

THE GOD OF OUR LIVES

LEADER'S GUIDE

***A STUDY OF THE CHARACTER AND WORKS OF GOD
USING A SELECTION OF HIS HEBREW NAMES***

MARTIN PURYEAR

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THE GOD OF OUR LIVES

LEADER'S GUIDE

Series Objective

The God of Our Lives seeks to help Christians know and love more fully the God in Whom they trust.

YAHWEH (PART 1)

GOD IS SELF-EXISTENT

Our Goal

Today, our goal is for each of us to cultivate the belief that God, as our self-existent Creator, will give to us – and withhold from us – whatever it takes for us to be all that we *can* be and to do all that we *can* do for the sake of His glory.

Something Greater than the Polish of Man

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages 6-7.]

- ? What is the point of this story? *[The Lord uses trials of affliction and weakness to make us less dependent upon ourselves and more dependent on Him. In doing so, we are emptied of confidence in our abilities so that we might be filled with the power of God. Our Creator knows exactly what we need ... and exactly what we do not need ... to be conformed more to the image of Christ Jesus.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there anything in particular that stood out to you in this introduction?

[Give them time to think.]

An Education in the School of Brokenness

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages 7-9.]

It is easy for us to see what Moses gained from the first 40 years of his life: a privileged social status, political influence, a formal education in the best of schools, the best of nutritious food, the best medical care in the world. But it might take a little more thought to comprehend the benefits of his second 40 years of life.

? What do you think Moses *gained* from his time in the wilderness herding sheep?

[He was directly exposed to the God of his forefathers.]

[He learned how to shepherd someone else's flock (and would be called upon to do so again with a much larger flock!)]

[He saw what he could have been if he had not received the privileges of his younger days ... a common shepherd.]

[He was humbled from thinking highly of himself: "Who am I ... that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?" (Exodus 3:11).]

[He became accustomed to living in the wilderness.]

[He learned his way around that area.]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

The Significance of the Name "I AM"

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **9-10**.]

[Have someone read footnote **1**, page **16**.]

We learned that the Name Yahweh highlights the self-existence of God.

- ? What does that mean, that God is "self-existent"? [*God was not created. No one or no thing brought Him into existence. He was not dependent on anyone or anything else outside Himself for His existence. (All creation, however, was dependent upon Him for its existence.)*]

[Summarize their answers.]

Just because our finite minds are unable to fully grasp (and explain) an infinite God does not mean we should somehow feel dissatisfied with our faith. To the contrary, our inability to comprehend His perfections should produce within us a sense of joyful security and reverent fear.

- ? How can our *limited* ability to comprehend the perfections of God *strengthen* us in our faith? [*A believer's faith is strengthened when he realizes that he is relying upon an Object greater than himself rather than someone his equal (or his inferior).*]

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Why LORD? Why Did You Do This to Me?

[Have 3 or 4 read this section: pages **10-14**.]

- ? When God places you in a negative or helpless situation ... one that is going to take more than your own determination to get out of (assuming you can get out of it), why would He do that? Is He not supposed to be making you happy? [*Our weaknesses are a priceless gift, intended to force us to depend upon God to fill sense of helplessness with more of Himself. In doing so, His power will be displayed through us, He will receive the glory, and we will share in that glory throughout eternity.*]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

The Priceless Gift of Weakness

[Have 2 or 3 read this section: pages 14-16.]

God is our Creator. And as Creator, He has the *right* to "sculpture" our lives as He sees fit: to give to us ... to withhold from us ... and to remove from us ... what He deems best for both His Name and our wellbeing. *Our* responsibility, as creatures, is to submit in faith to His good – but sometimes difficult-to-understand – will.

[Have someone read 2nd Corinthians 12:7-10.]

BECAUSE OF THE SURPASSING GREATNESS OF THE REVELATIONS, FOR THIS REASON, TO KEEP ME FROM EXALTING MYSELF, THERE WAS GIVEN ME A THORN IN THE FLESH, A MESSENGER OF SATAN TO TORMENT ME – TO KEEP ME FROM EXALTING MYSELF! CONCERNING THIS I IMploRED THE LORD THREE TIMES THAT IT MIGHT LEAVE ME. AND HE HAS SAID TO ME, "MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR YOU, FOR POWER IS PERFECTED IN WEAKNESS." MOST GLADLY, THEREFORE, I WILL RATHER BOAST ABOUT MY WEAKNESSES, SO THAT THE POWER OF CHRIST MAY DWELL IN ME. THEREFORE, I AM WELL CONTENT WITH WEAKNESSES, WITH INSULTS, WITH DISTRESSES, WITH PERSECUTIONS, WITH DIFFICULTIES, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE; FOR WHEN I AM WEAK, THEN I AM STRONG. (2ND CORINTHIANS 12:7-10)

In your reading you were asked, "Do you ever feel that God has slighted you ... that He did not give you a strength He seems to have given everyone else (or perhaps took from you a strength you once had)?"

Then you read, "That is by Divine design. Yahweh knows exactly what to give us to be all that we can be for His glory ... and He knows exactly what to *withhold* from us to be *all* that we can be for *His* glory."

Some things, however, are easy to read ... and easy to agree with in principle ... but hard to accept when it comes to your own life.

? Has there ever been a time when you had trouble accepting what God was doing in your life – or in the life of someone else you cared about – because it did not make any sense? If so, what *did* you do (or what *should* you have done ... or

what *are* you doing) to set unbelief aside and submit to His purposes? *[Spend time in fellowship with the Lord through His Word and prayer. Spend time with fellow believers who are well-grounded in Christ (having spent time in His Word and prayer and having applied God's Word to their lives over time. Read / quote God's promises. Verbally say to Him, "I trust You. Please strengthen me in my faith."]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

APPENDIX A

Israel's Use of the Name Yahweh

[Have someone read this section: page **131**.]

The reason the Jews stopped pronouncing the Name "Yahweh" is because of an overreaction to their fear of blasphemy. This, however, may be the lesser of two evils. It is also possible to be *too casual* in our use of God's Name.

? In what ways is the Christian community sometimes *careless* in our use of God's Name?

*[Any reference to God using **common** terms ("The Man upstairs," "My Rad Dad in the sky") lessens the reverence and respect He is due.]*

[The phrase "My God!" lowers the use of a Name into something much less than an expression of worship.]

[We should not use God's Name to further our own interests (e.g., using the occasion of a worship service – the purpose of which is to exalt the Name of God – to pass out our business cards or using His Name to gain votes during a political election).]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Summary

Today, we have considered the Name Yahweh. We have seen

- 1) the Name Yahweh is associated with His attribute of self-existence.
- 2) self-existence means that God was not created. No one or no thing brought Him into existence. He was not dependent on anyone or anything else outside Himself for His being.
- 3) being self-existent, God has the ability to bring everything else into existence. And because He "stitched us together," He knows everything we need – and everything we do not need – to be all that we can be for the sake of our own wellbeing and for the glory of His Name.
- 4) sometime after the completion of the Old Testament, the Jews – out of fear of committing blasphemy – stopped pronouncing this Name Yahweh. Instead, they used the Names Elohim or Adonai. Later, the vowels from Adonai (a o a) were added to the consonants from Yahweh (Y H W H), resulting in the spelling Yahowah. Hence, some English translations use the Name Jehovah for the Name Yahweh.

YAHWEH (PART 2)**GOD IS FAITHFUL****Review**

Last week we considered the Name Yahweh. We learned that

- 1) the Name Yahweh is associated with His attribute of self-existence.
- 2) self-existence means that God was not created. No one or no thing brought Him into existence. He was not dependent on anyone or anything else outside Himself for His being.
- 3) being self-existent, God has the ability to bring everything else into existence. And because He "stitched us together," He knows everything we need – and everything we do not need – to be all that we can be for the sake of our own wellbeing and for the glory of His Name.
- 4) sometime after the completion of the Old Testament, the Jews – out of fear of committing blasphemy – stopped pronouncing this Name Yahweh. Instead, they used the Names Elohim or Adonai. Later, the vowels from Adonai (a o a) were added to the consonants from Yahweh (Y H W H), resulting in the spelling Yahowah. Hence, some English translations use the Name Jehovah for the Name Yahweh.

Our Goal

Today, our goal is for each of us to cultivate the belief that God does what He says He will do. He keeps His promises.

"Catch Me Pa"

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **17-18**.]

Throughout our lives many people promise to do many things for us: "I will call you back at 10:00." "I will have your car fixed by closing time." "I will stay married to you 'till death do us part.'" But with most of these people, the best we can do is *hope* that they will be true to their word.

Opie, however, had more than mere hope that his father would catch him. He *knew* that he would. With full assurance, this son trusted his father to keep his promises.

- ? What do you think it took for Andy to gain his son's full confidence? *[Over time, this father kept each of his promises to catch his son. With consistency, this father was true to his word. Andy proved to be a trustworthy father.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there anything in particular that stood out to you in this introduction?

[Give them time to think.]

God's Covenant-Promises to Israel

Before one can prove his faithfulness, he must first promise to do something.

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **18-19**.]

Genesis 15 describes the covenant-relationship the LORD initiated with Abram. The covenant they "cut" is known as the Abrahamic Covenant.

- ? According to this section, what promises did the LORD make to Abram? *[He promised to give Abram: (1) a vast land mass with defined geographical (earthly) borders, (2) innumerable physical descendants and (3) abundant material and spiritual blessings]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Israel's Responsibilities / Israel's Failures

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **19-21**.]

[Have someone read footnote **3**, page **26**.]

- ? We noted listed several sins committed by Israel in their early history as a nation. What do you think is the worst sin ever committed by Israel? *[Their cry for the Messiah to be crucified.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Some Things Just Never Change

The Faithfulness of God

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **21-22**.]

- ? We identified Israel's worst sin throughout their history as a nation was to demand the crucifixion of the Messiah. In view of this crime, is the Abrahamic Covenant still in effect? If so, why? If not, why not? *[Yes, it is still in effect, not because national Israel has been faithful but because Yahweh is ever faithful to His promises to Abram and his descendants.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? If the conduct of national Israel neither maintains nor cancels the Abrahamic Covenant, what difference does it make how they live? *[Their obedience to the laws of God would allow them to **experience** the blessings of the covenant. Their disobedience would prevent them from doing so.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Why the LORD Remains Faithful to His Disobedient People

This section answers one of the most important questions God's people can ask: Why would the LORD remain so faithful to a disobedient people? The answer applies to both racial Israel and the New Testament Church. First, let us consider Israel.

[Have someone read this section: pages **22-23**.]

One reason Yahweh is faithful to His covenant-people has to do with what Abram was doing when God established His covenant with him.

? What is the significance of Abram being asleep during this ceremony? *[The Abrahamic Covenant is a one-sided covenant. Therefore, the continuation of this covenant does not depend on the faithfulness of Israel. It depends on the faithfulness of God. The LORD alone keeps the terms of this covenant intact. And as we have seen, Yahweh keeps His promises.]*

A second reason Yahweh is faithful to His covenant-people is for the sake of His Own Name. He does not want the world to believe He is unable to keep His promises to Israel.

The New Testament Church often fails to obey the commands God has given to us. Yet our salvation remains intact, not because we deserve to "stay saved" but because God is protecting His Name.

? Can you think of a promise(s) Yahweh has given to His Church – regarding the *security of our salvation*? *[John 10:28-29; Ephesians 1:13, Ephesians 4:30]*

? So, why has God remained faithful to keep *His Church* saved even though we, too, continue to sin against Him?

[What is true regarding Israel's covenant with God is also true regarding a New Testament believer's salvation ... both are permanent because both depend, not on the merits of man but, on the merits of God and God alone. The true and living Church is "sealed" in the resurrected Christ (Ephesians 1:13). As long as the Son of God remains faithful to the Father (and He always will), the New Testament believer remains eternally secure in his salvation.]

[Have someone read Ephesians 1:3.]

BLESSED BE THE GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHO HAS BLESSED US WITH EVERY SPIRITUAL BLESSING IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES IN CHRIST. (EPHESIANS 1:3)

*[If we obey God's New Testament commands, we will **experience** the goodness of every spiritual blessing we have in Christ. If we disobey these commands, we will not experience the blessings we have in Christ.]*

[But we will not lose our salvation. It remains intact because it depends – not on the works of man but – on the faithfulness of the Son of God, in Whom the believer is sealed.]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Yahweh, the Personal Name of God

[Have someone read this section: page **23**.]

[Have someone read footnote **4**, page **26**.]

The Name Yahweh is the personal Name of God. It is a Name that emphasizes His faithfulness to His people. He is a God that keeps His promises.

? What are some ways your heavenly Father kept His promises to you in the past?

[Summarize their answers.]

? Can you think of *one promise* that Yahweh made to you ... but failed to keep, and time has run out? (The question is not, "Can you think of one *desire* you had that God did not grant?")

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

New Testament Promises

[Have someone read this section: pages **23-24**.]

When Israel failed to conduct herself as a nation in a covenant-relationship with God, her disobedience did not cancel her covenant with Him. But she *did* forfeit many opportunities to *experience the blessings* of that covenant.

? As a member of the New Testament Church, what steps can *you* take to ensure that you *experience* the spiritual blessings you have in Christ? *[Study the Scriptures that we might know what the will of God is / trust God (through prayer) to motivate and empower us to obey His will / look for practical ways to put God's Word into practice]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

The Promise of an Eternal Rescue

[Have someone read this section: pages **24-25**.]

[Have someone read Romans 5:8.]

BUT GOD DEMONSTRATES HIS OWN LOVE TOWARD US, IN THAT WHILE WE WERE YET SINNERS, CHRIST DIED FOR US. (ROMANS 5:8)

[Have someone read John 3:16.]

FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, THAT WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM SHALL NOT PERISH, BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE. (JOHN 3:16)

- ? When the Father sacrificed His Son, what do you think that was like for Him to do so? What do you think He went through? *[The agony of being separated from His Son while He hung on the Cross. The agony of watching His beloved Son die, especially for crimes that He did not commit.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

This verse tells us how we should respond to what God did. It tells us we should "believe in His only begotten Son." That is, we should believe something about Christ.

- ? What exactly are we to believe about His Son? *[We are to believe more than His existence. And we are to believe more than His death happened. We are to believe why we needed Him to die (because our sins make us worthy of death and that His Death was in place of our own ... that He died so we would not have to die for our own sins). Unless a person is burdened over the eternal consequences of his sins and cries out to God for mercy ... he cannot be saved.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

John 3:16 also reveals two promises we can claim if we do trust in Christ for salvation.

- ? What two promises from this verse can we trust Yahweh to keep if we believe in Christ for salvation? *[We will be rescued from eternal death. We will be given eternal life.]*

If you have not yet trusted in Christ as the One Who died in your place for your sins, I hope you will feel free to seek me out, that we might talk about this important decision.

The Promise of Boundless Forgiveness

[Have someone read this section: page 25.]

[Have someone read Revelation 1:4-5.]

JOHN TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES THAT ARE IN ASIA: GRACE TO YOU AND PEACE, FROM HIM WHO IS AND WHO WAS AND WHO IS TO COME, AND FROM THE SEVEN SPIRITS WHO ARE BEFORE HIS THRONE, AND FROM JESUS CHRIST, THE FAITHFUL WITNESS, THE FIRSTBORN OF THE DEAD, AND THE RULER OF THE KINGS OF THE EARTH. TO HIM WHO LOVES US AND RELEASED US FROM OUR SINS BY HIS BLOOD. (REVELATION 1:4-5)

[Have someone read Hebrews 10:16-17.]

"THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THEM AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS UPON THEIR HEART, AND ON THEIR MIND, I WILL WRITE THEM." HE THEN SAYS, "AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE." (HEBREWS 10:16-17)

It may be that a *new* believer has not had the time or the teaching to learn that all his sins have been washed away ... and that God remembers them no more.

? But when an older believer continues to struggle with the guilt of his past sins, what may be the problem? *[He does not have a copy of the Scriptures to inform him of his deliverance from the penalty and guilt of his sins (ignorance). He knows what the Bible says about Christ's forgiveness of his sins, but he does not allow this truth to free him of this bondage. Or he refuses to believe it (unbelief).]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

The Promise of Divine Wisdom

[Have someone read this section: pages **25-26**.]

Let us compare what often happens when we try to solve a distressing situation *without* consulting the LORD, with the times we take our trials to Him in prayer.

? What are the usual results of trying to deal with a problem *apart from prayer* compared to the results *with prayer*? *[a spirit of defeat, an attitude of frustration, a sense of wasted time, a less-than-satisfactory change in*

circumstances (if any), a less-than-Christ-like attitude / character throughout the trial.]

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? If these are the usual results of facing a trial *without* prayer, why then, do you think we are sometimes willing to do so? *[Perhaps we go through most of our days' tasks without committing them to God in prayer (e.g., driving to work). In doing so we cultivate / maintain a self-sufficient attitude. When a problem arises, we address it with the same mindset we face our daily tasks: "I can handle this." We would do well to cultivate a spirit of dependence on God, even in the most mundane of tasks: "I need You to help me through **all** of today."]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

The Promise of a Glorious Home

[Have someone read this section: page 26.]

We have considered only a few of God's many promises He has given to the New Testament Church.

- ? What are some ways you can continually remind yourself (or a fellow believer) of the promises of God, especially when facing a difficult circumstance? *[Create a list of the Bible's promises that address the specific situation you face, regularly meditate upon this list of promises, regularly pray through these promises, ask someone to pray with you through each of these promises, listen to certain Bible-centered songs that address the situation]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Application: New Testament Promises

We may think we can, but none of us are able to "make it on our own." The fact is, we are a needy people (by divine design). God has tailored man to be dependent upon Him for all things.

? Would someone be willing to share with this group your need for God's help in some matter (for example, "employment" or "a restored relationship," etc.)

[To the group]

? Now, can you think of a promise Christ has given to His New Testament Church that addresses the need that was just mentioned?

[Have someone read each promise.]

APPENDIX B

Jesus' Use of the Name Yahweh

[Have someone read this section: page 132.]

It was stated that Jesus claimed to be the "I AM" of Exodus 3. That is, He claimed to be God.

? Why should the deity of Jesus Christ be important to us? [*Our sins could not be washed away by tainted blood*]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Summary

Today, we have considered a second attribute associated with the Name Yahweh. We have seen that

- 1) the Name Yahweh is associated with His covenant-relationship with Israel and highlights His faithfulness toward His people.
- 2) the LORD and Abram entered into a covenant-relationship.
- 3) the promises the LORD made to Abram were (a) a vast land mass with defined geographical (earthly) borders, (b) innumerable descendants, and (c) abundant material and spiritual blessings ... land, seed, and blessing.
- 4) Israel was expected to obey certain commands to *experience* the blessings of this covenant ... but they continually failed to do so.
- 5) despite Israel's unfaithfulness to the LORD, He has remained faithful to the promises He made to His covenant-people.
- 6) one reason the LORD has been faithful to keep His promises to Abram and his descendants is because it is a one-party agreement, the LORD being the only Participant Who must be faithful to its terms for it to remain intact.
- 7) a second reason the LORD has been faithful to keep His promises to Abram and his descendants is for the sake of protecting His Name from being maligned by the nations.
- 8) in John 8 Jesus Christ claimed the Name Yahweh for Himself, providing us with one of the clearest passages in the Bible of Jesus' claim to be God.

YAHWEH MEQADDISHKEM**GOD IS HOLY****Review**

Last week, we considered a second attribute associated with the Name Yahweh. We learned that

- 1) the Name Yahweh is associated with His covenant-relationship with Israel and highlights His faithfulness toward His people.
- 2) the LORD and Abram entered into a covenant-relationship.
- 3) the promises the LORD made to Abram were (a) a vast land mass with defined geographical (earthly) borders, (b) innumerable descendants, and (c) abundant material and spiritual blessings ... land, seed, and blessing.
- 4) Israel was expected to obey certain commands to *experience* the blessings of this covenant ... but they continually failed to do so.
- 5) despite Israel's unfaithfulness to the LORD, He has remained faithful to the promises He made to His covenant-people.
- 6) one reason the LORD has been faithful to keep His promises to Abram and his descendants is because it is a one-party agreement, the LORD being the only Participant Who must be faithful to its terms for it to remain intact.
- 7) a second reason the LORD has been faithful to keep His promises to Abram and his descendants is for the sake of protecting His Name from being maligned by the nations.
- 8) in John 8 Jesus Christ claimed the Name Yahweh for Himself, providing us with one of the clearest passages in the Bible of Jesus' claim to be God.

Our Goals

Today, our goals are for each of us

- 1) to understand the primary reason the Lord wants His people to be sanctified.
- 2) to gain perspective on *how* the Lord sanctifies His people.

The Day I Made Three Mistakes

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages 27-28.]

Several persons will benefit when the life of a believer becomes more like the life of Christ.

- ? Who stands to benefit from a spiritually maturing life ... and how? [*The Lord God Himself will be honored as His children reflect His character more consistently. Through a moral lifestyle, believers will enjoy a more wholesome life on earth. Furthermore, God's children will receive rewards that will last throughout eternity. The local church will be strengthened through each believer's spiritual maturity. This lost world will benefit by observing a clearer and more accurate picture of Christ through the individual believer and the local church*]

[Summarize their answers.]

God's Greatest Hatred: Idolatry

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages 28-29.]

- ? How would you define "idolatry"? [*wrongly bestowing one's devotion, praise, worship, and gratitude (that only God is worthy to receive) upon another person or thing*]

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Why do you think idolatry is so offensive to God? [*To give someone / something else one's devotion that is due God (and God alone) is to rob Him of what is His. It is to steal from Him. To exalt someone / something over Him is to lower His worth. It is to say to Him,*

"You, O God, are much less worthy than You claim to be. My devotion, therefore, will be given to something more valuable than You."]

[Summarize their answers.]

We should all ask ourselves: Do I have an idol, something I am devoted to even more than God?

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

God's Highest Priority: His Reputation

Holy

[Have someone read these two sections: page 30.]

We know that God wants to protect His reputation.

? What does He stand to lose from the world if His reputation is tarnished? *[He stands to lose the creature's willingness to **submit** to His authority (because of their loss of respect for Him). He stands to lose their desire to **worship** Him (because of their loss of awe toward His character). He stands to lose man's willingness to **trust** Him with their lives. The credibility of His Word is lost.]*

[Summarize each answer as it is given. With each one, ask *why* he would lose what he mentioned.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Sanctified

[Have someone read this section: pages 30-31.]

We have seen that God is serious about protecting His Name. To do so, He sanctifies His people.

? This is not true 100% of the time, but in general, what does a child's character reveal about his father? *[The character of a child declares the effectiveness of his father's influence (His authority and wisdom) over his life.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? What should motivate God's people to protect their Father's reputation?
[Because of our love for the One Who has done so much for us, we should want His Name to be highly honored.]

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

The Sanctification of Israel

By Separation from Idolatry

[Have someone read this section: page 31.]

One means Yahweh Meqaddishkem used to sanctify Israel was by separating them from the idolatrous people-groups surrounding them. To do so, He commanded them to execute all of them – men, women, and children – when they entered their promised land.

- ? Why not just command Israel to not associate with them? Why so drastic an action as total annihilation? *[Human nature is strongly inclined toward evil. Yahweh knew the temptation to follow the Canaanites in their immoralities would be too great to resist.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

By Revelation

[Have someone read this section: pages **31-32**.]

Another means Yahweh Meqaddishkem used to sanctify His people was by providing them with a written body of moral, ethical legislation, the Mosaic Law.

- ? How does that work? How does a written body of legislation help to sanctify His people? *[It is not enough to prevent a destructive life from having a negative influence on another (by separation). Wholesome counsel is needed to provide one with a constructive model to follow.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

The Sanctification of the New Testament Church

By Trials

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **32-33**.]

It was stated that Yahweh Meqaddishkem uses suffering in the lives of His people to sanctify them.

- ? Why is a trial sometimes the *only way* a life can be sanctified? *[Sometimes, the only way to "temper" His children is to place them in adverse situations in which He is the only Help possible. Sanctification will then take place as they cling to Him through persevering trust and obedience. For God to be a true reality in their lives sometimes requires the pain of the Refiner's fire. It does not feel very good, but the result is priceless.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

By the Word of God

[Have someone read this section: pages **33-34**.]

There is real benefit in *supplementing* one's time in God's Word with the Biblical insights of godly authors. But it was also stated, "books about the Bible ... are detrimental as a *replacement* (of the Bible). If we have time to read only one book, then let it be the Bible."

? Why should the Christ-follower never *replace* the Bible with books about the Bible? *[Although extra-biblical materials might be inspiring, they are not inspired. Unlike the Scriptures, they are not completely trustworthy (infallible). One must read even the most reliable of Christian authors with a discerning eye. Only the Bible is "God-breathed," providing all the Truth one needs to be conformed to the image of Christ and, thus, prepared for eternity.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

By Separation from Worldliness

[Have 2 or 3 read this section: pages **34-37**.]

[Have someone read footnote **5**, page **37**.]

We have seen one purpose for separating ourselves from a professing believer who refuses to repent of the sin he is practicing: to shame him unto repentance and restoration. But this separation is also beneficial for the believer himself. We have been told that “Bad company corrupts good morals.”

- ? Why is it not the other way around ... that “good company will improve bad morals”? [*Our human nature is not inclined toward righteousness. It is inclined toward sinful behavior. It is easier to swim with the current rather than against the current; and the current of man's nature is evil, not good.*]

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?”

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Called to Be Conformed to the Image of Christ

[Have someone read this section: page **37**.]

- ? The New Testament writings describe God's children as “saints.” To be a saint is to be “a holy one.” If a child of God is already holy, in what sense are we being *made* holy (sanctified)? Why do we need to be made into something we already are? [*Because the believer is “in Christ,” God views us **right now** in the same way He views His Son. Holy. We are holy in **position**. Our **experience**, however, is a different matter. As we mature, we are becoming – in our daily experience – what we already are in our position. Completely holy.*]

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?”

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Summary

Today, we have considered the Name Yahweh Meqaddishkem. We have seen that

- 1) God hates idolatry. To give someone / something else one's devotion that is due God and God alone is to rob Him of what is His. To exalt anything over Him is to lower His worth.
- 2) God is, therefore, serious about protecting His holy reputation.
- 3) When we say that God is "holy," we mean that God is set apart from all that is common and impure.
- 4) Because God is holy, He wants those who represent Him – His people – to be holy.
- 5) To be made holy is to be "sanctified."
- 6) God sanctifies His people by separating them from what is impure, by providing them with a written revelation of what He expects from them morally and ethically, and by tempering their faith and obedience through trials.

YAHWEH NISSI

GOD IS TRUTH

Review

Last week, we considered the Name Yahweh Meqaddishkem. We learned that

- 1) God hates idolatry. To give someone / something else one's devotion that is due God and God alone is to rob Him of what is His. To exalt anything over Him is to lower His worth.
- 2) God is, therefore, serious about protecting His holy reputation.
- 3) When we say that God is "holy," we mean that God is set apart from all that is common and impure.
- 4) Because God is holy, He wants those who represent Him – His people – to be holy.
- 5) To be made holy is to be "sanctified."
- 6) God sanctifies His people by separating them from what is impure, by providing them with a written revelation of what He expects from them morally and ethically, and by tempering their faith and obedience through trials.

Our Goal

Today, our goal is for each of us to cultivate the belief that God is Truth and is, therefore, able to provide us with what we need to overcome our three spiritual enemies: the world, the flesh, and the devil.

A Most Formidable Foe

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **38-39**.]

? Was there anything in particular that stood out to you in this introduction?

[Give them time to think.]

Israel's Banner in War

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **39-40**.]

This latter section concluded with the statement, "We should take note that the context in which this Name is found is that of *battle*."

? Why would the New Testament Church need to know about a Name for God that is associated with battle? [*The Christian life involves spiritual warfare*]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

The Significance of the Name Yahweh Nissi

[Have someone read this section: page **40**.]

? According to this section, what is the significance of this Hebrew Name, Yahweh Nissi? [*Yahweh Nissi will provide whatever His people need to overcome their enemies.*]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

What was true for Old Testament Israel is true for today's New Testament Church: Yahweh Nissi is the One Who will provide whatever His people need to overcome their enemies. But just who are the enemies of the New Testament believer?

To Have *This* Friend Is to Have These Enemies

[Have 3 or 4 read this section: pages **41-44**.]

We learned from our reading that all three of our spiritual adversaries – the world, the flesh, and the devil – were defeated at the Cross. Yet, all three are still attacking the believer.

- ? What exactly was *taken away* from them at the Cross; and what do they *still possess* that makes it possible for them to attack us? [*Their authority and power over the believer were destroyed. Each one's will to fight, however, remains intact.*]

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

The Banner of God Is Truth

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **44-45**.]

[Have someone read footnote **8**, page **47**.]

- ? Can you think of any values that have changed in your own life since you have been a student of God's Word?

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Stationed on the Front Lines

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages 45-46.]

Yahweh Nissi is “the One Who would provide the resources His people need to overcome their enemies.” The believers’ enemies were listed, followed by a discussion on what God has given us to experience victory over them. But nothing was said about the *purpose* of having an enemy.

? Why do you think God left these three enemies here to harass us? What benefit do they provide to God and His people? *[Suffering has a sanctifying effect upon a believer's life. Furthermore, it causes the believer to depend upon more fully (cling to) His Savior.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

[Have someone read Romans 5:3-5.]

AND NOT ONLY THIS, BUT WE ALSO EXULT IN OUR TRIBULATIONS, KNOWING THAT TRIBULATION BRINGS ABOUT PERSEVERANCE; AND PERSEVERANCE, PROVEN CHARACTER; AND PROVEN CHARACTER, HOPE; AND HOPE DOES NOT DISAPPOINT, BECAUSE THE LOVE OF GOD HAS BEEN Poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. (ROMANS 5:3-5)

[Have someone read James 1:2-4.]

CONSIDER IT ALL JOY, MY BRETHREN, WHEN YOU ENCOUNTER VARIOUS TRIALS, KNOWING THAT THE TESTING OF YOUR FAITH PRODUCES ENDURANCE. AND LET ENDURANCE HAVE ITS PERFECT RESULT, SO THAT YOU MAY BE PERFECT AND COMPLETE, LACKING IN NOTHING. (JAMES 1:2-4)

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?”

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

The Battle Plan of Righteousness

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages 46-47.]

Using Lucy as our example, a "Battle Plan of Righteousness" was presented in your reading.

? Who stands to benefit as Lucy takes this action ... and how?

[Lucy will be strengthened in her faith as she watches the Lord change her attitude and conduct around her cousin.]

*[As Lucy becomes more like Christ Jesus, **her local church** will be strengthened in righteousness and power, increasing the credibility of their testimony in the community.]*

[Her cousin will likely notice the change in Lucy's life, which may draw him (as an unbeliever) into the faith or encourage him (as a believer) to obey the Scriptures.]

*[Her transformation will attract the attention of **others in her circle** who used to listen to her complaints.]*

[God's reputation will be exalted as His power to change lives is observed.]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

APPENDIX C

The Source of All Truth: the Individual or the Lord?

The World's View: The *Individual* Is the Source of All Truth

[Have someone read these two sections: pages **133-134**.]

An individual is not the source of Truth, nor can he be.

? Why not? What is it about the creature that makes him an untrustworthy source of truth?

[Only the Creator can "perceive" what benefits the soul of mankind and what does not (e.g., forgiveness rather than revenge)]

[Only the Creator knows what the future holds for mankind versus what man hopes the future holds (judgment by God rather than oblivion), et. al.]

[The individual, especially in his fallen state, does not have all the facts. It takes an omniscient Creator to distinguish between reality and wishful thinking.]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

The Biblical View: The LORD Is the Source of All Truth

[Have someone read this section: page **134**.]

Jesus Christ said, "*I AM THE WAY, AND THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE; NO ONE COMES TO THE FATHER BUT THROUGH ME*" (JOHN 14:6). Notice that He did not say that what He teaches is Truth (although it is). He said that *He Himself* is the Truth.

It was stated in your reading, "When it comes to Truth, God Himself is the Standard. And since God's character does not change, Truth does not change."

? How is that beneficial to you, that Truth does not change?

[We do not have to adapt our lives to an ever-changing reality. We can count on each of God's moral laws to always be wholesome and good for us.]

[We are able to pray according to the will of God with confidence, knowing that what was true of His will yesterday is still true today.]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Summary

Today, we have considered the Name Yahweh Nissi. We have seen that

- 1) believers have three formidable adversaries: the world (an evil value system), the flesh (an evil inner craving), and the devil (an evil angel).
- 2) the *authority* of all three of these enemies has been crushed by Jesus Christ at the Cross. Nevertheless, they still have the *will and ability* to attack the believer.
- 3) to experience the victory that we have over our enemies, we must counterattack their lies with Truth.
- 4) the integrity of a person's character will determine the integrity of his words. Since God is Truth, then His Word is Truth. We can trust God's Word to not lead us astray.
- 5) to experience the victory that we have over our enemies, we must, therefore, understand and apply God's Word to our lives.
- 6) there are two opposing views as to the source of Truth. The world views the individual as the source of all truth. Something is true if he thinks it is true. This makes Truth relative and can only lead to chaos and ruin.
- 7) the Bible declares that God is the Source of all Truth. Truth is reality as God perceives it. So, truth begins, and ends, with God. This makes Truth absolute and will lead to order and life.

YAHWEH YIREH**GOD IS A GRACIOUS PROVIDER****Review**

Last week, we considered the Name Yahweh Nissi. We learned that

- 1) believers have three formidable adversaries: the world (an evil value system), the flesh (an evil inner craving), and the devil (an evil angel).
- 2) the *authority* of all three of these enemies has been crushed by Jesus Christ at the Cross. Nevertheless, they still have the *will and ability* to attack the believer.
- 3) to experience the victory that we have over our enemies, we must counterattack their lies with Truth.
- 4) the integrity of a person's character will determine the integrity of his words. Since God is Truth, then His Word is Truth. We can trust God's Word to not lead us astray.
- 5) to experience the victory that we have over our enemies, we must, therefore, understand and apply God's Word to our lives.
- 6) there are two opposing views as to the source of Truth. The world views the individual as the source of all truth. Something is true if he thinks it is true. This makes Truth relative and can only lead to chaos and ruin.
- 7) the Bible declares that God is the Source of all Truth. Truth is reality as God perceives it. So, truth begins, and ends, with God. This makes Truth absolute and will lead to order and life.

Our Goals

Today, our goals are for each of us

- 1) to become Christ-centered (rather than remaining self-centered) in our lives.
- 2) to be assured that, as Christ-centered worshippers, our heavenly Father will meet our needs.

A Passion for Shrimp

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **48-49**.]

The conclusion of this section stated: "The object of our devotion will determine the course of our choices (whether wise or foolish)."

? Would someone put that principle in your own words?

[Summarize their answers.]

? Would someone be willing to give an example of that principle from your own life?

? Was there anything in particular that stood out to you in this introduction?

[Give them time to think.]

Here, Abraham, Is Your Promised Son. Now ... Give Him Back to Me.

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **49-50**.]

God will sometimes test His people (James 1:2-4). Often these tests catch us off guard; and when they come, we usually experience some kind of loss. It will be a painful loss because more times than not, it involves someone / something "near and dear to us." (What we lose will never be something we do not care about.)

The question is, "How will we respond when God takes something away from us?" Will we respond in trust, displayed by obedient devotion? Or will we respond in unbelief, displayed by bitterness and anger?

? What do you think Abraham went through – mentally, emotionally, psychologically – when God commanded him to hand over his son? [*confusion, shock, groping for the reason ... or perhaps Abraham was calmly confident in God without needing a reason*]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

The Significance of the Name Yahweh Yireh

In What Context Is This Promise Made?

[Have someone read these two sections: pages **50-51**.]

[Have someone read footnote **10**, page **57**.]

In this section it was stated that the Name Yahweh Yireh, our God is a faithful Provider, was used in the context of worship.

? Why would we hope to find worship in the same context as a trial? *[To worship God, while being confronted with the painful agony of loss, is to be totally devoted to God. To give over to Him our greatest earthly possession is the highest form of worship. It is to say, "You are more important to me than this person or thing."]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

To What Kind of Person Will Provision Be Made?

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **51-52**.]

We have seen that the character of the worshipper was one of total devotion.

? Have you ever met anyone with Abraham-like devotion to God? If so, what was it about him that made you think he had this depth of passion for God?

? What do you think it took for him to get that way?

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

What Will God Provide?

[Have someone read this section: pages **52-53**.]

We saw from this section that God promises to meet the needs of those devoted to Him.

- ? How would you define (or describe) a "need"?

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

I would like to ask you to remember our answers to this question, "What is a 'need'" because we are going to come back to this discussion a little later in this study.

The Cost of Devotion

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **53-55**.]

Abraham used the Name Yahweh Yireh to designate a place of sacrifice. Sacrifice is an "ingredient" of worship.

- ? When one directs his time, money, or energy away from that which would benefit himself and places that resource on that which honors the Lord Jesus Christ, what, in effect, is he saying? *[You, O God, are more important to me than that which I am sacrificing.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

I Like to Fish. But I Love My Wife.

[Have someone read this section: page **55**.]

- ? What must one do to make Jesus Christ the all-consuming passion of his life? *[Spend extended time in the Word. Ask the Father to help him contemplate what his life – its past, present and future – would be like if it were not for Christ (all that Christ has accomplished for him). Spend time with those whose hearts are given to Christ.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

The Promise

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **56-57**.]

Many of us, perhaps all of us, have goals: to arrive at a certain body weight or to start an exercise program ... to save for our children's future education ... to be promoted at work, etc. These are all measurable achievements.

- ? Concerning our spiritual lives, most surely, we all want to be more devoted to God. But what does that look like ... to become more devoted to God? How do you know if you are doing that or not?

[Summarize their answers.]

Within the Name Yahweh Yireh is a promise to meet the needs of those who are devoted to Him. And we attempted to answer the question, "What is a 'need'?" Let us consider how *God* would answer that question ... *for us*.

- ? If God has promised to supply all the needs of His servants whose lives are fully devoted to Him, whose hearts are gripped by Him, whose passion for Him is the purpose for their existence, why is it that some of these faithful saints are severely treated or languish in prison or put to death (because they are Christians) instead of being rescued. Isn't their *need* for deliverance being withheld from them?

[The promise is that God would provide whatever the worshipper needs to fulfill His will. Often, suffering for Christ's sake – even to the point of martyrdom – is a part of God's will for the believer. And it is, of course, always according to His wisdom.]

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

[Have someone read 1st Peter 3:17.]

FOR IT IS BETTER, IF GOD SHOULD WILL IT SO, THAT YOU SUFFER FOR DOING WHAT IS RIGHT RATHER THAN FOR DOING WHAT IS WRONG. (1ST PETER 3:17)

[One of the greatest gifts God can give His children is to prepare them to share in the glory of Christ throughout eternity. This requires us to be purified. As Christ

accepted suffering as God's will for His life, we too are to have the same view toward suffering. The result of doing so is that, as we live by faith in God's sovereign care, the power of sin in our lives will be broken.]

[Have someone read 1st Peter 4:1-2]

THEREFORE, SINCE CHRIST HAS SUFFERED IN THE FLESH, ARM YOURSELVES ALSO WITH THE SAME PURPOSE, BECAUSE HE WHO HAS SUFFERED IN THE FLESH HAS CEASED FROM SIN, SO AS TO LIVE THE REST OF THE TIME IN THE FLESH NO LONGER FOR THE LUSTS OF MEN, BUT FOR THE WILL OF GOD. (1ST PETER 4:1-2)

Summary

Today, we have considered the Name Yahweh Yireh. We have seen that

- 1) the Name Yahweh Yireh highlights God's gracious provision of our needs.
- 2) worship is the context associated with this provision.
- 3) total devotion is the character of the worshipper.
- 4) and whatever the worshipper needs to fulfill the will of God is the content of the promise.

It is only through Christ Jesus that we can have what we thought our other devotions, our other loves, our other addictions would give us. If we make Him first in our lives, He has promised to supply all our needs – including our need for peace, security, contentment, and purpose – according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

YAHWEH SABAOTH**GOD IS A WATCHFUL DEFENDER****Review**

Last week, we considered the Name Yahweh Yireh. We learned that

- 1) the Name Yahweh Yireh highlights God's gracious provision of our needs.
- 2) worship is the context associated with this provision.
- 3) total devotion is the character of the worshipper.
- 4) and whatever the worshipper needs to fulfill the will of God is the content of the promise.

Our Goal

Today, our goal is for each of us to be confident in the Lord's defense and watch care of His people through His use of a massive army of spirit-beings (angels).

Angels are God's unseen agents. He sends them to protect and minister to His people. Somehow, they have the ability to influence men, using their actions to promote the will of God.

Hello. I'm Pleased We Can Finally Speak. I Was Your Guardian Angel.

[Have 2 or 3 read Psalm 91:1-14 and this section: pages **58-60**.]

- ? I thought *the Lord* was my Shield and Defender. Now I am being told that *angels* will guard me. How can both be true? [*God is the Source of the believer's defense. Angels are His agents, sent forth by Him to carry out His will for the believer.*]

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there anything in particular that stood out to you in this introduction?

[Give them time to think.]

Yahweh Sabaoth, the Commander of Warrior-Angels

[Have someone read this section: page 60.]

Yahweh Sabaoth has been presented as the commanding General of “a massive army of angelic warriors” whose purpose (in part) is to fulfill His will in the affairs of men.

- ? Why do angels *need* to be warriors to fulfill the will of God? *[There is a spiritual war taking place between these spirit-beings of God and those of darkness. As the angels of God seek to fulfill His will in the affairs of men, the spirit-beings under the authority of Satan (known as demons) seek to thwart that will. Consequently, there exists an on-going conflict between these two forces.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

[Have everyone turn to Ephesians 6:10-12. Ask someone to read this passage.]

FINALLY, BE STRONG IN THE LORD AND IN THE STRENGTH OF HIS MIGHT. PUT ON THE FULL ARMOR OF GOD, SO THAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO STAND FIRM AGAINST THE SCHEMES OF THE DEVIL. FOR OUR STRUGGLE IS NOT AGAINST FLESH AND BLOOD, BUT AGAINST THE RULERS, AGAINST THE POWERS, AGAINST THE WORLD FORCES OF THIS DARKNESS, AGAINST THE SPIRITUAL FORCES OF WICKEDNESS IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES.
(EPHESIANS 6:10-12)

- ? Can you think of any accounts in Scripture where God sent one or more of these spirit-beings to help His people in a time of distress? *[to strengthen Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane the night before His crucifixion (Luke 22:39-44); to deliver the Apostle Peter from prison while awaiting execution (Acts 12:1-11)]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?”

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

The Angels of Yahweh Sabaoth

Who They Are and What They Do

[Have someone read this section: pages 60-61.]

[Have everyone turn in their Bibles to Matthew 18.]

Matthew 18 presents God's attitude toward the citizens of His Kingdom, called here, His "little ones." Throughout this chapter, believers are instructed that they, too, should have this same attitude toward one another that the Father has toward His children.

In verse 1, the disciples ask Jesus a question about the kingdom of heaven.

[Have someone read verse 1.]

In verses 2-5 Jesus answers their question.

[Have someone read verses 2-5.]

Verses 6-7 warn those who may try to lead the Father's children into sin.

[Have someone read verses 6-7.]

Verses 8-9 instruct the Father's children on how to prevent *themselves* from straying into sin.

[Have someone read verses 8-9.]

Verses 10-14 reveal the Father's concern for His children who *have* strayed from Him.

[Have someone read verses 10-14.]

Verses 15-20 instruct believers on how to deal appropriately with their brother or sister who has strayed from the Father.

[Have someone read verses 15-20.]

Verses 21-35 instruct believers on what their attitude should be toward God's children who repent of their sins: an attitude of forgiveness.

[Have someone read verses 21-35.]

It is within the context of Matthew 18 that Jesus presents a warning: "Do not despise (even) one of these little ones" (My little children) ... and then He tells us why: "for I say to you that *their angels in heaven* continually see the face of My Father Who is in heaven."

The Specific Audience Guarded by Angels

[Have 2 or 3 read these sections: pages 61-62.]

- ? Why would Jesus call our attention to the access a believer's angel has to the Father in the context of this warning? *[The angel who guards "the despised one" has a close connection with the One Who dearly loves "the despised one." This is, therefore, not an empty warning.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Why Has Yahweh Sabaoth Assigned a Guardian Angel to Every Believer?

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages 62-63.]

- ? What is it about the believer that attracts the assaults of his spiritual enemy, requiring the protection of an angelic "bodyguard"? *[his reflection of God's character (his witness) to a world groping in emptiness and despair, wanting desperately to be delivered from, what, they do not know (apart from this witness)]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

**Yahweh Sabaoth Sends His Angelic Warriors
to Protect the Ministries of His Servants**

[Have someone read this section: page 63.]

- ? How can we allow our spiritual enemies to destroy our ministry? *[yielding to our flesh's cravings, a prayerless (self-dependent) ministry, defending ourselves from the attacks of worldly people using the world's weapons instead of God's (Ephesians 6:10-18)]*
- ? How can we work with God (using His resources) to prevent this from happening? *[daily contemplation of the Word of God; daily submission to the will of God through prayer; personal accountability to at least one mature church leader; the church's prayers for purity; circumspection in certain situations; emotional support; and counsel from mature believers]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

**Yahweh Sabaoth Sends His Angelic Warriors
to Strengthen His Servants to Persevere in Their Calling**

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: page 64.]

- ? What forms of opposition do you think Satan's forces use to tempt pastors to leave the ministry? *[constant criticism from church members; poor health; excruciating mental and emotional pain from adverse circumstances; social ostracism by church members; financial strains; et. al.]*
- ? How can we work with God (using His resources) to support our pastors in their work? *[by the words of appreciation we choose to speak to him; our notes of encouragement regarding what he is doing right; our prayers for his protection from demonic oppression or the temptation of the flesh; et. al.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Yahweh Sabaoth Sends His Angelic Warriors to Defend His Servants from Premature Death

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **65-66**.]

? Has there ever been a time when you could have been badly hurt or killed but, for some unseen reason, were spared? What happened?

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

CONCLUSION

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"

[Have 1 or 2 read these 2 sections: pages **66-67**.]

Summary

Today, we have considered the Name Yahweh Sabaoth. We have seen that

- 1) this Name is translated "the LORD of hosts." It is a Name of God that portrays Him as the Commander of a vast assembly of angelic warriors.

- 2) Yahweh Sabaoth uses His vast army of spirit-warriors to protect and minister to His chosen people. At least one angel guards every believer.
- 3) angels protect the ministries God's servants from being terminated before their appointed time.
- 4) angels fortify God's servants that they would be able to persevere in their callings.
- 5) angels protect God's servants from premature death.

ADONAI

GOD IS A LOVING MASTER

Review

Last week, we considered the Name Yahweh Sabaoth. We learned that

- 1) this Name is translated "the LORD of hosts." It is a Name of God that portrays Him as the Commander of a vast assembly of angelic warriors.
- 2) Yahweh Sabaoth uses His vast army of spirit-warriors to protect and minister to His chosen people. At least one angel guards every believer.
- 3) angels protect the ministries God's servants from being terminated before their appointed time.
- 4) angels fortify God's servants that they would be able to persevere in their callings.
- 5) angels protect God's servants from premature death.

Our Goal

Today, our goal is for each of us to acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus Christ *in this life*.

The Cross of the Lamb and the Throne of the Lion

[Have 3 or 4 read this section: pages **68-71**.]

? Was there anything in particular that stood out to you from this introduction?

[Summarize their answers.]

The Meaning of the Title "Lord"

[Have someone read this section: page **71**.]

- ? What does our Master, Christ Jesus, have the right to expect us, His bond-slaves, to do? *[He has the right to expect our obedience to His commandments ... whether His laws are easy or difficult ... whether they are popular or unpopular ... whether they result in personal gain or loss. Our Master has the right to expect our faithful submission to His will.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

The Historical Context of the Name Adonai

Adonai Is Israel's Master

[Have 1 or 2 read these two sections: pages **72-73**.]

Adonai did not command Israel to cross the Jordan when the river was low. He commanded them to cross the river at flood stage. Perhaps this led some to say, "This does not make any sense. *Why* is our Lord doing it *this way*?" (Have you ever asked that question?)

Nor were they commanded to cross the river as soon as they arrived at its banks. Israel had to wait three days before they were told to move forward. Perhaps this led some to say, "This does not make any sense. *Why* is our Lord making us *wait*?" (Have you ever asked that question?)

- ? Why do you think your Master sometimes expects you to *do* something that does not make any sense to you ... or expects you to *wait* for something good for no apparent reason? *[He is training His people to live by faith, not by logic. He does not want us to submit to His will only if we **understand** the **why**. He wants us to submit to His will because we **trust** the **Who**.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Adonai Is Israel's Revered Master

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **73-74**.]

The Master has the right to expect *obedience* from his slave. But that obedience is to be more than an outward conformity to a set of rules. He is to be motivated by a *sincere respect* for his Master.

? What must take place in a believer's life for him to grow in reverence for the Lord Jesus? [*experience discipline from the Father; develop a growing awareness of the "gap" between the greatness of the Lord's Person and power and the believer's own smallness.*]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Adonai Is Israel's Loving Guide

[Have someone read this section: page **74**.]

The slave can expect *guidance* from his Master.

? Looking back over your Christian life, when was there a time when you sensed the Lord guiding you?

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Adonai Is Israel's Loving Sustainer

[Have someone read this section: pages **74-75**.]

The slave can expect to be *cared for* by his good and loving Master.

- ? Looking back over your Christian life, when was there a time when you sensed the Lord sustaining you, perhaps at a time of weakness?

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Know That the Living God Is Among You

[Have someone read this section: page **75**.]

Many missionaries and pastors have faithfully labored – for years – in the ministries to which they believed they were called ... but saw little fruit for their efforts. Yet, they believed that “the living God was with them.”

- ? Why should they have believed that “God was with them” in a labor where human effort had been invested in planning ... and in raising money to purchase materials ... and in recruiting personnel ... and in working hard ... but they saw little fruit? (And for that matter, why should *we* believe it?)

*[The believer who abides in Christ has been promised to bear much fruit (John 15:5); but he is not promised to **see** that fruit. (Those who plant and water are not necessarily present during the harvest.) God's presence with us is not determined by the fruit we see. (If that were true, then God was not with Elijah – 1st Kings 19:14 [see vs. 18].)]*

*[God has not commanded His Church to “Go and make disciples in only those nations ‘where you see God at work.’” We are commanded to “Go and make disciples of **all** the nations.” If we are obeying the Great Commission, we are in the will of God and, therefore, He is “with (us) always, even to the end of the Age” (Matthew 28:20).]*

[Summarize their answers.]

[Have someone read 1st Corinthians 3:8.]

NOW HE WHO PLANTS AND HE WHO WATERS ARE ONE; BUT EACH WILL RECEIVE HIS OWN REWARD ACCORDING TO HIS OWN LABOR. (1ST CORINTHIANS 3:8)

? If seeing fruit is not what determines whether God is with you or not, how do you know when it is time to move to another ministry and when it is time to stay where you are?

*[It will be time to **stay** if no one is available to continue that work, and circumstances allow the laborer to do so.]*

*[It **may** be time to leave if the labor has reached a point in which gifts – other than those possessed by the current minister – are needed. The timing of this departure should take place once the laborer has equipped others to continue his work (or someone else can be brought in to continue that work).]*

*[It is **likely** time to **leave** if circumstances force one to do so (health, government restrictions).]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Know That the Living God Will Drive Out Your Enemies

[Have someone read this section: pages 75-76.]

The believer has three unseen enemies: the world (an evil value system), the flesh (an evil inner craving), and the devil (an evil angel). These three enemies have already been defeated by Christ Jesus:

[Have someone read John 16:33.]

THESE THINGS I HAVE SPOKEN TO YOU, SO THAT IN ME YOU MAY HAVE PEACE. IN THE WORLD YOU HAVE TRIBULATION. BUT TAKE COURAGE; I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD. (JOHN 16:33)

[Have someone read Romans 6:8, 10-12.]

NOW IF WE HAVE DIED WITH CHRIST, WE BELIEVE THAT WE SHALL ALSO LIVE WITH HIM ... FOR THE DEATH THAT HE DIED, HE DIED TO SIN ONCE FOR ALL; BUT THE LIFE THAT HE LIVES, HE LIVES TO GOD. EVEN SO CONSIDER YOURSELVES TO BE DEAD TO SIN, BUT ALIVE TO GOD IN CHRIST JESUS. THEREFORE, DO NOT LET SIN REIGN IN YOUR MORTAL BODY SO THAT YOU OBEY ITS LUSTS. (ROMANS 6:8, 10-12)

[Have someone read Hebrews 2:14.]

THEREFORE, SINCE THE CHILDREN SHARE IN FLESH AND BLOOD, HE HIMSELF LIKEWISE ALSO PARTOOK OF THE SAME, THAT THROUGH DEATH HE MIGHT RENDER POWERLESS HIM WHO HAD THE POWER OF DEATH, THAT IS, THE DEVIL. (HEBREWS 2:14)

? Why should the Christ-follower believe that Adonai will enable him to be victorious over these same three formidable foes? *[Because Christ has already defeated them, those in Christ are already "overcomers" and have been given everything they need to live a life of victory over these enemies.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Our Master's Love

[Have someone read this section: pages **76-77**.]

The Master we serve loves us. Love was described as an act of the will to seek what is best for another person.

? With this description of love in mind, how can an all-knowing, all-powerful God's love be a perfect love? *[Because He is all-knowing, He knows exactly what is best for an individual. And because He is all-powerful, He is able to bring about his best.]*

? Why isn't God's goal to make someone happy? Is He not a God of love? *[Giving a person what he wants will make him happy. But what he wants may be detrimental to his well-being. The love of God moves Him to give to His child what he **needs** for the sake of his well-being and to withhold what would hurt him.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

A True Profession of Lordship

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **77-78**.]

It was stated in your reading, "Clearly, the way one confesses the Lordship of Christ is by striving to obey the will of God."

? Is it possible for one to strive to live a life that is free from sin without being legalistic? *[The motive behind obedience is loving gratitude. We obey as an act of gratitude for what the Lord has done for us ... and in doing so, to bring honor to His Name. The motive behind legalism is to get (or to keep) something. To believe that one gains salvation or that one keeps himself saved through obedience (legalism) is a false (unbiblical) doctrine. We obey, not to get saved but because we already are saved ... by grace through faith in Christ.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Conclusion

[Have someone read this section: page **78**.]

Summary

Today, we have considered the Name Adonai. We have seen that

- 1) the Name Adonai highlights the Lordship of God. He is Master of all the earth. He has the right to rule.
- 2) Adonai has the right to expect obedience from His slaves.
- 3) He has the right to expect reverence from His slaves.
- 4) He loves His servants. He seeks their highest good.
- 5) as a loving Master, Adonai will *guide* His servants to do His will.
- 6) and as a loving Master, Adonai will *sustain* His servants.
- 7) those who acknowledge the Lordship of Christ are not those who merely confess Him as Lord verbally but are those who obey His will (His Word).

ELOHIM

GOD IS ALL-POWERFUL

Review

Last week, we considered the Name Adonai. We learned that

- 1) the Name Adonai highlights the Lordship of God. He is Master of all the earth. He has the right to rule.
- 2) Adonai has the right to expect obedience from His slaves.
- 3) He has the right to expect reverence from His slaves.
- 4) He loves His servants. He seeks their highest good.
- 5) as a loving Master, Adonai will *guide* His servants to do His will.
- 6) and as a loving Master, Adonai will *sustain* His servants.
- 7) those who acknowledge the Lordship of Christ are not those who merely confess Him as Lord verbally but are those who obey His will (His Word).

Our Goal

Today, our goal is for each of us to become deeply convinced that nothing is impossible for our God to do ... and will do ... if it is according to His perfect will.

In the Palm of His Hand

[Have 2 or 3 read this section: pages **79-80**.]

? Was there anything in particular that stood out to you in this introduction?

[Give them time to think.]

The Power of the Plural

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **80-81**.]

[Have someone read footnote **17**, page **87**.]

? Was there anything in particular that stood out to you in this section?

[Give them time to think.]

Definition of Omnipotence

[Have someone read this section: page **82**.]

? Was there anything in particular that stood out to you in this section?

[Give them time to think.]

Elohim Has the Power to Answer Our Prayers

[Have 2 or 3 read this section: pages **82-84**.]

? If your will were different than God's will ... and you could somehow get Him to set His will aside in order to give you what *you* want, would you do so? Why or why not?

When God does not answer our prayers the way we would like for Him to, it is not because He lacks power. It is because we lack a full understanding of what is truly best for those concerned.

? What causes some to become angry with God ... to believe that He has "let them down"?

[Ignorance: (1) They do not know God's will because they do not know the Scriptures. (2) They did not know that they were to trust God to do His will rather than their will. (3) They have not come to the point in their understanding that God's will is better than their own. (4) They do not yet know how to "live by faith."]

[Unbelief: (5) They just assume that their will is best and, therefore, "How could the will of God be any better." (6) They have never had a person in their life that could be trusted. (7) They have not had time to see His hand at work.]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Elohim Has the Power to Change Our Lives

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **84-85**.]

If we pray for our Lord to transform us into the image of Christ, He will do so (usually gradually) because that is exactly what He wants to happen in our lives.

? What can we do to become *fervent* in our prayers for Christlikeness? [*Remind ourselves of the time when we will bow before Christ at His Appearing (1st John 3:2-3). Ask the Lord to give us that longing for sanctification.*]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Elohim Has the Power to Fulfill His Promises to Us

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **86-87**.]

? What can we do to ensure that what we are trusting God to do is something He actually promised to do? [*Study the Scriptures; write down promises when we come to them in our reading*]

[Summarize their answers.]

Suppose someone wants to be married. But there is no promise in the Bible that guarantees he / she will be given a spouse. Nevertheless, there are still promises to be claimed.

? What would be some? [*The promise of God's love, His wisdom, His use of one who is free from a spouse (1st Corinthians 7:32-38), His sovereign care*]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Conclusion

[Have 1 read this section: page 87.]

Summary

Today, we have considered the Name Elohim. We have seen that

- 1) the Name Elohim highlights God's infinite power. He is all-powerful. He is omnipotent.
- 2) for God to be omnipotent means that He is able to do anything He wills.
- 3) Elohim is able to answer any prayer that conforms to His will ... and He will.
- 4) He is able to transform the lives of His people into the likeness of His Son ... and He will.
- 5) He is able to fulfill every promise He has made in His Word ... and He will.

EL SHADDAI**GOD IS ALL-SUFFICIENT****Review**

Last week, we considered the Name Elohim. We learned that

- 1) the Name Elohim highlights God's infinite power. He is all-powerful. He is omnipotent.
- 2) for God to be omnipotent means that He is able to do anything He wills.
- 3) Elohim is able to answer any prayer that conforms to His will ... and He will.
- 4) He is able to transform the lives of His people into the likeness of His Son ... and He will.
- 5) He is able to fulfill every promise He has made in His Word ... and He will.

Our Goals

Today, our goals are for each of us

- 1) to understand that God, and God alone, is the only self-sufficient Person.
- 2) to believe that we are not independent of God in anything.
- 3) to be convinced that our God is all-sufficient ... that whatever we need to know and be and do, He is able to provide it ... that He is our all in all.

“Thank You Just the Same Anyway Lord”

[Have 2 or 3 read this section: pages **88-89**.]

- ? How can “the breadwinner” who works hard to get the essentials for life still maintain an attitude of dependence on God? *[He must remain ever mindful that, apart from God, he would not have the resources he needed to be able to do what he has done. With what did God supply him that he could not supply for himself ... no matter how hard he was to work?]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

El Shaddai, the All-Sufficient One

[Have 2 or 3 read this section: pages **89-91**.]

[Have someone read footnote **20**, page **98**.]

"Here Lord, Let Me Help You with That Promise of Yours"

[Have 3 or 4 read these two sections: pages **91-92**.]

- ? Have you ever needed God to do something ... as soon as possible ... but you *felt* that He was moving too slowly for *your* own good ... or (as far as you could tell) He was not moving at all?
- ? If you have ever been in that situation, were you tempted to take matters into your own hands?
- ? If you have ever "taken over" from God, what were the results of that action?

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

“You Can't Do This. But I Can.”

[Have 2 or 3 read this section: pages **92-94**.]

As believers, you and I face a “balancing act.” As we seek to impact lives for eternity, we are to give God our highest quality of work. And yet, as we do, we have the tendency to trust in those efforts – rather than in God's power – to bear spiritual fruit.

- ? How can the servants of Christ maintain a proper attitude of dependence in God while, at the same time, giving their best efforts to the Lord? *[We should remember those times in our ministries when the power of God was manifested when we were **unable to be well-prepared**. We should remember those times when our **best efforts fell flat**. We can pray for the Lord to keep us in close fellowship with Him through His Word and prayer.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?”

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

The Self-Sufficiency of God

[Have someone read this section: page **95**.]

- ? What is the difference between being “self-sufficient” and being “all-sufficient”? *[For God to be “self-sufficient” means that He is able to sustain Himself without any help from His creation. (He does **not** need us.) For God to be “all-sufficient” means that He can supply everything His creation needs to exist and to be sustained. (We **do** need Him.)*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

"I Command You to Do the Impossible"

"I Hear the Savior Say"

[Have 3 or 4 read these two sections: pages **95-98**.]

Is El Shaddai our "all in all"? Is He the One to Whom you and I look to provide us with everything we need to do His will?

? What does it take for us to realize that – apart from almighty God – we are too weak to accomplish His will on our own and are in constant need of His power to do so? *[It will always require an honest assessment of ourselves; it will usually require some failure(s) on our part.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Is it possible for a new convert to comprehend this truth? *[No. He needs some time and experience in trying to live out the Christian life before he can grasp this truth.]*

? How can you help a new believer prepare for this realization? *[Let him know ahead of time what to expect. Be patient when he "plows forward" in his own strength.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Summary

Today, we have considered the Name El Shaddai. We have seen that

- 1) the Name El Shaddai highlights God's self-sufficiency. He has no need for anyone or anything outside Himself to sustain Him. He is not dependent upon His creation for anything.
- 2) the proper balance of the Christian life involves both personal responsibility and trust in God's provisions.
- 3) it is impossible for us to know, be, and do what God wants us to know, be, and do apart from the Spirit of God's enablement. We are *not* self-sufficient.
- 4) but because God *is* self-sufficient, *He* is able to provide us with everything we need to live a life of faith and obedience. The self-sufficient One is the all-sufficient One. He is our all-in-all.

EL ROI**GOD IS AN ALL-KNOWING, EVER-PRESENT HELP****Review**

Last week, we considered the Name El Shaddai. We learned that

- 1) the Name El Shaddai highlights God's self-sufficiency. He has no need for anyone or anything outside Himself to sustain Him. He is not dependent upon His creation for anything.
- 2) the proper balance of the Christian life involves both personal responsibility and trust in God's provisions.
- 3) it is impossible for us to know, be, and do what God wants us to know, be, and do apart from the Spirit of God's enablement. We are *not* self-sufficient.
- 5) but because God *is* self-sufficient, *He* is able to provide us with everything we need to live a life of faith and obedience. The self-sufficient One is the all-sufficient One. He is our all-in-all.

Our Goals

Today, our goals are for each of us to

- 1) be convinced that, even though all others forsake us, our Lord "will never leave us, nor will He ever forsake us."
- 2) turn to the Throne of Grace first, foremost, and repeatedly during the times we are abandoned by all others.

Not a Friend in the World

[Have 3 or 4 read this section: pages 99-101.]

When Jesus Christ went to the Cross, He was obeying the will of the Father. And yet, while being obedient, He was being abandoned by family and friends, followers and foes. As He did the will of God, *no one* wanted to be associated with Him.

Perhaps you yourself have been abandoned by someone while trying to live out the righteous will of God ... someone you would have sworn would never leave your side.

- ? If so, why do you think he / they did that? [*Human nature is rebellious toward God. The only ones who want to submit to the will of God are those who are motivated to do so by the Spirit of God. (The will to obey God is God-generated.) Everyone else will reject God's authority over their lives as they understand the demands that He makes upon them. They will also reject those who do not rebel with them because those who are righteous expose their unrighteousness.*]

[Summarize their answers.]

As you increasingly display the righteousness of Christ, you should be prepared to be rejected by some.

[Have someone read 2nd Timothy 3:12.]

INDEED, ALL WHO DESIRE TO LIVE GODLY IN CHRIST JESUS WILL BE PERSECUTED. (2ND TIMOTHY 3:12)

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

The Historical Context of the Name El Roi

[Have 3 or 4 read this section: pages **101-104**.]

- ? Was there anything in particular that stood out to you from this introduction?

[Summarize their answers.]

The Omniscience of God

[Have someone read this section: pages **104-105**.]

Thinking she was alone in the wilderness, Hagar realizes she has a Companion, One Who knows a lot about her: her past, her present and her future.

- ? Why do you think that would be to your advantage ... having been rejected, you live in the presence of One Who knows your past, present and future? *[According to Romans 8:31, "God is for us." The One Who knows us so well is, nevertheless, "for us." These two truths can provide the believer with an enduring sense of security. This is one "Friend" Who will never abandon us.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

The Omnipresence of God

[Have someone read this section: page **105**.]

- ? Was there anything in particular that stood out to you from this introduction?

[Summarize their answers.]

What to Do When You Are Abandoned by Others

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **105-107**.]

When we take a broken relationship to the Lord in prayer, our desire and request will often be for the relationship to return to what it once was. And maybe it will. But there is no *guarantee* that it will.

The only person's will we have any degree of control over is our own. We cannot govern someone else's will. If a person we care for turns against us, it could be that the relationship will one day be fully restored ... or at least partially. On the other hand, if he chooses to continue in his rejection of us, the relationship may never be restored to what it once was.

This brings us to Hebrews 4:15-16.

[Have someone read Hebrews 4:15-16.]

FOR WE DO NOT HAVE A HIGH PRIEST WHO CANNOT SYMPATHIZE WITH OUR WEAKNESSES, BUT ONE WHO HAS BEEN TEMPTED IN ALL THINGS AS WE ARE, YET WITHOUT SIN. THEREFORE LET US DRAW NEAR WITH CONFIDENCE TO THE THRONE OF GRACE, SO THAT WE MAY RECEIVE MERCY AND FIND GRACE TO HELP IN TIME OF NEED. (HEBREWS 4:15-16)

We are told to draw near to the throne of grace "with confidence."

- ? Since two wills are involved in a strained relationship, what exactly can we be *confident* the Lord will do? *[Just because someone has chosen to reject us does not mean that we must reject him. We should not allow his choices to dictate ours. We can have confidence that the Lord will help us do the right thing toward him. We can be confident that He will strengthen and comfort us ... that He will motivate and empower us to love the one who has rejected us ... and that He will give us wisdom to respond to the person in righteousness.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

What to Do When You Feel Abandoned by God Because of Your Sin

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **107-108**.]

[Have someone read 1st John 5:13]

THESE THINGS I HAVE WRITTEN TO YOU WHO BELIEVE IN THE NAME OF THE SON OF GOD, SO THAT YOU MAY KNOW THAT YOU HAVE ETERNAL LIFE. (1ST JOHN 5:13)

- ? According to 1st John 5:13, is this letter addressed to believers or unbelievers?
[believers]

[Have someone read 1st John 1:9.]

IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS, HE IS FAITHFUL AND RIGHTEOUS TO FORGIVE US OUR SINS AND TO CLEANSE US FROM ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS. (1ST JOHN 1:9)

It was pointed out in your reading that the magnanimous grace of God is greater than any sin we could possibly commit. Instead of wallowing in despair over our sins, 1st John 1:9 is presented as the remedy for the sins one commits *as a believer*.

According to this verse, "if we confess our sins, (God) is *righteous* (or just) ... to forgive ... and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

? How can a just Judge be *righteous* and forgive sin at the same time? Isn't a just judge responsible to punish sin? What allows God to forgive, yet remain just? *[Because Christ has paid for our sins, God is righteous to pardon those who accept that Payment for themselves. He is not "letting anyone off the hook." The debt was paid for us.]*

[Have someone read 1st John 1:6-7.]

*IF WE SAY THAT WE HAVE **FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM** AND YET WALK IN THE DARKNESS, WE LIE AND DO NOT PRACTICE THE TRUTH; BUT IF WE WALK IN THE LIGHT AS HE HIMSELF IS IN THE LIGHT, WE HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH ONE ANOTHER, AND THE BLOOD OF JESUS HIS SON CLEANSSES US FROM ALL SIN. (1ST JOHN 1:6-7)*

? What are verses 1:6-7 talking about? *[The subject of 1st John 1 has to do with the believer's fellowship with God, not his salvation.]*

[Have someone read Acts 10:43.]

OF HIM ALL THE PROPHETS BEAR WITNESS THAT THROUGH HIS NAME EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM RECEIVES FORGIVENESS OF SINS. (ACTS 10:43)

Here, we are told that "everyone who believes in (Christ Jesus) receives forgiveness of sins." The moment he trusts in Christ for salvation, the believer's sins are washed away ... all of them ... forever.

? If a believer received forgiveness of sins upon faith in Christ, why, then, does 1st John 1:9 encourage him to "confess" his sins to be forgiven and cleansed of all unrighteousness? Has he not already been forgiven and cleansed? *[Confession of sins allows the believer to remain in close fellowship with the God of his salvation. It allows him to experience the forgiveness he already has through faith in Christ.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

What to Do When You Feel Abandoned by God Because of Your Circumstances

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **108-109**.]

When facing a painful circumstance, we are often tempted to focus on the lie, "God has abandoned me." To combat this lie with truth, it was recommended that we laser beam our attention on God's character rather than the negative situation we are in.

? If we do *not* focus our attention on God but stay focused on our situation, what can we *expect*? [*misery and defeat*]

? If we focus on God rather than on our circumstances, what will be the *guaranteed* result? [*We will live triumphantly through the trial*]

? If we do this, is there anything *positive* that is *not* guaranteed? [*The change of our circumstances is not guaranteed*]

? What, then, does triumphant living look like if it does not pertain to our circumstances? [*Christlike composure in the midst of our situations, good or bad, easy or difficult*]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Conclusion

[Have someone read this section: page **109**.]

Summary

Today, we have considered the Name El Roi. We have seen that

- 1) the Name El Roi highlights God's knowledge. He knows all things the way they actually are as well as everything that is possible. He is all-knowing. He is omniscient.
- 2) the Name El Roi also highlights God's presence. All of Him is everywhere at the same time. He is omnipresent.
- 3) our Lord Jesus Christ Himself was abandoned by everyone – both friend and foe – as well as His Father in heaven. He, therefore, is able to be a sympathetic Minister to His people who are being forsaken by others.
- 4) El Roi can provide us with the encouragement and strength we need when we are forsaken by our family, co-workers, school mates, friends, and spouse.
- 5) El Roi can provide us with forgiveness and assurance when we feel abandoned by God because of our sins.
- 6) El Roi can provide us with the assurance of His love and care when we feel abandoned by God because of a painful situation we face.

EL ELYON**GOD IS THE SUPREME SOVEREIGN****Review**

Last week, we considered the Name El Roi. We learned that

- 1) the Name El Roi highlights God's knowledge. He knows all things the way they actually are as well as everything that is possible. He is all-knowing. He is omniscient.
- 2) the Name El Roi also highlights God's presence. All of Him is everywhere at the same time. He is omnipresent.
- 3) our Lord Jesus Christ Himself was abandoned by everyone – both friend and foe – as well as His Father in heaven. He, therefore, is able to be a sympathetic Minister to His people who are being forsaken by others.
- 4) El Roi can provide us with the encouragement and strength we need when we are forsaken by our family, co-workers, school mates, friends, and spouse.
- 5) El Roi can provide us with forgiveness and assurance when we feel abandoned by God because of our sins.
- 6) El Roi can provide us with the assurance of His love and care when we feel abandoned by God because of a painful situation we face.

Our Goal

Today, our goal is for each of us to abandon our worldly pursuits and focus our attention on living for Christ Jesus.

When We've Been There Ten Thousand Years, Bright Shining as the Sun

[Have 2 or 3 read this section: pages **110-111**.]

- ? What are some ways we might answer this statement: *"10,000 years from now, I am going to be very glad that I _____"*?

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there anything in particular that stood out to you in this introduction?

[Give them time to think.]

A Short-Sighted Folly

[Have 3 or 4 read this section: pages **111-114**.]

We saw from this lesson that both Lot and Bera were focused on this world. Their hearts and minds were devoted to what it had to offer.

? Who all stands to suffer loss when a believer has this same heart for the world? *[The reputation of **God** will be damaged by his poor witness. The **local church's** effectiveness will suffer from one of its members not living in the power of the Holy Spirit. The **unbelieving community** will suffer when they see – and conclude – that following the God of the Bible will make no difference in their lives. The **believer himself** will suffer eternal loss of rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

A Far-Sighted Wisdom

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **114-115**.]

We saw from this lesson that both Abram and Melchizedek were *God-centered*. Their hearts and minds were devoted to El Elyon.

? What can we do throughout our lives to ensure that we will be well-satisfied with our lives 10,000 years from now? *[Pray for this kind of heart. Obey God's Word. Consider from time to time what we were like before we were saved, then consider the spiritual blessings we have been given because of Christ's faithfulness. Fellowship with mature believers.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

The Significance of the Name El Elyon

[Have someone read this section: pages **115-116**.]

This section described El Elyon in four ways:

He is a *jealous* Sovereign, unwilling to share our attention with any other object of devotion.

He is a *meticulous* Sovereign, One Who controls the details of our lives.

He is a *wise* Sovereign, using His Own Counsel (His Truth) to guide us throughout our lives.

And He is a *loving* Sovereign, seeking what His best for His children and His creation.

We could describe our Sovereign God in many other ways.

? With what other attributes could you describe El Elyon, your Supreme Sovereign?

[With each attribute mentioned, ask how that perfection – connected to His sovereignty – should affect the believer's life.]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Just What Are You Trying to Accomplish?

[Have 3 or 4 read this section: pages **116-119**.]

There is much to do to advance the cause of Christ, too much for any one individual. No one can do it all, which means that we need to be discerning as to what we agree to do and what we decline to do.

? When you are asked to *serve* the King in some capacity, how do you know what to say "Yes" to and what to say "No" to? *[Ask yourself, "Is this opportunity according to my God-given **gifts**?" "Is it according to my God-given **passions**?" "Do I have the **time** for this (in view of my already-agreed-to commitments)?" Seek counsel from those who know you well and who have godly discernment.]*

There are times when the servant of Christ must operate in an area of weakness. Out of necessity, he is called upon to do something that is not in his area of strength; but since there is no one else to perform this work, he must do so. That, however, is the exception to the rule. For one to advance the Kingdom of God most effectively, the believer should seek to labor in his area(s) of giftedness.

? How does one go about determining what his God-given gifts are (and what they are not)? *[Praying for God's direction. Trying his hand at various kinds of ministries. Asking those who have observed him in different ministries for their evaluation of his effectiveness. Asking those who know him best what they think his strengths are ... and his limitations.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

Summary

Today, we have considered the Name El Elyon. We have seen that

- 1) the Name El Elyon highlights the sovereignty of God. He is King of kings and Lord of lords.
- 2) for God to be sovereign means that He rules as Governor of the universe.
- 3) our King refuses to share His reign with anyone or anything else. El Elyon is a *jealous Sovereign*.
- 4) our King is detail oriented. El Elyon is a *meticulous Sovereign*.
- 5) our King knows exactly what He is doing. El Elyon is a *wise Sovereign*.
- 6) our King seeks what is best for His kingdom. El Elyon is a *loving Sovereign*.
- 7) those who live for this world will still be sorry they did 10,000 years from now.
- 8) those who live for the King of kings and Lord of lords will still be glad they did 10,000 years from now.

EL OLAM**GOD IS ETERNAL AND UNCHANGING****Review**

Last week, we considered the Name El Elyon. We learned that

- 1) the Name El Elyon highlights the sovereignty of God. He is King of kings and Lord of lords.
- 2) for God to be sovereign means that He rules as Governor of the universe.
- 3) our King refuses to share His reign with anyone or anything else. El Elyon is a *jealous Sovereign*.
- 4) our King is detail oriented. El Elyon is a *meticulous Sovereign*.
- 5) our King knows exactly what He is doing. El Elyon is a *wise Sovereign*.
- 6) our King seeks what is best for His kingdom. El Elyon is a *loving Sovereign*.
- 7) those who live for this world will still be sorry they did 10,000 years from now.
- 8) those who live for the King of kings and Lord of lords will still be glad they did 10,000 years from now.

Our Goals

Today, our goals are for each of us to

- 1) rest in our confidence that the God we follow is no different now than the way He is described in our Bibles.
- 2) be fully assured that our unchanged God will deal with us just as lovingly and just as wisely as He dealt with His people in the Scriptures.
- 3) trust in the ability of our eternal God to be able to give to us and to maintain for us our eternal life.

Telephone Booths and Typewriters, Slide Rules and Cassette Tapes

The Historical Context of the Name El Olam

[Have 3 or 4 read these two sections: pages **120-122**.]

Several decades before Nebuchadnezzar's army defeated and exported thousands of Jewish citizens to Babylon, Isaiah warned the southern kingdom of Judah of their impending captivity. It was within the writings of Isaiah that the Name El Olam appears.

- ? Why would the Name, El Olam, the everlasting and unchanging God, have special significance to the people of Judah as they faced captivity in Babylon? *[Because God is unchanging, their covenant with Him remained unchanged. During their captivity, therefore, Yahweh would remain faithful to His promises as He had always been throughout their long history. He would not forget them nor abandon them, even as they endured His discipline.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

"Surely All Flesh Withers"

[Have someone read this section: page **123**.]

The Bible teaches that all flesh is perishing. Our lives upon this earth are temporary.

- ? How should we respond to this Truth right now? *[I would avoid spending an inordinate amount of time on that which will not last and focus more time preparing myself and others for eternity. I would be encouraged to know that this weak body I now have will one day be replaced with a glorified body.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

"Behold, the Nations Are Less than Nothing ... and Meaningless"

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **123-124**.]

The Bible teaches that all nations are regarded by God as "less than nothing and meaningless."

? How should we respond to this Truth right now? *[I will avoid spending an inordinate amount of time promoting the affairs of my nation and focus more time preparing myself and others for eternity. I will be encouraged to know that my present citizenship is of an eternal kingdom, governed by an eternal King.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

"The Earth's Rulers and Judges Wither"

[Have 1 or 2 read this section: pages **124-125**.]

The Bible teaches that the influence of this world's rulers and judges will one day be gone with the wind.

? How should we respond to this Truth right now? *[Those in the believing community who live under a tyrannical dictator whose laws violate the Law of Christ are to "obey God rather than man," knowing that his reign is temporary, but God's reign is eternal.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

The Significance of the Name El Olam

El Olam Is Eternal

[Have 2 read these two sections: pages **126-127**.]

- ? If God stopped being eternal, how would that affect you? *[It would mean that we really do not have eternal life ourselves. If the Author of eternal life can lose His, then those He sustains will also lose their eternal lives.]*

No one has a brighter future in front of him than he who possesses eternal life. In fact, we already possess this eternal life. It has already begun.

- ? What does your possession of eternal life have to do with you right now? *[We need to live our lives with an eternal perspective.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

El Olam Is Immutable

[Have someone read this section: page **127**.]

- ? If God stopped being immutable, how would that affect you? *[If His character can change, then so can His Word (promises). We would not know if His promises would still be valid on any given day. We would not know what kind of God we are approaching in prayer. Does He still love me? Will He still reward the righteous and punish the wicked? Etc.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

The Same Yesterday and Today and Forever

[Have 2 or 3 read this section: pages **127-129**.]

We have invested the last several weeks carefully pondering a selection of God's wonderful perfections. In a way it was like examining a beautifully cut diamond. It is only one diamond; but as we observe its every cut reflecting light from its various angles, its beauty becomes increasingly apparent the longer we intently gaze upon it.

- ? From all the perfections we have considered, is there one particular attribute to which your soul especially clings ... perhaps because of a trial you are going through or because of a certain joyous occasion? If so, why is that attribute so special to you at this time in your life?

Summary

Today, we have considered the Name El Olam. We have seen

- 1) the Name El Olam also highlights the eternity of God.
- 2) for God to be eternal means that He has always existed. There is no "point" in time when God started to exist, nor is there a "point" in time when He will cease to exist. He has no beginning and no end.

- 3) The eternal character of God allows us to trust in His ability to give to us and to maintain for us our eternal life. Only an eternal God can give eternal life.
- 4) the Name El Olam highlights the unchanging character of God. He is immutable.
- 5) for God to be immutable means that He does not change Himself nor can anyone or anything else change Him.
- 6) the unchanging character of God allows us to be fully assured that God will deal with us just as lovingly and just as wisely as He dealt with His people in the Scriptures.