

To Know Him By Name



An Intimate Look at the Names of God

Janet Ables  Kristin Miller

Lulu Press, Inc.

Raleigh, North Carolina, USA

**For more information about this or other resources by these authors or speaking availability,
please email jjables@sbcglobal.net.**

Published by Lulu Press, Inc.

© 2011 by Janet Ables and Kristin Miller

ISBN 978-1-257-85433-3

Cover by Kylie Bennett, Atascadero, CA

Except where otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations in this book are taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version, copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society.

Other versions used include:

New American Standard Bible®, copyright © by The Lockman Foundation 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995. Used by permission. (www.lockman.org).

The Amplified® Bible © copyright, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1964, 1965, 1987 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. (www.lockman.org).

THE MESSAGE copyright © by Eugene H. Peterson, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002. Used by permission of NavPress Publishing Group.

Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2007. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, IL 60188 USA. All rights reserved.

New Century Version®. Copyright © 2005 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

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 Rophe: Our Healer

(yah-WEH ro-FEH)

“...I am the LORD who heals you.”

Exodus 15:26b



DAY ONE: INTO THE DESERT

Our second compound name of YHWH is *Yahweh Rophe*. We find the Hebrew word *rophe* sixty-seven times in the Old Testament and it means to heal or cure. This verb is not only used to imply physical healing, but it is also used to describe moral and spiritual healing as well. It is also used to refer to the healing God performs on behalf of the land, water, nations and so forth.

God revealed Himself as *Yahweh Rophe* when our friends, the Israelites, were newly liberated from bondage in Egypt. The context in which we first learn this name is important, so let's begin by examining the context in which *Yahweh Rophe* revealed Himself. Read Exodus 14:21-31 and describe the events recorded there.

What does this incident prompt the Israelites to do in verse 31?

Seriously, how could they not? After such a dramatic rescue during which they were snatched from utter destruction, how could they not put their trust in God? A healthy dose of the fear of the LORD would also serve them well.

Read Moses' song in Exodus 15:1-21. As you read, imagine yourself on the shores of the Red Sea, listening to Moses recount what had just happened before your very eyes. The reality of a bloodthirsty army hot on your heels, the wall of water on either side as you walked through on dry land, and then as Miriam so aptly put it: *"the horse and its rider... hurled into the sea."* No wonder the Hebrew people broke out into spontaneous praise. No wonder they sang and danced and played the tambourine.

Certainly this would qualify as a "mountaintop experience" for the Israelites, wouldn't it? The scene at the Red Sea was the climax of a series of dramatic events designed to bring Israel face to face with her God. Sometimes, though in less dramatic fashion, God uses this method with us as well. Describe a mountaintop experience in your own spiritual life where you came face to face with God and were left, like Israel, rejoicing and praising Him.

It was on this spiritual high that Israel began their trek into the Desert of Shur with their God. This region of vast wilderness extends relentlessly from Egypt to Palestine. Read "the rest of the story" in Exodus 15:22-27. How long did the mountaintop experience seem to last?

What did the people do to announce that the spiritual high was officially over?

What was their issue? Why were they grumbling?

Haven't we all been there? Well, probably not literally, but certainly spiritually. Think of it like this: God has acted in some dramatic way in our lives and we've reveled in it. And then, eventually, reality sets in. Our enthusiasm for the adventure we're on with God wanes and we feel worn out, parched, and more than a little bit lost. We are often hard on the Israelites for their fickle nature toward God, but how often do we let **our** circumstances influence our attitude toward God? No doubt more often than we would like to admit. How did Moses handle the situation? What was his first course of action?

How did God answer and what did Moses do?

The last phrase of verse 25 reveals what this was really about. Note it here.

There's the "T" word again. The **test** of difficult circumstances often reveals our fickle nature and the depth of our commitment to God. He used this test to get the attention of His fickle people because He had something very important to tell them right from the get-go. What was it?

Listening to God's voice and committing to obedience is a form of preventative medicine in the lives of God's people, both physically and spiritually. With the miracle of healing the waters, *Yahweh Rophe* announced that He is the healer of His people.

Is there something in your life that, like the waters at Marah, is bitter

when you expected it to be sweet? Confess this to God. Listen carefully to Him and commit to doing what's right in His eyes. Ask *Yahweh Rophe* to heal the waters in your life and to bring you to camp at a place of twelve springs and seventy palms, a place of refreshment and rest in Him.



DAY TWO: THE TRICKY PART

When the crowd was grumbling about the water saying, "*What are we to drink?*" I imagine it more like this: *Uh, Moses, so what exactly are we supposed to drink out here in the blistering heat since we followed you and our 'God' and we've walked for three days and we're really, really thirsty? Can't you just hear the sarcastic edge?*

God miraculously sweetened the water, and then He told His people something very specific. Write His words from Exodus 15:26 here.

Underline or highlight His very first word. What does this word imply about the promise God was making to His people?

Think about this for a minute. Is this fair? Why or why not?

If is always tricky. It means the words that follow are purely conditional. The LORD says, "...if *you pay attention to His commands and keep all His decrees...*" (oddly speaking in the third person as He sometimes does). In other words, if *you obey*.... What He means is just that: if they chose to obey His law, He would keep them healthy. An example of the law He is referring to is found in Leviticus 15. For a snapshot, read verse 11. If you

have time, read the whole chapter and you'll get the picture of how God was seeking to keep His people healthy centuries before modern medicine discovered such principles.

Yahweh's conditional promise in Exodus 15 sets the stage for the many dietary and sanitary laws that He would enact later with his people at Mt. Sinai. Many scholars believe that this was one of the ways God lived up to His name *Yahweh Rophe*. Long before modern medicine would prove the benefit of these standards, God provided His people with instructions on how to avoid becoming physically sick in the first place.

In the same way, the directives of the LORD's moral law offered similar protections. The Ten Commandments outlined a lifestyle that was right in God's eyes. Keeping His decrees would help the people avoid risky moral situations thus keeping them spiritually healthy as well. That said, does your opinion of the conditional nature of the promise change? Why or why not?

The other tricky part of this passage is the implication that the LORD causes sickness and disease. What does God say in verse 26 to suggest this and what does this say about His control over sickness and health?

Can this be right? Does God inflict disease? Read Numbers 12:1-13. What was the cause of Miriam's illness?

Miriam's situation makes an important connection between sickness and personal sin. Sometimes the two are directly related. Miriam and Aaron sinned against Moses and her leprosy was the consequence. God, it seems, reserves the right to correct His people in this manner. They could have avoided God's discipline if they had chose to do what was right in His eyes and hadn't badmouthed Moses to promote themselves.

How did Aaron, and presumably Miriam, respond when they realized what their sin had caused?

This, it seems, is one desired result of any such sickness: repentance. But sickness isn't always caused by the *personal* sin of the individual who is ill. How is this so? See Romans 5:12 for help.

If Adam had not sinned in the garden, there would be no sickness or disease in the world today and healing would never be needed. So ultimately we can argue that all sickness is *due* to sin. But repentance may not necessarily be what God is looking for by allowing it. What does John 9:1-3 have to say about another divine purpose in sickness?

Often we are not unlike the disciples who asked, *Why, Lord?* It's a fair question and our Savior answered it directly. How can His answer bring comfort?

It is *Yahweh Rophe* that makes use of even sickness and disease to display His work. Healing of the body is possible, but it's always temporary. The work God truly seeks to do in our lives is eternal. If physical healing is proving elusive for you or a loved one, pray for eyes to see God's work in new ways.

Close today by writing out 2 Kings 20:5 here and spending a few minutes meditating on it.



DAY THREE: SPIRITUAL HEALING

Throughout the Gospels Jesus is found doing miracles of healing. The gospel of Matthew gives us a good summary of how Jesus spent what *must* have been a great deal of His time. Read Matthew 4:23-24 and make a list of all Jesus did.

How does Jesus describe His work in His own words in Matthew 11:2-5?

It seems almost everywhere Jesus went, there was someone in need of physical healing. And though His heart must have broken to see people suffering physically with all manner of sickness, He was also confronted with an even greater need. How does Jeremiah 17:9 describe that need?

The English Standard Version says it like this:

“The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately sick...”

This is our greatest problem. Our hearts are sick and it is sin that has made them so. Jesus knew that even if He were to physically heal every sick person on the earth, our true need would remain: spiritual healing. He hints at this in Matthew 13:13-15. Read it and jot down His diagnosis and His suggested cure.

Though it may not have been crystal clear to His audience, it wasn't complicated. Every time Jesus performed a physical miracle it was leading up to the greatest healing miracle of all: healing people spiritually from the ravages of sin. Slowly, read the words of Isaiah 53:4-5 afresh. Don't rush. What are the words or phrases that relate to sickness and to healing?

This passage in Isaiah is, of course, prophecy foretelling the work of our Savior. The prophet announced plain as day what the mission of the Savior would be in Isaiah 61:1-2a. What are the highlights?

Everything listed in this passage is spiritual in nature: preaching the good news, proclaiming freedom from our enemy and sin, freedom from the kingdom and power of darkness, and *binding up the brokenhearted*. The ugly truth is that sin leaves in its wake a multitude of brokenhearted people. And according to Isaiah 59:2, it separates us from God. The mission of our Savior was to bind up our wounds and heal us from our sickness of sin, restoring us to right relationship with our God. In order to do that, what had to happen? Read 1 Peter 2:24.

What a scandalous irony! The Great Healer was wounded so that we could truly be healed. Ponder that for a moment. Imagine the nails driven into the hands that had touched and healed so many. *"By His wounds we are healed."* This was how God always intended to heal us spiritually. This is how it had to be, inconceivable though it may seem, because the Healer was also the healing.

It is with our friends the Israelites, out there in the Desert of Shur, that we see a picture of these future things. God's redemptive plan was hidden within the story of unrelenting thirst, grumbling, bitter waters, and an unlikely instrument of rescue. What did God show Moses in Exodus 15:25?

Our English translations differ here slightly. Some say a piece of wood while others say a tree. Either way, it seems an odd choice, doesn't it? The grumbling Israelites watched Moses throw a piece of wood into the water expecting this to somehow change their situation. They must have thought Moses was crazy, and it does seem a little weird unless you catch a glimpse of the future in all of this.

It was the *tree* that changed everything for the Israelites that day. The tree healed the water and silenced the grumbling that resulted from bitterness. The tree made the water not just drinkable but sweet and the sweet water healed their thirst. In the desert that day, unlikely though it seemed, the tree was their salvation. Go back to 1 Peter 2:24. What does Peter suggest about the tree?

Just as *Yahweh Rophe* healed the waters at Marah, He heals the bitter water of sin in our life and transforms it into streams of living water. On that tree He was wounded for us, plunged into the bitterness of sin and emerged to offer us a well of salvation. He invites us to come to Him and be truly healed.

Confess to *Yahweh Rophe* any bitterness in your life that has led to broken heartedness and grumbling. Ask Him by the power of the cross to replace the bitter water of sin with the sweet water of life that flows from the cross. Meditate on Psalm 147:3 and as you do, ask Him to bind up your wounds, and thank Him for being *Yahweh Rophe*, the LORD who heals you.

“He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.”

– Psalm 147:3



DAY FOUR: JOURNAL PSALM 103

Webster’s Dictionary defines the word heal as *“to make sound or whole; to restore.”* As *Yahweh Rophe*, God is the One who makes us whole and restores us to Himself. Today’s psalm praises God for His ability to heal and restore us. Read Psalm 103 in its entirety.

After beginning the psalm with a call to praise, David encourages us to remember all God has done for us. Spend a few minutes praising God for the ways He has: pardoned your iniquities, healed your infirmities, redeemed your life, shown you compassion, satisfied your life with good things and renewed your strength (verse 3-5).

Verse 7 reminds us that God made His ways known to Moses and to His people, Israel. Ask God to make His ways known to you. Ask Him to reveal His nature to you. Meditate on verse 8 and focus on God’s character. After you sit quietly for a minute make a list of how God has revealed Himself to you.

In verse 11, David describes God’s lovingkindness as being higher than the heavens. David also says that our *Yahweh Rophe* has removed our transgressions far from us. Thank God for his compassion, lovingkindness and forgiveness. He has removed your transgressions as far as the east is from the west. Thank Him for healing you, making you whole and restoring you to Himself.

Although David acknowledges that our physical bodies are temporary and will one day literally return to dust (verses 14 through 16), he finds consolation in the fact that God's character is everlasting and His righteousness endures forever. How does the eternal nature of God bring you comfort and peace? What does it mean to be eternal?

Read verse 19. "The LORD has established His throne in the heavens, and His sovereignty rules over all." Take a minute to think deeply on what this verse means. Find encouragement in the fact that God's sovereignty rules your life.



SMALL GROUP: DOING LIFE TOGETHER

The first time *Yahweh Rophe* was revealed to the Hebrew people was following their miraculous deliverance at the Red Sea. Just three days after the miracle happened, the people found themselves in need of healing. Specifically, they needed God to show up on their behalf again and this time they needed Him to turn the bitter waters sweet. Describe a time in your life when you needed God to show up and provide spiritual healing for you or someone you love.

After God sweetened the water He made a conditional promise to them regarding their physical health and called Himself their Healer. Based on what you know about the dietary and sanitary laws found in the book of Leviticus, what were these laws designed to do?

In 2 Kings 20 King Hezekiah became mortally ill and prayed for physical healing. God not only restored Hezekiah to health, but He also delivered the nation of Judah from its enemies. However, Hezekiah's physical healing and Judah's deliverance was temporary. King Hezekiah eventually died and Judah was ultimately taken captive by the nation of Babylon. Given the fact that physical healing is always temporary, why do we often put so much emphasis on physical healing?

In what ways have you seen someone experience physical healing? In what circumstances have you seen God choose not to heal physically?

As we learned in our study this week, Jesus spent much of His time

performing miracles and healing people of various diseases. However, we also studied the fact that Jesus saw beyond the physical and desired to heal an individual's heart and soul. Read Matthew 13:13-15 and discuss Jesus' cure for those who are spiritually sick.

Isaiah 53:5 declares that Jesus was pierced for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities, scourged for our healing. Knowing the price Jesus paid for our spiritual healing, what should our response be?

God desires to comfort those who are afflicted and brokenhearted. Read Isaiah 61:1-2 and discuss how Jesus binds up the brokenhearted and comforts those who mourn.

In 1 Peter 2:24, Peter identifies one of the benefits of the cross: because of the cross we have the opportunity to die to sin and self. Share some practical ways we can die to sin and experience healing to the fullest.

“...And by his wounds, we are healed.”

Sources



- Arthur, Kay. *Lord, I Want to Know You*. Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook, 1992, 2000.
- Blue Letter Bible. *The Names of God in the Old Testament*. www.blueletterbible.org, April 2002, July 2004
- Brooks, E.E. *El-ELYON...The Most High God*. www.kingdomlife.com.
- Dolphin, Lambert. *The Names of God*. www.ldolphin.org/Names.html, 2000.
- Humpal, Dave. *Feed My Sheep*. www.hurtingchristian.org, 1997.
- Julien, Sarah. *Coming Home: Adoption in Ephesians and Galatians*. www.quodlibet.net, July 2003.
- Keathley, J. Hampton, III. *The Names of God*. www.bible.org/article/names-god.
- Keller, Phillip. *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1970.
- Lang, Bernhard. *The Bible Study: From Adonai to Yahweh*. www.bibletopics.com/biblestudy/154.htm.
- Lockyer, Herbert. *All the Divine Names and Titles in the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1975.
- MacLeod, David J. *You Shall Call His Name Jesus*.
- Paulk, DiAnna. *I AM That I AM: El Elyon: Adonai: Yahweh; El Roi, El Bethel, El Olam & El Berith*. www.path-light.com, 2002.
- Powers, Donna & Powers, Wayne. *The Italian Job*. USA: May 2003.
- Rich, Tracey R. *Judaism 101: The Name of God*. www.jewfaq.org, 1996-1999.
- Richards, Larry. *Every Name of God in the Bible*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2001.
- Rudd, Steve. *Jesus Echoes the "I AM" statements of Jehovah in the Gospel of John!* www.bible.ca
- Ryrie, Charles Caldwell. *The Ryrie Study Bible New International Version*. Chicago, IL: Moody Bible Press, 1986
- Smith, Malcolm. *The Lost Secret of the New Covenant*. Tulsa, OK: Harrison House, Inc., 2002.
- Spangler, Ann. *Praying the Names of God*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004.
- Stone, Nathan. *Names of God*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1944.
- Towns, Elmer L. *My Father's Names*. Ventura, CA: Regal, 1991.
- Vine, W.E. *Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1873-1949.
- Wiersbe, Warren W., ed. *Classic Sermons on the Names of God*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1993.

Wikipedia. *Inattentional Blindness*. www.en.wikipedia.org/Inattentional_blindness. November, 2010.

Wikipedia. *Jewish Views on Marriage*.

www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewish_views_on_marriage, February 2011.

Wikipedia. *Shalom*, www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shalom, March 2011.

www.jehova.net/jehova1.htm.

Zodhiates, Spiros, ed. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*. USA: AMG International, Inc., 1992, 1993.

Zondervan NASB Exhaustive Concordance. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000.

Notes

