

The Names of God: יהוה

Exodus 3:1-6, 13-15; John 8:51-59

*Little Trinity Church
13 August 2023*

1. Periodically celebrities will give their children very odd names. What is the strangest name you recall hearing? What might that indicate about how our society (or at least certain segments of it) views the significance of a name? And how is that different from Biblical times?
2. Read Exodus 3:1-6, 13-15. What name does God reveal to Moses at the burning bush?
 - a. LORD - Yahweh
3. In verse 14 God explains to Moses the meaning of this name. What is that explanation and how do you understand the explanation?
 - a. "I AM WHAT I AM" or "I AM THAT I AM"
4. In the sermon James suggested that there were three important implications from this name of God. What were those implications?
 - a. "God IS. Not A being but Being. The persistent source from whom all beings come. Not contingent upon or in reference to anyone or anything else."
 - b. The Hebrew verb to be doesn't just refer to mere existence or being in the abstract but rather manifest existence or being. So this name of God doesn't simply mean that God IS, but also that God IS WITH - God is manifest.
 - c. God is FOR his people. God is actively on their side. Not cruel and capricious on the one hand, or distant and disinterested on the other.
5. Read John 8:51-59. What point about Jesus did James say that John was trying to make in his Gospel and in this passage in particular?
 - a. Jesus is this same self-revealing God. Jesus claimed to be the I AM from Exodus 3 and that is why the religious leaders wanted to stone him for blasphemy.
6. Who did Jesus promise to send to his followers after he left (see John 14:16, 17, 26)?
 - a. The Advocate - the Holy Spirit.
7. What are the implications for us, the followers of Jesus in the 21st century? And what is the special distinctive in our relationship with God in this age of the Spirit?

- a. God IS: as the foundation and source of all being, God is unimaginably vast and beyond comprehending, a God whose thoughts are not our thoughts and whose ways are not our own - certainly not a God created in our image - but we are created in His.
 - b. By His Holy Spirit, God IS WITH us. God is not the Deus Absconditus- the absent or clock-maker god - of deistic philosophy. God is manifest among us and dwells among those called by His name.
 - c. God IS FOR us. His Spirit protects, sustains and empowers us. The Spirit intercedes for us with wordless groans. The Spirit causes the fruit to grow and showers us with gifts for service. Oh yes, God IS For us.
 - d. The distinctive for us in the age of the Spirit is that, with an intimacy almost beyond comprehension, the Spirit of God is IN us. Individually, and especially collectively, you and I are God's holy temple.
8. And finally, does this matter to you? If so, how?