



The **Black Church Leadership and Family Conference** is right around the corner. There is a full program for every member of the family! Join us for this all-in-one, equipping and energizing week, **July 22 through July 26, 2024**. I'm sure this year will be just the time of relaxation, refreshment, and revival we need.

Learn more at [lifeway.com/blackchurchconference](https://lifeway.com/blackchurchconference).

Thanks for joining me in this season of study. Grab your Bible and allow God to speak through *YOU*!

Be Blessed!

Dr. Mark A. Croston, Sr.

*YOU* General Editor

National Director of Black Church Ministries

[lifeway.com/BlackChurchLife](https://lifeway.com/BlackChurchLife)

# GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOU

*YOU* is a three-in-one learner and leader resource with inspirational and educational features to enhance Bible study that leads to spiritual maturity and life change. Here is information to help you get the most out of *YOU*.

## LEARNER PAGES

The first half of *YOU* includes pages for personal study. These should be read by the learner and leader prior to group time. Included in each session:

**Memory Verses** encourage filling the mind with the Word of God to strengthen every aspect of spiritual life.

**Keywords** identify and define words or phrases to add clarity to the biblical text.

**Digging Deeper** provides a deeper look at a word, character, or other aspect from the session.

**Did You Know?** provides biblical truths and information to equip learners to boldly defend the truths of God's Word.

**Live It** sums up the session and offers applications points to challenge daily living.

## DAILY READINGS

Included with each session are five devotionals to be read by the learner and leader. The benefits of a daily devotion are innumerable. Their primary purpose in this resource is to focus attention on the biblical content of each session for application of and conformity to the Word of God.

## LEADER PAGES

The second half of *YOU* includes pages to guide the teaching of each session. Leaders can use the leader pages to guide learners through the passage and its key emphases as detailed on the learner pages. Here are suggestions on how to teach:

- Prior to the session, read and study the Bible passage, keywords, and learner pages.
- Plan teaching using the leader pages. Keep in mind that because of time, it may not be possible to use every teaching suggestion. **Also the teaching suggestions are in sequential order for easy use.**
- Features to use when teaching include: The Point, which is readily recognizable on the learner and leader pages; The Question at the top of the first page of each learner session; Keywords on the Scripture pages; "Digging Deeper"; "Did You Know?"; Pack Items\* (see next page); "Object Lessons"; and Commentary at the end of each session on leader pages.
- Refine your teaching plans when necessary.

Get more teaching help at [you.lifeway.com](http://you.lifeway.com).

## PRAY

Because the Holy Spirit is the guide for your study, invite Him to show you how to "rightly divide the word of truth" as you teach your group. Read the Bible passage several times, asking the Holy Spirit to show you its meaning and application.





# FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO GO DEEPER



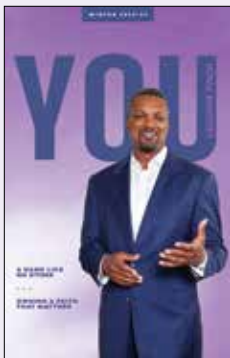
The **Advanced Bible Study** is written for group members who desire more extensive commentary. It includes exposition of each session's Scripture passage, an examination of keywords, an introduction to the setting of the passage and biblical life and times, questions to guide the study, and interactive responses to help readers apply God's truths to their lives today.

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The **Herschel Hobbs Commentary** is designed specifically for leaders and provides a comprehensive exposition of each session's Scripture passage. Specific attention is called to items in the biblical text that readers would miss without a commentary. This commentary is based on the King James Version but interacts with all major English translations.

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The **YOU Leader Pack** is a collection of teaching aids designed to help leaders provide a visual and interactive experience for learners. Each pack contains posters, charts, maps, and handouts that can add another layer to teaching and engender needed variety that makes learning more interesting.

The **YOU Leader Pack** is located at [lifeway.com/YOU](http://lifeway.com/YOU)

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# YOU DISCIPLESHIP PLAN

## The Pathway of Discipleship

Growing in Christ is a journey—a lifelong journey—but what does that look like? Lifeway's research reveals eight markers consistently present in the lives of believers who are growing spiritually. Each year, Bible Studies for Life engages all eight of these areas. Following this intentional plan for discipleship ensures progress on the pathway to becoming more like Christ.

Visit [BibleStudiesforLife.com](https://BibleStudiesforLife.com) for a fuller picture of this discipleship plan through 2024.

8 SIGNPOSTS	Fall 2023	Winter 2023-24	Spring 2024	Summer 2024
<b>Live Unashamed</b>	Staying True in a World Far from God			
<b>Share Christ</b>	Confident in the Face of Hard Questions			
<b>Seek God</b>		A Name Like No Other		
<b>Exercise Faith</b>		Owning a Faith That Matters		
<b>Obey God and Deny Self</b>			It's All About Jesus	
<b>Serve God and Others</b>			Being an Authentic Church	
<b>Engage with Scripture</b>				Promises We Can Count On
<b>Build Relationships</b>				More Than a Sidekick: Serving Alongside Others



# STUDY 1

## A NAME LIKE NO OTHER

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### INTRODUCTION

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#### **Seek God.**

Understanding the name of God guides us in knowing Him better. His name helps us understand and trust who He is; consequently, we can live with confidence and trust that He can and will work powerfully in our lives as we turn to Him.

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### Writer Bio

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#### **Jere Phillips**

serves as pastor of Peterson Lake Baptist Church (Tennessee), has also been a state convention leader and seminary professor. He and his wife have two married children and seven grandchildren.

#### **Antoine Wright**

adapted this unit for the YOU audience. He is an associate minister at Zion Baptist Church in Marietta, Georgia. He is also a practicing attorney in the Atlanta area.

#### **Brenda Croston**

wrote the Daily Readings for this unit. She serves as the women's ministry leader at Mt. Gilead Missionary Baptist Church, Nashville, TN. She is privileged to enjoy life with her husband, Mark. Together they have four adult children and two beautiful granddaughters.



## A BIBLE STUDY ABOUT THE POWERFUL NAME OF GOD

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In this study we will consider the power found in God's name in several aspects. We will reflect on the importance, majesty, love, salvation, righteousness, and protection found in God's name. As a result, we should develop a deep, humble reverence for Him.

God's name is important as it demonstrates His supremacy over everything. While God transcends everything found in creation, He is also deeply concerned about what happens and how events affect the people of God. This study will help us to trust in God whatever we encounter.

Worship is the proper response when we consider the majesty of God's name. Remembering God's mighty acts on behalf of Israel motivates David to compose the psalm examined in this study. Reviewing it, we can recall the mighty acts God has performed in our lives as well.

The love expressed in God's name reveals He is not just powerful, but personal. David reflects on the many ways that God demonstrates love for all of His people. In this study, we will gain assurance that we can depend on God because of His love for us.

Humanity can find salvation in God's name. The story of the birth of Jesus, whose name means "God saves," makes it clear, God is the source of salvation. While engaging in this study, we can gratefully celebrate the salvation that God has given us through Christ Jesus.

God alone is the standard for righteousness. Considering the state of sinful humanity in light of God's righteousness demonstrates our need for God's intervention. This study will help us appreciate the magnitude of the gift that God has given us in making us righteous.

Protection is promised for those who trust in God. The psalmist discusses a number of threats that ultimately cannot harm the ones who rely on God for protection. As a result of this study, we will more deeply trust God to strengthen us in the face of adversity.

As we learn more about God through sessions in this study, we learn His character and are reassured of our position in Him. God's name is not just powerful, it is truly a name like no other!

## SESSION 1

# THE IMPORTANCE OF GOD'S NAME

Leader pages on pp. 102-105

**THE POINT:**  
GOD'S NAME REVEALS HE  
IS THE ALL-POWERFUL  
GOD WHOM WE CAN  
COMPLETELY TRUST.

## EXODUS 3:1-6,9-15

<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, Moses was shepherding the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian. He led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. <sup>2</sup> Then the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire within a bush. As Moses looked, he saw that the bush was on fire but was not consumed. <sup>3</sup> So Moses thought, "I must go over and look at this remarkable sight. Why isn't the bush burning up?"

<sup>4</sup> When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called out to him from the bush, "Moses, Moses!" "Here I am," he answered.

<sup>5</sup> "Do not come closer," he said. "Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." <sup>6</sup> Then he continued, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Moses hid his face because he was afraid to look at God.

<sup>9</sup> So because the Israelites' cry for help has come to me, and I have also seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them, <sup>10</sup> therefore, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh so that you may lead my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt."

<sup>11</sup> But Moses asked God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and that I should bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" <sup>12</sup> He answered, "I will certainly be with you, and this will be the sign to you that I am the one who sent you: when you bring the people out of Egypt, you will all worship God at this mountain."

<sup>13</sup> Then Moses asked God, "If I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what should I tell them?" <sup>14</sup> **God replied to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you."**

<sup>15</sup> God also said to Moses, "Say this to the Israelites: The LORD, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is my name forever; this is how I am to be remembered in every generation."

### MEMORY VERSE

### KEYWORDS

**Angel of the Lord (v. 2)**—This name (Malak Yahweh) appears in the Old Testament fifty times. It often appears to designate a theophany, or appearance of God to humanity.

**God (v. 4)**—The Hebrew term is *Elohim*. It emphasizes the majesty and infinite nature of God.

**I AM WHO I AM (v. 14)**—The translation of the personal name of God—Yahweh. This name comes from the Hebrew verb for "to be." It emphasizes God as being both self-existent and self-sufficient. Nobody created Him, and He needs nothing outside of Himself to exist.



## WHAT DOES GOD'S NAME COMMUNICATE TO YOU?

Many of us remember watching the film adaptation of *Roots* at some point. In a famous scene, the character Kunta Kinte is repeatedly whipped as a slave driver seeks to force him to accept the name his enslaver has given him. Interestingly, both the enslaver and the enslaved understand the importance of one's name. A similar attempt to use names to separate individuals from their heritage occurs in the Old Testament. Daniel and his friends Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah are exiled from their homeland in Babylon and their names are changed (Dan. 1:1-7). While their Jewish names honor God, the Babylonian names of Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are meant to honor Babylonian culture and religion.

As important as human names are, the name of God is even more so. God's name provides us with insight into His concern for us and connection to us. The name God uses in speaking to Moses at the burning bush expresses just how awesome He is. Regardless of the power and position of those who are oppressing God's people, the oppressors do not have the final word.

God's name is important because it reminds us that God is ultimately in charge.

### God Is Continual // Exodus 3:1-6

"Meanwhile, back at the ranch." Many western stories change scenes with that phrase. The term meanwhile ties what happens in one place with an important event elsewhere. The opening word meanwhile in verse 1 ("now" in some translations) helps us transition in time from the previous chapter as the Hebrews desperately cried out to God. The Lord had not forgotten His people. While they sought God's deliverance, He was preparing a deliverer.

Having killed an Egyptian, Moses fled the palace and found shelter among the tents of Jethro, a Midianite priest. Marrying Jethro's daughter, Moses traded the silk robes of royalty for the humble clothes of a shepherd. God used Moses's exile to prepare him for a historic act that would display the Lord's holiness and trustworthiness.

## THE POINT:

# GOD'S NAME REVEALS HE IS THE ALL-POWERFUL GOD WHOM WE CAN COMPLETELY TRUST.

Similarly, we may find ourselves hiding out from the sins of our past. Shame and guilt often chase us into fugitive wastelands. Sometimes our flight is not physical, but we retreat emotionally. Like Moses, we seek shelter in the most unlikely places.

God guided the errant prince to Horeb, the mountain of God, on the far side of the wilderness. Here Moses encountered an incredible sight, a burning bush that was not being consumed by the fire. From the midst of the bush came the voice of the angel of the Lord. Some writers think Moses encountered the preincarnate Christ there. Others separate the appearance of the Angel of the LORD and the voice of God. The important truth is that God spoke to Moses and called him personally.

The phrase "When the LORD saw" doesn't suggest Moses caught God by surprise. God designed every aspect of Moses's life for His purposes. Like Moses, we might not recognize God when He calls us. Moses simply said, "Here I am." He didn't know the identity of the One who spoke, nor did he fully comprehend the holy moment he had entered. People who are far from God sometimes find themselves in a similar state.

When Moses responded, God introduced Himself as "the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." He began by using what would be a vital identifier: "I Am." God isn't merely the Lord of Hebrew history. He's the ever-present One who transcends history. He is the God who was and is and always will be. And He knows us by name too.

In God's presence, Moses's casual presumption met the clashing reality of God's holiness. Where Moses stood was "holy ground." Not because the dirt was special, but because God was in this place. God told Moses to remove his sandals, an act of humility and respect. Too often we rush into God's presence carrying the dust of the world and its cares. Pausing to recognize His holiness, we must set aside everything that hinders our encounter with our Lord.

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR SOMETHING TO BE HOLY?

### God Is Concerned // Exodus 3:9-12

Whenever we think God doesn't know our situation, we should remember His response to Moses. The desperate cries of His people had indeed reached His ears. This anthropomorphic reference doesn't mean God has physical auditory organs. It affirms that God hears and knows what is happening with His people, especially in their distress. God had also seen. He wasn't blind to the oppression the Egyptians laid on the Hebrews. They were His people. He was sensitive to their plight.



## DIGGING DEEPER A LONG RELATIONSHIP

In Exodus 3:6, the Lord referred to Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. These patriarchs of Israel had their own experiences with God. Their stories, recounted in the book of Genesis, were messy. They consisted of faith and drama. Nevertheless, God remained faithful to the promises He made them. By the time of Moses, many years and generations have passed. However, the Lord shows Moses that in the midst of the ordeal in Egypt, He had not been absent or unaware. The promises made to Israel's ancestors will come to pass, and God indicated that Moses had a role to play. Moses' service would help carry out the promises God had made long before Moses and the rest of the Hebrews in Egypt had even been born.

**Why do you think that God identified His relationship with Israel's ancestors before discussing Israel's current situation?**



Up to this point, Moses was hopeful. You can almost hear him say, "That's right, God. Go get 'em." To his surprise, God told Moses, "Go. I am sending you." The Lord's command was an imperative, not an invitation. The last thing Moses expected (or wanted) was to be sent back to Egypt. To return might mean his execution (Ex. 2:11-22). When God calls us to His service, it rarely involves something easy.

To make matters worse, God's commission involved an imposing tyrant and an impossible task. Moses was being sent to Pharaoh. By now, he had been in his desert exile for forty years. He was eighty years old. What could an old castaway do to sway the mightiest ruler of the land?

Moses's impossible task involved leading God's people to freedom. How could one man overcome the forces of Egypt? Then, even if he could find a way to lead the people out, who was Moses to demand they follow? In fact, once Moses had secured an exit permit, the people constantly rebelled. They moaned and groaned about their hardships, blaming everything on Moses.

Moses asked, "Who am I?" Who was he in comparison to the Pharaoh, who was worshiped as a god by the Egyptians? Who was he among the elders of Israel? Who would listen to a shepherd from Midian? He was no longer a prince of Egypt.

We can identify with Moses's dilemma. When God presents us with a seemingly insurmountable task, we quickly ask, "Why me?" Surely others are better educated, more qualified, stronger, or more influential. God would do better assigning this job to someone who not only could do it, but who wanted to do it.

### WHAT REASONS DO YOU HAVE FOR TRUSTING GOD?

God's answer to us is the same as His response to Moses. It's not about us; it's about Him. Moses was right; he was inadequate for the task, but God was fully capable to accomplish His purposes. This omnipotent God would be with Moses as he obeyed the Lord.

## God Is Changeless // Exodus 3:13-15

Moses had another dilemma; he really didn't know God. He couldn't undertake this mission under his own authority. He had none. Interestingly, Moses didn't ask God in whose name he should approach Pharaoh. Moses was notorious among the people of the palace. The Israelites were a different story.



If Moses went to them under the authority of the "God of your ancestors," he needed to answer their questions about who God is. The first question would be: What is His name? Egyptians worshiped many pagan gods. Under Amenhotep IV (1353-1335 BC), later known as Akhenaton, Aton the sun god was elevated above all other deities. Later, a similar sun god, Amen-Re, became the favorite of Tutankhamen. Other kings came and went, dynasties rose and fell, but their gods remained. Some deities related to natural elements like earth and air, while others supposedly ruled spiritual realms like the dead. No wonder Moses needed to be specific when the people questioned him about who he represented.

Instead of rebuking Moses for asking His name, the Lord responded with a self-descriptive phrase: "I AM WHO I AM." Various sources offer several renderings from "I will be who I will be" to "I am Being." All models revert to the same idea—the omnipresent God. He can't be defined by any dictionary or comprehended by human philosophy. Unlike created things, God has life in Himself. He is self-existent, without origin or end (John 5:26).

## THE POINT:

# GOD'S NAME REVEALS HE IS THE ALL-POWERFUL GOD WHOM WE CAN COMPLETELY TRUST.

## WHAT DOES GOD'S RESPONSE TO MOSES REVEAL ABOUT HIS CHARACTER?

God made it even simpler for Moses. When the Israelites demanded who had sent Moses, he was to say "I AM" had sent him to them. This four-letter word has been translated as Yahweh or Jehovah. In most English Bibles, it is represented by the word LORD written in all capital letters. The Hebrews felt the name of God was so holy, they refused to speak it aloud.

God went further and told Moses that he could identify their God as the Lord who was "God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Unlike the Egyptian gods who fell in and out of favor with successive dynasties, the Lord was forever the same. The One who had guided Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would now lead them out of bondage into a land of prosperity and freedom. Yahweh was not only the God of their past (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), but He was also the God of their future. The ever-present One would be with Moses and with God's people. And He'll be with us too. We can trust Him because His divine nature is true, consistent, and dependable.

## HOW DOES THE WAY GOD WORKED IN THE PAST INFORM THE WAY WE WALK IN THE PRESENT?

## DID YOU KNOW?

The Fisk Jubilee Singers are a group originally organized to raise funds for Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee through music. Since their beginning shortly after the American Civil War, the Fisk Jubilee Singers have traveled extensively and won a Grammy in 2021. They may be most well known for their renditions of African American spirituals. Enslaved African Americans created spirituals in response to the conditions that they faced and frequently related their experiences to their faith in God. One famous spiritual is "Go Down Moses," which discusses the Hebrews' exodus from Egypt. Enslaved African Americans drew parallels between their experiences and those of the ancient Hebrews, seeing themselves and the Hebrews as both being people of God.

**Biblical Truth:** Spirituals expressed hope that God would intervene to deliver them as He had done for His people throughout Scripture (Ps. 34:17).

**What similarities and differences do you notice between enslaved Africans and the Hebrews in Egypt?**

## LIVE IT

### How can you demonstrate appreciation for the importance of God's name in your life?

Recognizing the importance of God's name means honoring it. God's name is closely related to His character. We know more about who God is as we see and understand what He does. As we trust Him and follow Him, we show others how they can follow Him too. God's name reveals He is the all-powerful God whom we can completely trust. Choose one of the following applications to experience this truth:

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- **Listen.** Listen to God's voice. Prayerfully seek His guidance about how you can glorify Him.
- **List.** Pause and examine your situation. List ways you can be God's ambassador where you are, so that others can come to know Him.
- **Look.** Discover opportunities to take God's name to people outside your current influence.



# DAILY READINGS

## 1. INFINITELY I AM // PSALM 90:1-2

Moses's words in Psalm 90:2, "... from everlasting to everlasting you are God" were written sometime after God revealed an unknown name for Himself in Exodus 3—I AM. Meaning He would be everything Moses needed when and wherever needed.

And without fail, God did exactly that. He became destroyer in chapters 7-11 of Exodus, deliverer in chapter 13, supplier amid hunger in chapter 16, and lawgiver while the children of Israel danced with lawlessness in chapter 32. The I AM displayed He was everywhere, all the time, through anything type of power in countless ways over Moses's lifetime. No wonder Moses declared, "... from everlasting to everlasting you are God." We can declare the same.

**The I AM and His ability and willingness to be all remains infinitely available to this generation and beyond.**

## 2. YADA', DETAILED KNOW // EXODUS 3:7-8

The average person describes yada as non-essential details or boring repetition. A description that fails miserably. When God says of the Israelites in Exodus 3:7, "... I know [yada] about their sufferings." It denotes a detailed, active understanding of their agony. Their layers of suffering ran deeper than even they knew, but God knew. He said, "I have come down to rescue them. . . ." This reveals something else. Yes, God knew the intricacies of their suffering and came down, but He also walked with them as He delivered them. How amazing is that? God yada's His children with a knowing so intimate that it goes beyond surface understanding straight to the heart of what is necessary for deliverance.

**There is no place He will not venture to, known or unknown, to rescue us from danger.**

## 3. DIFFERENT, BUT SAME // HEBREWS 11:1

Hebrews chapter 11, known as the Faith Hall of Fame, points to something greater than the actions of the biblical characters so admired by many. Hebrews 11 shows God as steady. He shows up in

the lives of these people in very different ways and yet, His personal description, I AM, never changes. The changeless God is rich with different attributes that reveal themselves at appointed times. Those traits can be trusted because Yahweh God displays each with His eternal knowledge, everlasting love, and infinite mercy. Nothing and no one can ever change God's steadiness. His stability stands even in the face of humanity's unstable actions. What an incredible assurance. God is different, but the same.

**God shows up armed with what we need, but never without who He is. Hallelujah and amen.**

## 4. FIRST LOVE // 1 JOHN 4:7-19

When we think of love, especially our first, pitter-patter heartbeats, silly grins, or butterfly flutters tend to come to mind. Some might say those are the defining attributes of first love. Yet, the Bible refutes that claim. God is quite literally the defining source of first love. Physical sensations fall short when we realize how true that is. God loved us first. Without His love, love wouldn't exist. Which makes Him the truest form and definition of first love. The next time your heart goes pitter patter aflutter with love beats over a new baby or spouse, remember that you can love because God loved you first.

**A love, defined by His actions, solidified by His continual compassion, and justified by Jesus on the cross. If that isn't first love, what is?**

## 5. MAJESTY COMPELLED // 1 CHRONICLES 29:11

The south and north poles of a magnet pull toward one another. In close proximity, they cannot be kept apart. The draw is stronger than the forces that would pull them away because the distance between the two is minimal. God's majesty kind of compels us in that way. His name encompasses so much, all of what we need to be exact, that once we get closer to Him, the knowledge of who He is grasps us. We don't have a choice in that we are overtaken by His wonder. In His presence, we bow down because we know there is none other worthy enough for us to bend our knees, lay prostrate before, or lift holy hands with lowered heads to.

**His majesty compels.**