

The Hebrew Corner

God is revealed to us in many ways in the Tanach. The names of God that appear in the pages of the Tanach give us an insight into the nature of God. In this discussion, the names of God that are extensions to the tetragrammaton (יהוה) will be considered, starting with a name of God revealed in this passage (Genesis 22:1-14):

“And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together. And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on

the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.”

The name translated as Jehovahjireh is Yahweh Yireh (יהוה יראה, yah-WEH yih-REH) or Adonai Yireh. Yihreh is from the Hebrew verb raah (ראה, rah-AH), which means to see. (In Judaism, the name Adonai or Hashem is substituted for the tetragrammaton, the name of God revealed to Moses, out of respect. Here, for specificity, the name of God will be referred to as Yahweh, although the exact pronunciation is not known.) Here God is seeing or overseeing Abraham's plight, and giving him a remedy, the ram appearing in the thicket. This verb in some usages can mean provide or furnish, which would apply to this passage. The importance to us is that God oversees our situation each day, and will provide what we need if we trust in him.

The name of God given in the following passage (Exodus 15:22-26) reveals another attribute of God:

So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness,

and found no water. And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? And he cried unto the LORD; and the LORD shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them, And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee.”

The English translation, “the LORD that healeth thee,” in this passage is Hebrew is Yahweh Rofecha (יהוה רפאך, yah-WEH roh-FEH-chah), which can also be translated as “the LORD your healer.” Rofecha is from the verb rafa (רפא, rah-FAH), which means to heal. What God is telling the Israelites is that he not only can make their water potable, but he can also heal them. By extension, he can do this for us as well.

As many of the prophets in the Tanach demonstrate fear when encountering God or an angel of God for the first time, so it is for Gideon in this passage (Judges 6:11-24):

“And there came an angel of the LORD, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.

And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites. And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee? And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house. And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man. And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me. Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my present, and set it before thee. And he said, I will tarry until thou come again. And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought it out unto him under the oak, and presented it. And the angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so. Then the angel of the LORD put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the LORD departed out of his sight. And when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of the LORD, Gideon said, Alas, O LORD God! for because I have seen an angel of the LORD face to face. And the LORD said unto him, Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die. Then Gideon built an altar there unto the LORD, and called it Jehovahshalom: unto this day it is yet in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.”

Jehovahshalom in Hebrew is Yahweh Shalom (יהוה שלום, yah-WEH shah-LOHM), which can be translated as “the LORD of shalom, or “the LORD of peace.” God was telling Gideon not to fear for his life, because he was coming to him, not in judgment, but in peace. We need not be afraid of God, even in our sinful nature, because he is the God of shalom, which means he will provide health, peace, and general well being for us.

Next we see God in another light, as one preparing for battle (Exodus 17:8-15):

“Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovahnissi:”

Jehovahnissi in Hebrew is Yahweh Nissi (יהוה נסי, yah-WEH nihs-

SEE), which can also be translated as “the LORD my standard,” or “the LORD my banner.” Nissi is from the Hebrew noun nais (נִס, NAYS), meaning standard (banner on pole used to rally soldiers for battle), ensign, signal, or sign. The sense here is that the LORD rallied the men of Israel to fight against their enemies, the Amalekites. For us, we can also expect that he will raise a standard against the forces of darkness that come against us.

Next, a name of God is revealed that has a strong connection to Jesus, our Yeshua (Jeremiah 33:14-16):

“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness.”

The Hebrew phrase translated as “The LORD our righteousness,” is Yahweh Tsidkenu (יְהוָה צְדִקְנוּ, yah-WEH tsihd-KAY-noo). The passage makes clear, that this name of God will be bestowed upon the city of Jerusalem as well. God is our only source of righteousness, and the only righteousness that we have comes from God through the death and resurrection of his son Jesus, the branch of righteousness referred to in this passage.

Finally, the name for God in the following passage given to a city (which may be referring to the New Jerusalem of Revelation 22), is one that we should pray for every day (Ezekiel 48:30-35):

“And these are the goings out of the city on the north side, four thousand and five hundred measures. And the gates of the city shall be after the names of the tribes of Israel: three gates northward; one gate of Reuben, one gate of Judah, one gate of Levi. And at the east side four thousand and five hundred: and three gates; and one gate of Joseph, one gate of Benjamin, one gate of Dan. And at the south side four thousand and five hundred measures: and three gates; one gate of Simeon, one gate of Issachar, one gate of Zebulun. At the west side four thousand and five hundred, with their three gates; one gate of Gad, one gate of Asher, one gate of Naphtali. It was round about eighteen thousand measures: and the name of the city from that day shall be, The LORD is there.”

Translated as “The LORD is there,” is the Hebrew name Yahweh Shammah (יהוה שמה, yah-WEH SHAH-mah). This is what we should be in constant prayer for: the direct presence of God in our lives. With him being there, no harm can come to us, and we surely will prevail over the circumstances that hinder us. God bless each one of you during the month, and may his presence always be there for you.