

“Revelation”
Series, “*What’s in a Name?*”

6/6/10

9 & 10:45 am

PREAMBLE

Name change update: As you know, we’re moving towards a name change for our church. The one motivating purpose for this is that the word “Baptist” does not communicate what it once did. In fact, members have been telling us for many years that friends were telling them they would not come to a “Baptist” church.

To try to understand the breadth of this experience, as part of an all-church survey several years ago, we found that almost 50% of church members who regularly invite someone to a church activity said they had this experience.

Although our church name holds many precious memories and a wonderful heritage, the pastors and deacons concluded that to be faithful to the mission Jesus has given us, we should choose a new name, one that is more reflective of who we are as a church, especially since we have not been a part of a Baptist denomination since December of 1980.

We almost changed the name at the same time, and a few times after, so it has been in the minds of pastors, deacons and many others for a long time.

So, here’s the plan: after 15 months of planning, meeting with individuals and groups within the church, we plan to present the new name at the worship services on Sunday, June 27, three weeks from today.

It is a name that has been recommended by several people in the church via the e-mails that have been coming in, and even before that as we met with various groupings in the church. (We have received more than 100 name recommendations via e-mail or letter. Thank you!)

At a deacon’s meeting last Tuesday evening, a few of the deacons said people were offering money if they would tell them the new name. It hadn’t been determined at that time. But, since there is such an interest in knowledge for money, we’re going to post, on E-bay, a bidding process whereby you can know the new name a day ahead of time, or, if you pay the “buy it now” amount, you can know two weeks ahead! (Just kidding!)

So, we will present the new name on Sunday, June 27.

Then, the Sunday after, July 4, we will ask you to affirm the selection by a vote. A vote is necessary for this to become official with the State. This is much like how we ask you to affirm the selection of the deacons every year with a vote.

Please remember, this is not about what is preferred by each of us, it is about removing a clear and proven obstacle to the people Jesus told us to reach. We are the same people, the same church, believing the same Bible, in the same God, His Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Let's move together, in unity, to move forward as a church family under Jesus.

PRAY

BOP update tonight and tomorrow night, 7:00: Updates, direction. Not fund-raisers, but information that I believe will encourage you on where we are and where we're going for this last year of BOP.

OPEN to Genesis 1

INTRODUCTION

What's in a name?

Have you ever wondered how names came to be?

Sometimes they are simply a label of some kind. It appears that's what is happening in Genesis 1 when God is naming the things He is creating: "day," "night," "land," "sea."

Names are often more than a label. There is something behind them. In 1 Chronicles 4:9-10 we find out that a baby was named "Jabez" because his birth was particularly difficult and painful for his mother. So, he went through life known as "the pain." I wonder how many times he was asked, "How'd you get that name?" "Well ..."

Sharon knew someone in school whose last name was "Bush." She was born with pretty red hair. So, her parents gave her the first name, "Rose." "Rose Bush." Sometimes you wonder ... what does that reveal about the parents?

In the Bible, names often reveal things about a person or location, or even God Himself.

And that's what we find in the very first verse of the first book of the Bible.

READ Genesis 1:1

The first verse of the first page of God's word.

Names Reveal the Qualities or Traits of God

Genesis 1:1 “**In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.**”

A. “**God**” *Eloheim* (Genesis 1:1)

There is something very fascinating about this word, *Eloheim*.

Eloheim is plural, and the singular is *El*.

But *Eloheim* is always used in the singular when speaking of the one true God of the Bible.

Scholars believe this is an early indication of Trinity... one God, in three persons.

We see this displayed in Genesis 1:26 “**Then God [*Eloheim*] said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, in Our likeness ...’**”

27 “**So God (*Eloheim*) created man in His Own image, in the image of God (*Eloheim*) He created him; male and female He created them.**”

This is the true God acting in unity as Trinity. And, He is also revealed as Creator. God Who makes things by speaking them into existence.

B. “**LORD God**” *YHWH Eloheim* (Genesis 2:4)

READ Genesis 2:4 “**This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created. When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,**”

Here is the first time we see LORD / **YHWH** in the Bible.

“**God**” is *Eloheim*. Because *Eloheim* is attached to it, we know it is the same God we are talking about.

YHWH is the most distinctive name for God in the Bible. This is His actual name vs. a title. (Just as **Jesus** is the most distinctive name for “Lord” in the NT; and “Jesus” is His actual name, not Lord).

Exodus 20:2-3 “**I am the LORD (YHWH) your God (*Eloheim*), Who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.**
3 **You shall have no other gods before Me.**”

What does YHWH reveal to us about God? What does it mean?

YHWH is from the verb “*to be*.”

To help understand this, let’s **TURN** to Exodus 3:14, where Moses is talking with God:

READ Exodus 3:13-15 “**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?’**

14 **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.”’**

15 **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 by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation.”’**

YHWH and “**I AM**” are both from the word “*to be*.” And you’ll notice in v. 15 that God comes back to YHWH as **the name by which He is to be remembered from generation to generation.**

YHWH reveals that God is, and always will be. He is not bound by time. He is eternal. He lives in eternity. He is and always has been and always will be.

Some sum this up by saying YHWH is “the ever-existing God.”

We see this same idea expressed about Jesus throughout the NT. One is in Revelation:

Revelation 1:8 “**I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “Who is, and Who was, and Who is to come, the Almighty.”**

Now, what we have just covered is unfathomable, mind-blowing, awesome! And it inspires awe in us.

Sometimes this is referred to as God’s transcendence. He is so far beyond all limits that we know, so far surpassing what we are, ‘other’ than what we are it can seem there is no way to actually relate to Him.

But, a relationship with Him is exactly what He desires with us.

And we see this dimension of His name revealed as we continue through the Scriptures.

C. “LORD” with a descriptive quality attached

To further reveal the qualities or character of God; to reveal how He relates to us, the Bible has many descriptive words attached to **YHWH** ... words that emerge as He relates to people, as He acts on their behalf in various kinds of ways in all kinds of situations.

In the Hebrew OT these often appear like YHWH, with the quality on the other side of the hyphen.

There are so many of these qualities that we can't look up each one this morning, but the list will be available this week in my sermon notes on the church website. (www.fbcmodesto.com)

Here's what we find:

- The LORD Creator (Jehovah Bore, Isaiah 40:28)

I am His personal creation; He knows me and what is best for me. He also created everything in Heaven and on Earth. He commands matter.

- The LORD King Forever (Jehovah Melech Olam, Psalms 10:16)
- The LORD, the Lord of All the Earth (Jehovah Adon Kol Ha-arets, Joshua 3:11)
- The LORD Most High (Jehovah Elyon, Genesis 14:18-20)
- The LORD the Judge (Jehovah Hashopet, Judges 11:27)
- LORD GOD of Truth (Jehovah El Emeth, Psalms 31:5)

He is my King, my Ruler, my Judge, the One Who has the right to give direction in my life, the One I am to submit to and be loyal to.

- LORD GOD of My Salvation (Jehovah Elohe Yeshuathi, Psalms 88:1)
- The LORD Your Redeemer (Jehovah Goelekh, Isaiah 49:26 & 60:16)
- The LORD Our Righteousness (Jehovah Tsidkenu, Jeremiah 23:6)
- The LORD Who Sanctifies You (Jehovah Mekaddishkem, Exodus 31:13)

The One Who makes me acceptable to Him, the One Who makes it possible for me, an imperfect person who sins, to be right with Him.

- LORD GOD of Hosts/armies (Jehovah Elohim Tsebaoth, Psalms 59:5, Isaiah 28:22)
- The LORD Strong and Mighty (Jehovah Izuz Wegibbor, Psalms 24:8)
- The LORD Mighty In Battle (Jehovah Gibbor Milchamah, Psalms 24:8)
- The LORD Our Defense (Jehovah Maginnenu, Psalms 89:18)
- The LORD My Banner/Victory (Jehovah Nissi, Exodus 17:15)

God is the One Who fights on behalf of His people and for His own glory.

- The LORD GOD of Your Fathers (Jehovah Elohe Abothekem, Joshua 18:3)
- The LORD My GOD (Jehovah Eli, Psalms 18:2)
- The LORD Is with You (Jehovah Immeke, Judges 6:12)
- The LORD Shall Provide (Jehovah-jireth, Genesis 22:14)

He is personally concerned for you, your life, your needs, always with you and watching out for you.

- The LORD My Refuge (Jehovah Machsi, Psalm 91:9)
- The LORD the Shield (Jehovah Magen, Deuteronomy 33:29)
- The LORD My Fortress (Jehovah Mauzzi, Jeremiah 16:19)
- The LORD My Deliverer (Jehovah Mephalti, Psalms 18:2)
- The LORD Your Savior Jehovah Moshiekh, Isaiah 49:26 & 60:16)

He is the One Who has promised to protect you, rescue you and keep you safe.

- The LORD My Light (Jehovah Ori, Psalms 27:1)
- The LORD My Strength (Jehovah Uzzi, Psalms 28:7)
- The LORD (our) Healer (Jehovah Rophe, Exodus 15:26)

- The LORD My Rock (Jehovah Sali, Psalms 18:2)
- The LORD (our) Peace (Jehovah Shalom, Judges 6:24)
- The LORD Who Is Here (Jehovah Shammah, Ezekiel 48:35)
- The LORD My Shepherd (Jehovah Roi, Psalms 23:1)

He is the One Who will provide you with direction, strength, stability, healing, leadership and care, with you in every situation providing what you need as you look to Him.

- The LORD Whose Name Is Jealous (Jehovah Kanna Shemo, Exodus 34:14)

The One true God Who requires that we be exclusive with Him ... no other gods to which we give our loyalty.

We look to Him and no other “god” as our source of life and provision and forgiveness and righteousness. We love HIM with all of our heart and all of our soul and all of our mind and all of our strength. (Mark 12:30)

This is how God reveals Himself to us!

<http://www.lillyofthevalleyva.com/jesuslovesyou-gods-names-complis.html>

And all of these characteristics proclaim the core characteristic by which God reveals Himself: God is love.

D. God is love (1 John 3:1, 4:9-10, 16)

God’s all-descriptive, all-consuming quality: **Love. “God is love.”**

1 John 3:1 **“How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!”**

1 John 4:16 **“And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.”**

1 John 4:9-10 **“This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him.**

10 **This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.”**

CONCLUSION

A.W. Tozer once wrote, *“What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.”*

Names reveal truths about the one who bears the name.

How do we see God? Is it a clear, Biblical picture by which He reveals Himself? A picture that reveals accurately how He relates to us, loves us, what He requires of us?

God knew we could never live up to the standard of perfect love, and that we could never do anything to make up for the offenses we would commit against Him and His rightful ways for our lives.

So, He sent His Son, Jesus, to die in our place, to pay the penalty for our sins.

All this so we could know our Creator, be in a relationship with Him, and live the abundant life He created us to have before we turned away from Him.

Turn to Him this morning!

“True God in Heaven, I surrender myself to You through Your Son, Jesus. Please forgive me and continue to reveal Yourself to me! Help me to know you better and better as I seek You in Your Word. Amen.”