

# To Know Him By Name



*An Intimate Look at the Names of God*

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# A Note From the Authors



“...My people will know my name...”

Isaiah 52:6

*To Know Him By Name* is a result of an honest desire to know our God better, who He really is, and how He works in our lives. It is our hope and prayer that through this study your understanding of your Maker, your Savior, and your King will expand beyond its current boundaries and you will develop a deeper level of intimacy with the Lover of your soul. He is, you will find, an incredibly complex personality with emotions, plans, and a longing to be loved by His people. This book is far from exhaustive; in fact, we admittedly have barely scratched the surface. Some of the names of God traditionally presented in such a study have been omitted, while others more obscure have been explored. Regardless, we have found that as our knowledge of Him is diligently cultivated through study, our love for Him flourishes and our desire to serve Him overflows from a grateful heart. Get to know Him better...you won't regret it!

In His Name,

Janet & Kristin

# How to Use This Study



*To Know Him By Name* is a study for both individual and small group use. Based largely in the Old Testament, it is rooted in much Biblical history. Woven throughout, however, is practical application pulled from the pages of the New Testament and the words of Jesus Himself. Each chapter of study is divided into five sections. The first three are designed as a day's worth of personal study to introduce a particular name of God and exploring the context in which the name was revealed. This encourages digging into the spiritual principles found in the revelation of each name, some often hiding in plain sight. The fourth day of study links the name studied in that chapter to a particular psalm. Taking the time to journal through a psalm is well worth the effort and will hopefully provoke meditation and reflection with thoughts and prayers recorded in a separate journal. The intention of time spent journaling through a psalm is to be immersed in a time of praise and worship centered on the character of our God. Finally, the last section of each chapter is a set of small group questions that recap the week of homework, hitting the

highlights and encouraging discussion. These questions can be answered ahead of time or be explored together in a small group format. However you choose to use this study, may you be blessed and enriched as you seek to know your God better!

# Yahweh Shalom: Our Peace

(yah-WEH sha-LOME)

“So Gideon built an altar to the LORD there  
and called it The LORD is peace.”

Judges 6:24



## DAY ONE: PRECIOUS LITTLE PEACE

After well over 100 years of dwelling in the Promised Land, our friends the Israelites struggled miserably. Long after God had given them victory over their enemies, God’s people were hopelessly adrift. How does Judges 17:6 describe this period in Israel’s history?

But wait...weren’t they supposed to be doing what was right in the eyes of *Yahweh*, the LORD their God? As His people, weren’t they supposed to be living according to His Law? Yes and yes, but let’s just say it wasn’t really working out that way. The people of Israel obeyed for a time and enjoyed God’s blessing. Then, they would wander far from Him and experience His discipline. Obey. Disobey. Obey. Disobey. For a snapshot of this endless cycle at its worst, read Judges 6:1-6. What was going on here?

God’s people were living in caves in the Promised Land. They were planting but not harvesting because their enemies were ravaging their land and leaving them nothing. Their situation had become dire. According to Judges 6:6, what did they finally resort to?

Finally, they cried out to God. Though God knew they viewed Him as a last resort, He heard their cries and answered them. Read God's words to His people in verses 8-10. What did He say to them?

*Yahweh* sounds much like an exasperated parent. *I told you what to do, but you didn't listen to Me.* Or, more accurately: *I told you what NOT to do....* We can outrun the consequences of disobedience for a time, but when they finally catch up to us, it's never pretty. This was smack dab where Israel found herself. However, God didn't leave His people in their misery indefinitely. Taking the form of the Angel of the LORD, what did *Yahweh* do in Judges 6:11-12? What did He say?

Simple, yet profound: God showed up. God spoke. And, when *Yahweh* said in verse 12, "*The LORD is with you, mighty warrior,*" He meant it literally! Clueless Gideon, however, took the opportunity to air his grievances. What did Gideon say in verse 13?

It seems Gideon was having trouble connecting the dots in more ways than one. Apparently he had forgotten the whole concept of blessings following obedience. However, the LORD didn't take offense at Gideon's selective memory. Instead, God simply told Gideon He was sending him to save the day. What was Gideon's response in verse 15?

Again we find a Bible character feeling inadequate for his assigned task. God's Book is full of FINE people (Freaked-out, Insecure, Neurotic, and Emotional). Ever feel that way? Gideon did. But, God sought to put Gideon at ease. What was God's patient answer to Gideon's feelings of inadequacy?

Finally, Gideon was beginning to get it. From verses 17-22, what did Gideon do and what was his reaction when things went up in smoke?

Perhaps all that talk about God abandoning them was ringing in his ears. Clearly, he knew he was in trouble, but what did God say in verse 23?

*Shalom*. God said *Peace!* And peace was exactly what Gideon and the Israelites needed. They had no peace in their land because they had given their hearts to other gods. The peace they longed for could only come from following their God wholeheartedly. Gideon gives voice to this reality when he built the altar. From verse 24, what did he name it?

If we replace YHWH with I AM...well, just fill it in below and see.

“ \_\_\_\_\_ peace.”

In that moment, probably shaking in his mighty warrior's boots, Gideon realized that the LORD is peace. And, since God is the source of peace the Israelites would never have peace until they set their whole hearts on following God in obedience. Gideon would soon become *Yahweh's* instrument in rallying His people, calling them back to Himself, bringing peace that would last 40 years.

Is something stealing *your* peace? If the answer is yes, evaluate whether it's because you've given your heart away to someone or something other



than God. When obedience is hard, have you chosen an easier path? When priorities do battle, does compromise prevail with God getting lost in the shuffle? Confess these things and remember your God is *Yahweh Shalom*. True peace comes only from being right with Him.



## DAY TWO: THE PERSONIFICATION OF PEACE

The Hebrew word *shalom* is translated many ways. It's a word that is much more complex than our English word "peace" would suggest. In our language, peace often means no more than the absence of conflict. In Hebrew however, *shalom* can mean "whole," "finished," or "full." Bible translators sometimes render *shalom* as "perfect," "welfare" or "well." Despite the fact that 170 times the word is simply translated "peace" in our English Bibles, the idea of *shalom* means more than a state of mind or affairs. Ann Spangler, thankfully, has combined all these diverse thoughts into a simple statement:

*"Shalom comes from living in harmony with God."*

Harmony produces wholeness, well-being, and a life of peace, because it comes from the only true source, *Yahweh Shalom*. But how do we even begin to live in harmony with God? As we've seen, the Israelites had only marginal success with this despite being His chosen people. Their peace was always temporary and very often fleeting because they failed to meet God's requirements for living in harmony with Him. Based on what you know of the Israelites, what was their biggest problem?

No matter how we choose to label it, the Israelites had an obedience problem. More accurately, they had a disobedience problem. And disobedience is sin. Their sin kept getting in the way of their harmony with God and the system of animal sacrifices that God ordained to cover that sin and restore fellowship with Him was unable to bring about lasting *peace* with Him.

If there is one thing we can learn from the Israelites' experiences, it is that by our own efforts we cannot achieve true *shalom* with God. What our

ancient friends proved was that the basis for harmony with God needs to be established apart from us. There is only one way to do that. How does Paul explain it in Romans 5:1?

*Yahweh Shalom* sent His Son Jesus to establish peace with us. What title does Isaiah 9:6 give Messiah that qualifies Him for the job?

Check out Colossians 1:19-20. Here Paul is a little more specific about exactly how we have peace with God through Jesus. What does he add?

Peace with God came at a high price. How does Isaiah 53:4-6 explain it?

Sin demands punishment. Because God is just, He must exact justice, but because He is merciful, He caused our iniquities to fall upon Himself. The punishment He endured on our behalf brought us a very precious commodity: peace. Despite all the many layers of *shalom*, at its heart is the idea of reconciliation brought about by a completed transaction or a debt paid. This, in so many ways, was the greatest triumph of the cross.

Glance back at the beginning of today's lesson and review the many English words for *shalom*. If we look carefully, we can find one of those same words in John 19:28-30. What is said and what might it mean in this context?

This is the aspect of *shalom* that should pierce our hearts. Not to get bogged down in the etymology of our word, but according to Wikipedia, *“the conjugated verb form of shalom has other spins that are worth noting, such as: Shulam as in ‘it was paid for’ or Meshulam as in ‘paid in advance’ or Hishtalem meaning ‘it was worth it.’ Hence one can say that, ‘when it’s paid-for then there is peace,’ as in PEACE HAS A PRICE.”* Wikipedia could not have known what those words might mean to us.

The blood shed. The punishment endured. The debt paid. Transaction complete. Finished. *Shalom* with God. Let that sink in. Meditate on the astonishing thought that Jesus’ final words from the cross were laced with the idea that yes, peace has a price, but it was worth it. Grab your journal and write out a prayer to the Prince of Peace, thanking Him for paying your debt and making peace with God on your behalf.

*Shalom* for us begins when the transaction at the cross was completed. But, Paul takes this thought a step further. What does he say about Jesus in Ephesians 2:13-14?

Jesus not only made peace for us, but He is the personification of peace.

*“Peace, for us, then is not a feeling, experience, or possession...  
but the lordship of Him who came as the living embodiment of peace.  
Thus, when he says, ‘My peace I give unto you,’ He gives us  
not merely an attribute but Himself.”<sup>2</sup> – Herbert Lockyer*

Why do we ever look for peace anywhere else when Jesus has given us Himself first and foremost? Jesus explains why the peace He gives us in John 14:27 is nothing like the peace the world gives. What is wrong with the peace the world gives?

The Prince of Peace says it so clearly in John 16:33. How do we have real, lasting peace?

In. It's a tiny little word, but it can change everything. *Take heart, Jesus says, there is peace to be found in Me. You can look elsewhere, but you'll never find what you truly need. Remember, I AM peace.*



### DAY THREE: THE PRACTICAL ASPECT OF PEACE

Here's a liberating thought: Because our peace is in Jesus, it is not based on external circumstances. How is this different from how you have traditionally viewed peace?

Often, we seek peace in the form of the cessation or outright avoidance of conflict. But this is trying to manage our external circumstances over which we often have little or no actual control. How much better it is to seek the peace that only *Yahweh Shalom* can give! When the storms of life are swirling around us and we need peace, Philippians 4:6-9 offers us some practical advice. The Amplified Bible reads this way:

*“Do not fret or have any anxiety about anything,  
but in every circumstance and in everything,  
by prayer and petition, (definite requests), with thanksgiving,  
continue to make your wants known to God.”*

Through prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, we surrender to God our fears and worries. This is our part of the bargain. Paul goes on to explain

God's part:

*“And God's peace shall be yours, [that tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and being content with its earthly lot of whatever sort that is, that peace] which transcends all understanding shall garrison and mount guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”*

There is a clear cause and effect relationship here, an “if...then” clause of sorts. If we resolve not to fear but to instead pray, then peace will come. What do you notice is not promised here?

Paul does not promise that faithful prayer and petition will result in a change of circumstance or an end of conflict. What he does promise is actually so much better! Look back over the way the Amplified version describes what the peace of God will do for our minds and hearts. What words does this version of the Bible use to express the benefits of peace? Underline or highlight them above.

This is a powerful word picture. To mount a guard implies an ongoing vigilance ever at the ready to protect and safeguard. A garrison is a permanent military installation with deep reserves. This is how we are to think of the peace of God. Have you ever experienced indescribable peace? If so, what were the circumstances under which you experienced this level of peace?

Paul goes on in verse 8 to instruct us to think on worthy, lovely, excellent, virtuous and honorable things. By process of elimination, what are we **not** to fixate on?

If you answered “our circumstances,” you’re right! As we have all experienced, obsessing over our circumstances never brings us peace. The guard and garrison of peace we need to weather this turbulent life comes only from surrendering to and trusting in our God.

Leave it to Paul to take it one step further. He drops another if...then clause. Still in the Amplified Bible, Philippians 4:9 reads like this:

*“Practice what you have learned and received and heard and seen  
in me, and model your way of living on it, and the God of peace  
(of untroubled, undisturbed well-being) will be with you.”*

If we practice what we’ve learned from the Bible and if we model our life after it, then peace will come. Paul is talking about lifestyle here. We are to process the teaching of God’s Word and live it out if we are to experience His presence and thus His peace. We can’t expect peace to come if we are not modeling our life after His Word.

In just a couple of verses, Paul has hit us with a familiar double whammy: trust and obey. The words together probably ring a bell, but their connection to peace may have eluded you. The measure of our peace depends on both the measure of our trust and the measure of our obedience. Remember the words of the old hymn?

*“Trust and obey for there’s no other way  
to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey.”<sup>3</sup>*

Trust plus obedience equals peace. And peace is what we are called to. It is how *Yahweh Shalom* wants us to live. This is clear from Colossians 3:15. How does Paul instruct us in these verses? What are we to do?

In a way, this brings us full circle. If we have been accustomed to thinking of peace in terms of the absence of or resolution of conflict, consider the verse above again in those terms. What battle is raging within our hearts?

The war for our hearts and minds is ongoing and intense. Why don't we surrender and **let** the peace of Christ **rule** in us? Why do we fight it? *Yahweh Shalom* has posted a guard and has a garrison stationed in reserve, but we must trust and obey and let the Prince of Peace rule. He doesn't promise to change our circumstances. But, He does promise to give us *shalom*.

*"Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace*

*at all times and in every way..."* – 2 Thessalonians 3:16



#### DAY FOUR: JOURNAL PSALM 46

Although many psalms contain elements of peace, one psalm in particular evokes thoughts of peace amidst the storms of life. Open your Bible to Psalm 46 and read this comforting psalm.

This psalm begins with a declaration of trust. Record verse 1 in your journal and then write out your own declaration of trust.

Despite the fact that the psalmist is living in a world that is falling apart, he is able to experience peace in the midst of the chaos. How does the psalmist describe his circumstances in verses 2 and 3?

In what ways is your world similar to the psalmist's? In what areas do you feel out of control? How has your world been shaken? Let's apply the lesson of Philippians 4:6-9 to our lives. Take your concerns and circumstances to God. Spend as much time as you need to fully surrender these things to *Yahweh Shalom's* tender care.

Although the psalmist is realistic about his circumstances, in verse 4 he describes a tranquil river running through the chaos. Who is in the midst of this river? According to verse 5, what does *Yahweh Shalom's* presence do for our circumstances? Thank God for being in the middle of your mess. Call to Him. Ask Him to be your help.

How is God described in verse 7? Take a minute and think of the ways God gives you strength in the midst of the storm. He is with you. He is your stronghold. Cling to Him.

In verse 8 the psalmist invites us to examine the works of the LORD. How is God working in your circumstances? If you are having difficulty identifying how God is at work, write out another declaration of trust. Acknowledge that although you don't see His hand, you trust it is there.

What advice does verse 10 give us when we are trying to find peace in the midst of the storm? Spend time being still with your God. Rest in the fact that He is with you and He is your stronghold.



#### **SMALL GROUP: DOING LIFE TOGETHER**

Like the people of Israel, we often have difficulty experiencing peace in our daily lives. As we learned in Judges 17:6, the Israelites failed to experience peace because they decided to do things their own way instead of God's way. We have all been guilty of pursuing our own way at various times in our lives. Share a time when you attempted to do things your own way. How did that work out for you?

Hopefully we've learned from our mistakes and are gradually learning to place all areas of our lives under God's authority. Can you think of any area of your life that has improved since following God's instructions? How has obedience brought peace?

In this chapter we learned that the word "shalom" means whole, finished, or full and is often translated perfect or well. Spend a few minutes discussing Ann Spangler's quote:

*"Shalom comes from living in harmony with God."*



Although righteous living can bring us a certain level of peace, complete peace can only be found in a relationship with Jesus Christ. According to Romans 5:1 and Colossians 1:19-20, what makes perfect peace and harmony with God possible?

We also read this great quote by Herbert Lockyer:

*“Peace, for us, then is not a feeling, experience, or possession...  
but the lordship of Him who came as the living embodiment of peace.  
Thus, when he says, ‘My peace I give unto you,’  
He gives us not merely an attribute but Himself.”*

In what ways have you experienced the truth of this quote? How is peace the presence of Jesus rather than a feeling, experience or possession?

Read Jesus’ words in John 14:27. In what ways is the peace Jesus offers different than the peace the world promises?

Now read John 16:33. In this verse Jesus promises us two things: in this world we will have troubles and He has overcome the troubles of this world. How have you experienced Jesus’ peace in the midst of a difficult season of life?

In Philippians 4:6-9 we find Paul’s prescription for peace. In these verses Paul instructs us to bring everything to God in prayer and only allow our minds to dwell on things that are true, honorable, right, pure, lovely, and excellent. How do prayer and honorable thinking help us experience peace?

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# Notes



<sup>1</sup> Spangler, Ann. *Praying the Names of God*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> Lockyer, Herbert. *All the Divine Names and Titles in the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1975, p 40.

<sup>3</sup> Sammis, John H. & Towner, Daniel B. *Trust and Obey*. 1918.