

# YAHWEH: The Unchangeable I Am, the Covenant God, Pt. 2



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**Text:** Exodus 3:1-14<sup>1</sup>

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**Series:** Drawing Near to God through His Name

**Introduction:** Open your Bibles to Exodus 3. With over 6800 mentions of the Name Yahweh in the Bible, it is impossible to do a thorough study of the name. But what we find is that in both Old and New Testament, it is the Covenant name of God.

God revealed Himself to Moses with His sacred name: Yahweh. It's translated into English by the phrase, "I AM WHO I AM" (**Exo. 3: 14**). God is the Source of everything. He is the Uncaused cause of all things.

## I. Yahweh, the unchangeable, self-existing God.

### A. I Was Not—you and I have a beginning

Thirty six years ago no one cared about Matthew Black. At least not the one who would be born on the south side of Chicago. They might have cared about my Uncle Matthew Black in Scotland, but they didn't care about me because I did not exist. There wasn't any Matt Black. The world was getting along fine without me. I didn't know anything about the world, and the world didn't know anything about me, because I was not. Then on May 22, 1974 I began my life in this world. I actually came into being at my conception. I came to be. But I didn't come to be by myself. I had a beginning. I had to be procreated by other people before I could be at all. The one thing I know about you is that there was a time when you did not exist. You had a beginning.

### B. Human Beings Change

And we change. We are not what we were, and we are not yet what we shall be. **One theologian said instead of human beings, we should be called "human becomings"**. You see, we are changeable. Whatever we are is never permanent. I'm different now than I was when I started this message. I might be only 12 minutes and 33 seconds older than I was when I began. I am always in process. I am always becoming.

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture is from the *English Standard Version* of the Bible.

### C. Yahweh Does Not Change

- **Malachi 3:6**, “For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed”.
- **Hebrews 13:8**, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”

You’d better be glad that Yahweh does not change. This is the reason that if you put your trust in Him, you will not be consumed. You will not perish. It has always been this way.

## II. Yahweh, the Covenant God [Exodus 34:5–7].

When Yahweh spoke to Moses from the burning bush, it was to make an agreement with Moses and the Hebrew people. He was keeping His promise to Abraham.

### A. Remember God's promise to Abraham.

Remember **Genesis 15:13-14**, “Then the LORD said to Abram, “Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years. 14 But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions.”

We have to ask: what covenant? What are the main covenants in the Bible? The Old and the New.

When we think of the Old Covenant, what do we think of? Judgment. Condemnation. What does the Old Agreement teach us? That we are to be perfect. How perfect? Absolutely. “The soul that sins, it shall die” (Exodus 18:4). Then there is a list of what constitutes righteousness. And who kept the law given by Moses in the Old Covenant? Not one soul. So what did they do? They were to be very diligent in offering sacrifices to God to cover their sin.

Yet there are shadows of Christ in the Old Testament. There is a way out of that Old Agreement. There is a looking to Christ!

### B. Yahweh is Savior and Judge

**Exodus 34:5–7a** (ESV) — “The LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him [Moses] there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. 6 The LORD passed before him [Moses] and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, 7 keeping steadfast love [covenant loyalty] for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin...”

Don’t forget **Exo. 34:7b**, “but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.”

This tells us of Yahweh’s nature.

**Transition:** What we are going to find now is that this Yahweh is Jesus.

Remember the words of Paul to Timothy in **2 Timothy 4:1**, “I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom”

What makes the difference between whether Yahweh is my Savior or my Judge? It is whether or not I am in covenant with Him. If I put my faith in Him then He will save me. The Old Testament saints made that agreement by looking forward to the Cross. We make that agreement with God by looking back to the Cross.

Look at this covenant God! John 3:16 (ESV) —“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

Jesus is Savior and Judge! Are you in covenant with Him?

### III. **Jesus is Yahweh [Isa. 44:6; Phil. 2; Rev. 1].**

#### A. **Jesus' glory before the world began [Jn. 17]**

**John 17:1-5**, “When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, 2 since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. 3 And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. 4 I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. 5 And now, **Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.**”

What glory?

**John 1:1–3** (ESV) — “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made., 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth”.

#### B. **Jesus claims the titles of the Yahweh of the Old Covenant.**

**Isaiah 44:6**, “Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: **“I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god.”**”

Jesus claims *exclusivity* as God, He also is claims the incommunicable attribute of *eternity*.

**Revelation 1:7-8**, “Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen. 8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.””

Who is this amazing figure? Let's read on and look at **Revelation 1:17-18**, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, 18 and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades."

What did the Redeemer Yahweh of the angel armies say in **Isaiah 44:6**? "his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: "I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god."

**Jesus also claims the power to grant eternal life!**

**John 10:27-30**, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. 30 I and the Father are one."

### C. Jesus has the attributes of Yahweh

We do not have the power of being in ourselves. Yahweh does.

- **The Psalmist says Psalm 100:3**, "Know that the LORD, He is God [*Elohim*]; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture" (NKJV).
- **Paul says it in Acts 17:28**, "In him we live and move and have our being"

Let's consider these statements and compare them with Hebrews and Colossians. The Bible teaches us that we cannot exist for the next five minutes without the sustaining power of Jesus.

- **Hebrews 1:3**, "He [*Jesus*] is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he [*Jesus*] upholds the universe by the word of his power." I woke up this morning on the borrowed strength of Jesus.
- **Colossians 1:14-16**, speaking of Christ, Paul says, "in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. 15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. 17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together."

Our breath and life are sustained by Yahweh, the Great I AM.

### D. The Apostles teach us that Jesus is Yahweh.

**Philippians 2: the Name Above Every Name**

God has given Jesus a Name above all names. God reveals that Jesus has the name that is above every name and commands every rational being to give Him the worship that only Yahweh should have.

Consider **Isaiah 45:20-25** (ESV), "Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, you survivors of the nations! They have no knowledge who carry about their wooden

idols, and keep on praying to a god that cannot save. 21 Declare and present your case; let them take counsel together! Who told this long ago? Who declared it of old? Was it not I, the LORD? And there is no other god besides me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none besides me. 22 “Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. 23 By myself I have sworn; from my mouth has gone out in righteousness a word that shall not return: ‘To me [YAHWEH] every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear allegiance.’ 24 “Only in the LORD, it shall be said of me, are righteousness and strength; to him shall come and be ashamed all who were incensed against him. 25 In the LORD all the offspring of Israel shall be justified and shall glory.”

How does Paul interpret this?

1. Christ’s great *Name*.

Philippians 2:5–11 (ESV) — “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord [YAHWEH], to the glory of God the Father.”

**Verse 9**, “Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the Name that is above every name”. God has literally “super-exalted” Christ by bestowing upon Him in human history the Name that is above every name. Christ is given many titles that are amazing and exalted titles.

He is called King of kings and Lord of Lords. He is called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Father of Eternity, and the Prince of Peace,

***But what is this highly exalted “NAME”?***

- It was such a sacred name that in Leviticus 24, when someone blasphemed “the Name”, they were stoned to death.
- It was so precious a Name, that the scribes when coming upon the Name Yahweh, would take a bath, take up a brand new writing instrument, and write the Name of Yahweh each time they came upon it in transcribing the Old Testament Scriptures.
- [Giving Jesus Christ the name "Lord" which is the Greek for Yahweh, is the ultimate of all honors because he says in **Isaiah 42:8**, "I am the LORD [Yahweh]; that is my name." It is no one else's name. Yahweh is the name that trumps all other titles--the exalted covenant name of the God of Israel—“the Name that is above every name.”]<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Kent Hughes. Philippians. p. 91.

Look at Christ's great Name. He became nothing for you. So we should also become nothing!

2. Christ's great **Fame**. **Philippians 2:10-11**, "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Soon every tongue of every rational being in all creation will confess that Jesus Christ is Yahweh! Every believer will cry at the top of his lungs in voice and song. We with the angels will do it over and over again for all eternity. It is our joy to "rejoice in the Lord always". Every unbelieving heart will confess too--in shock and despair. Even Satan will do it. His knee and his tongue will not be excluded. Every fallen angel will do it. Legion upon legion will do it. Caiaphas will confess Christ as Yahweh. Pilate will do it. Nero, Hitler, Alexander the Great, Stalin, Osama Bin Ladin, every Muslim, every Jew, every Jehovah's witness will confess that Jesus Christ is Yahweh. Every soul from every age will confess that Jesus is Yahweh, King of kings, and Lord of lords!<sup>3</sup>

He will put all enemies under His feet! He will come in the clouds with glory!

**Conclusion:** Jesus is Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel.

**Moses asked God who He was.**

What is your name? He said He was Yahweh. And He sent ten plagues, the tenth being divine justice on the firstborn. He said to sacrifice a lamb and put its blood on the door posts. All those who believed, put their trust in the Lamb and followed Moses through the Red Sea. And what an exodus they had!

And so it is that Yahweh Himself is the Lamb. He delivers us. He gives His blood in the New Covenant. He keeps His covenant with us. Our doctrine can be summed up in one theological expression: Jesus is LORD. That is, Jesus is Yahweh. He is the faithful, loyal, covenant keeping God to all who trust in Him!

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.