

Contents of Set

Names of God

Names of Christ

Names of the Holy Spirit

≡≡≡ NATHAN STONE ≡≡≡

NAMES
OF *J*OD

FOREWORD BY *W* ANN SPANGLER

MOODY CLASSICS

MOODY PUBLISHERS
CHICAGO

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Elohim



THE FIRST QUESTION in some of our catechisms is, “What is the chief end of man?” and the answer is, “Man’s chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.” But we will experience God in such fashion—we will glorify Him and enjoy Him—only in proportion as we know Him. The knowledge of God is more essential for the Christian, and indeed for all the world, than the knowledge of anything else—yes, of all things together. The prayer of the Lord Jesus for His disciples in John 17:3 was: “Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.” And speaking of this, Christ, our Jehovah-Jesus, Paul sums up in Philippians 3:10 the great goal of his life: “I want to know Christ.”

“I suppose if sin had not entered the world,” says one writer, “the acquisition of the knowledge of God would have been the high occupation of man forever and ever.” It is for a lack of knowledge of God that the prophet Hosea informs his people they are destroyed. And it is from the lack of knowledge of God that many

are without spiritual power or life. There is little real knowledge in these days of the one, true God.

There are many ways, of course, in which we may study God. The God who of old time spoke, "unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken to us in his Son," the epistle to the Hebrews tells us. And this Son, Jesus Christ, while on earth said in the great discourse and prayer with God: "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word" (John 17:26).

True, it is in the face of Jesus Christ we best see the glory of God; yet while we are in the flesh we can only know in part at most. And it behooves us to know all we can learn of God. All the Scriptures are profitable to us for instruction and edification, but perhaps not very many people know much about the person of God as revealed in His names. Surely a study of these names should be a most profitable way of increasing that knowledge.

When Moses received a commission from God to go to His oppressed people in Egypt and deliver them from bondage, he said: "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?" (Exodus 3:13).

Now the word *God* or even *Lord*, as we see it in our English Bibles, conveys little more to us than the designation of the Supreme Being and Sovereign of the universe. It tells little about His character and ways. Indeed we cannot say all that the myste-

rious word *God* means to us until we know more about Him. And we can know little of what the word *God* means until we go to the language from which the word *God* is translated, the language that is the first written record of the revelation of Himself, the language in which He spoke to Moses and the prophets.

Missionaries and translators have always had difficulty in finding a suitable word for the Hebrew word we translate God. Those who have attempted to translate this word into Chinese, for instance, have always been divided and still are as to which word is best. One of the greatest of these translations preferred a word that means "Lord of Heaven."

Now a name in the Old Testament was often an indication of a person's character or of some peculiar quality. But what one name could be adequate to God's greatness? After all, as one writer declares, a name imposes some limitation. It means that an object or person is this and not that, is here and not there. And if the Heaven of heavens cannot contain God, how can a name describe Him? What a request of Moses, then, that was—that the infinite God should reveal Himself to finite man by any one name! We can hardly understand or appreciate Moses himself unless we see him in his many-sided character of learned man and shepherd, leader and legislator, soldier and statesman, impulsive, yet meekest of men. We can know David, too, not only as shepherd, warrior, and king, but also as a prophet, a poet, and musician.

Even so, the Old Testament contains a number of names and compound names for God that reveal Him in some aspect of His

character and dealings with mankind. It is our purpose in this series of studies to examine these names and their meanings, their significance for ourselves as well as for those of old.

As one would expect, the opening statement of the Scriptures contains the name *God*. "In the beginning God"! The Hebrew word from which this word *God* is translated is Elohim. While not the most frequently occurring word for the Deity, it occurs 2,570 times. The one that occurs most frequently is the word translated Lord in the King James Version.

Elohim occurs in the first chapter of Genesis thirty-two times. After that, the name Jehovah appears as well as Elohim; and in many places a combination of the two—Jehovah-Elohim. As far back as the twelfth century, students noticed that these different names were used in the Bible, but thought little of it until about the eighteenth century when a French physician thought he discovered the reason for the use of different names of God. He said that the book of Genesis (especially) was based on two other documents, one written by a man who had apparently known God only as Elohim—this was called the Elohist document—and the other written by a man who had known God only by the name Jehovah—this was called the Jehovistic document.

Scholars pursued this theory until they thought there had originally been five or six documents, and even many fragments of documents all pieced and fitted together by a later editor, and then altered and added to by still later editors so that some of the stories we now read in Genesis and other books were made up of

parts of stories from various documents and fragments. Moses was denied authorship of most of the Pentateuch. The theory was carried to such lengths of absurdity that it was far more difficult to believe than the simple, plain declaration of the Bible itself that Moses wrote these things. And indeed who, of all people, could have been in a better position and better able to write them than he? One can only think of many of these scholars that much learning hath made them mad. The point is that they could see no other basis, no other significance for the use of different names for God in the Old Testament than a literary basis—a literary significance—as though there is no significance at all for the spiritual mind. There is a spiritual significance in the use of these different names. It is much more “rational” to believe that the great and infinite and eternal God has given us these different names to express different aspects of His being and the different relationships He sustains to His creatures.

The Meaning of the Word

In order to gain some idea of the meaning of this name of God, Elohim, we must examine its origin and note how, generally, it is used. There is some difference of opinion as to the root from which Elohim is derived. Some hold to the view that it is derived from the shorter word *El*, which means mighty, strong, prominent. This word *El* itself is translated “God” some 250 times and frequently in circumstances that especially indicate the great power of God. For instance, in Numbers 23:22 God is spoken of

as the El who brought Israel up out of Egypt—"he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn" [wild ox] (KJV). The Scriptures make very much of God's mighty arm in that great deliverance. So in the next verse follows: "it will now be said of Jacob and Israel, 'See what God [El] has done!'"

In Deuteronomy 10:17 (KJV) we read that "Jehovah your [Elohim] is God of gods, and Lord of lords, *the God* (or *El*) who is great, mighty, and dreadful." It is this word *El* that is used in that great name *Almighty God*, the name under which God made great and mighty promises to Abraham and to Jacob (Genesis 17:1; 35:11). It is also one of the names given to that promised Son and Messiah of Isaiah 9:6-7—God, the Mighty.

Thus, from this derivation, Elohim may be said to express the general idea of greatness and glory. In the name *Jehovah*, as we shall see more fully, are represented those high moral attributes of God that are displayed only to rational creatures. The name *Elohim*, however, contains the idea of creative and governing power, of omnipotence and sovereignty. This is clearly indicated by the fact that from Genesis 1:1 to 2:4 the word *Elohim* alone is used, and that thirty-five times. It is the Elohim who by His mighty power creates the vast universe; who says, and it is done; who brings into being what was not; by whose word the worlds were framed so that things that are seen were not made of the things that do appear (Hebrews 11:3). It is this Elohim with whose Greek equivalent Paul confronts the philosophers on Mars' Hill saying that He made the world (cosmos) and all things, and

by this very fact is constituted possessor and ruler of heaven and earth; whose presence cannot be confined by space; whose power doesn't need man's aid, for through His great will and power and agency, all things and nations have their very being.

It is most appropriate that by this name God should reveal Himself—bringing cosmos out of chaos, light out of darkness, habitation out of desolation, and life in His image.

There is another word from which some say Elohim is derived. It is *Alah*, which is said to mean to declare or to swear. Thus it is said to imply a covenant relationship. Before examining this derivation, however, it may be well to say that in either case, whether El or Alah, the idea of omnipotence in God is expressed. To make a covenant implies the power and right to do so, and it establishes the fact of "absolute authority in the Creator and Ruler of the universe." So the Elohim is seen making a covenant with Abraham, and because there is none greater, He swears by Himself. "By myself I have sworn." In Genesis 17 we see perhaps a combination of both of these derivations. In verse 1 we have: "I am God Almighty [El-Shaddai]; walk before me and be blameless"; in verse 7: "I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you," that is, to be with them in covenant relationship.

It is the Elohim who says to Noah, "The end of all flesh is come before me." But He cannot completely destroy the work of

His hands concerning which He has made a covenant and so He continues: "But will establish my covenant with you" (Genesis 6:18). "Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth . . . never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life" (Genesis 9:16, 15).

The Elohim remembers Abraham when He destroys the cities of the plain and for His covenant's sake spares Lot. Joseph on his deathbed declares to his brethren: "I am about to die. But [Elohim] will surely come to your aid and take you up out of this land to the land he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" (Genesis 50:24). He is the Elohim who keeps covenant and loving-kindness with His servants who walk before Him with all their heart (1 Kings 8:23).

With regard to Israel, over and over again it is written: "I will be your [Elohim] and you will be my people." The covenant element in this name is clearly seen because of God's covenant relationship to Israel, and this is especially brought out in such passages as Jeremiah 31:33 and 32:40, where the name *Elohim* is used in connection with that new covenant, an everlasting covenant that God will one day make with His people Israel when He will put His law and His fear within their hearts.

To Israel in distress comes the word: "Comfort, comfort my people, says your [Elohim]" (Isaiah 40:1). For the eternal God who covenants for and with them and us will keep His covenant.

The Plural Form

There is one other striking peculiarity in the name *Elohim*. It is in the plural. It has the usual Hebrew ending for all masculine nouns in the plural. A devout saint and Hebrew scholar of two centuries ago, Dr. Parkhurst,¹ defined the word *Elohim* as a name usually given in the Scriptures to the ever blessed Trinity by which they represent themselves as under the obligation of an oath to perform certain conditions. According to this definition the Elohim covenanted not only with the creation but, as the Godhead, within itself, concerning the creation. This is seen from Psalm 110:4, where David says concerning his Lord, the coming anointed One or Messiah: "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: 'You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.'" This is, of course, as the book of Hebrews confirms, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, the first and the last, the eternally begotten Son of God, the object of God's love before the foundation of the world (John 17:24); who shared God's glory before the world was (John 17:5). Colossians 1:16 tells us that by Him or in Him were all things created. But creation is the act of the Elohim. Therefore, Christ is in the Elohim or Godhead. Then even in Genesis 1:3 we read that the spirit of the Elohim moved or brooded over the face of the waters. The entire creation, animate and inanimate, was, then, not only the work of the Elohim, but the object of a covenant within the Elohim guaranteeing its redemption and perpetuation. It is quite clear that the Elohim is a plurality in unity.

So, Dr. Parkhurst continues: "Accordingly Jehovah is at the beginning of creation called Elohim, which implies that the divine persons had sworn when they created."²

It is significant that although plural in form it is constantly accompanied by verbs and adjectives in the singular. In the very first verse of Genesis, the verb *create* is singular, and so all through the chapter and indeed through the Bible. In many places (as in Deuteronomy 32:39; Isaiah 45:5, 22, etc.), we find singular pronouns. "I am [Elohim], and there is no [Elohim] other." Other places in the Scriptures (2 Kings 19:4, 16; Psalms 7:9; 57:2, etc.) use adjectives in the singular with Elohim. In contrast with this, when the word *elohim* is used of heathen gods, plural adjectives are used, as in 1 Samuel 4:8, etc. Then again this one Elohim speaks of Himself as *Us*, as in Genesis 1:26, "Let us make man in our image"; in Genesis 3:22, which speaks of man becoming "like one of us." In 11:7 God says: "Let us go down and confuse their language." In Genesis 35:7 Jacob builds an altar at Bethel, calling it El Beth-El, the God of the House of God because there the Elohim revealed themselves to him. To the sovereign Lord of the universe, the Jehovah of hosts, whom Isaiah saw exalted high upon a throne, is ascribed the threefold Holy, and that same One from the throne calls to the prophet, "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" So instances could be multiplied.

There are some who object to the idea of the Trinity in the word *Elohim*, and it is only fair to say that some conservative scholars as well as liberal and critical would not agree with it,

among them John Calvin. They say that the plural is only a plural of majesty such as used by rulers and kings. But such use of the plural was not known then. We find no king of Israel speaking of himself as “we” and “us.” Besides, the singular pronoun is so often used with Elohim. To be consistent with that view, we should always find not “I am your Elohim,” as we do find, but “*We* are your Elohim.”³

Others call it the plural of intensity and argue that the Hebrews often expressed a word in the plural to give it a stronger meaning—so blood, water, life are expressed in the plural. But as one writer points out,⁴ these arguments only favor the idea of a Trinity in the Elohim. The use of the plural only implies (even in the plural of majesty) “that the word in the singular is not full enough to set forth all that is intended.” With Elohim the plural form teaches us that no finite word can adequately convey the idea of the infinite personality or the unity of persons in the Godhead.

Certainly the use of this word in the plural is wonderfully consistent with that great and precious doctrine of the Trinity, and its use as already shown in the Old Testament surely must confirm that view.

There is blessing and comfort in this great name of God signifying supreme power, sovereignty, and glory on the one hand, for “thine [Elohim] is the power and the kingdom and the glory”; and on the other hand signifying a covenant relationship that He is ever faithful to keep. Thus He says to us, “I will be to you a

God" (Elohim), and we may say, "My [Elohim], in whom I trust" (Psalm 91:2).

Notes

1. Parkhurst, *Hebrew Lexicon* (see Elohim).
2. Ibid.
3. Girdleston, *Old Testament Synonyms*, 39.
4. Ibid.

NAMES OF CHRIST

T.C. HORTON
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THE SEED OF THE WOMAN

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. (*Genesis 3:15*)

"Because He stooped so low God has exalted Him very high" (Philippians 2:9 Arthur Way's Translation). From this first great act and fact in His revelation to that last greater act when He died for our sins on Calvary, and up until the time when God exalted Him very high to sit at God's own right hand in the heavenlies, our Saviour's example was one of profound humility. He came from the bosom of the Father to become the "Seed of the Woman." The one who said, "the words which I have spoken to you, the same shall judge you," was, in His innocence, judged by sinful men and crucified.

Oh, You who humbled Yourself to be born of a woman, who bore our sins in Your own body on the tree, we bow on our faces before You and worship and adore You. May we empty ourselves to be filled by You. Amen.

Offspring of the woman - NIV

THE ANGEL OF THE LORD

And the Angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time. (*Genesis 22:15*)

The "Angel (or Messenger) of Jehovah" was Himself God's message to us. He brought His own message to heal our deep sorrows and losses—He is our sin offering. He gave up His glory to bear our pain through the sacrifice of His own body on the cross.

We worship You, O "Angel of the Lord" and thank You that You are indeed a messenger for our salvation. Let us receive Your message with deep love and gratitude. Amen.

SHILOH (PEACEMAKER)

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. (*Genesis 49:10*)

Israel must walk in darkness under law until the years may seem eternity, but "Shiloh" comes at last and peace with Him. Has Shiloh come to you? And has the peace which passes understanding, the peace *He* made, entered into your soul? For Shiloh came and conquered every foe that could harass you, and He stands today offering the peace He made "that passes knowledge." Have you received it? Has Shiloh come in vain for you? Begin today and "in everything by prayer and supplication make your requests known to Him," and Shiloh's peace shall "calm your heart."

Lord, Your peace passes all our earthly understanding. Help us to remain obedient and faithful to You so that Your peace will remain. Amen.

THE STONE OF ISRAEL

But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel). (*Genesis 49:24*)

The "Stone of Israel," the chief Cornerstone, is rejected by the builders, a Stone of Stumbling, a Rock of Offense, a Foundation Stone, on which alone we build all that shall stand. He makes us a polished, living stone; built in with other stones; perhaps a pillar to stand permanently and always be a part of His temple, for His own indwelling.

Holy Lord, self-offered for my peace; through death that I might live, through fire that I might become indestructible—enlighten me today till I perceive Your peace that passes understanding. Amen.

The rock of Israel - niv

THE PEACE OFFERING

And if his oblation be a sacrifice of peace offering, he shall offer it without blemish before the Lord. (*Leviticus 3:1*)

Is there any point of dispute between your Lord and you? One little thing which you do not surrender? He is right. He cannot change. It is your heart which must surrender. Then can you receive the peace which passes knowledge. He has made the offering which these Old Testament sacrifices prefigured and which atones for all your past, but you must yield your will to Him. Shall it be now?

Lord Jesus, change my heart by Your power that I may know the wonderful blessings of peace with God through Your atoning blood. Amen.

Fellowship offering - NIV

A STAR

I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. (*Numbers 24:17*)

What could be more beautiful or more fitting than that our Lord should be called of God "a Star"? Those who know Him best may say, "I shall see Him, but not now. I shall behold Him, but not nigh." From far beyond our world of trouble and care and change, He shines with undimmed light, a radiant, guiding Star to all who will follow Him—a morning Star, a promise of a better day.

Lord God, Your star is a sign of hope, pointing to the heavens. Let us see You shining brightly as Maker of heaven and earth, and our personal Saviour. Amen.

A SCEPTRE

A Sceptre shall rise out of Israel. (*Numbers 24:17*)

There is a view of Jesus which men are slow to see, but some day all the world shall know that "a Scepter" shall rise out of Israel and evil will be destroyed before His righteousness more swiftly than ice must melt before the glowing sun. It is in the very nature of things that sin must be consumed before His glorious holiness. It can only be the love of sin that blinds the eyes of men to His consuming righteousness.

Search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting. Then melt me, mold me, fill me, and use me. Amen.

THE CAPTAIN OF THE HOST OF THE LORD

And He said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. (*Joshua 5:14*)

The hosts of Israel stand before the gateway to a promised land. No swords are drawn, no skill have they, but with them is an unseen host, and with the host stands "the Captain of Jehovah's Host." Jericho and all the giants of the land submit, and for you, "behind the dim unknown stands God within the shadows keeping a watch above His own."

Captain of the Hosts of God,
In the path where You have trod,
Bows my soul in humble awe—
Take command. Your word is law.

Cause me to possess the land,
Led by Your Almighty hand.
Be my guide, defense and power,
Lead me from this very hour.

Lead me ever onward on the path of righteousness for Your name's sake. Amen.

THE ROCK OF MY SALVATION

The Lord liveth; and blessed be my rock; and exalted be the God of the rock of my salvation. (2 Samuel 22:47)

No graver danger threatens the believer than that of forgetting that he was redeemed—forgetting even as he experiences it what our salvation cost, and who is the rock foundation of our faith. To meet this need our Saviour pictures Himself not merely as the Rock of Ages, and our Strong Rock of Refuge, but “the Rock of our Salvation.” Here, in Him and based upon His merit and atoning grace, we were saved from among the lost. Let us glory in this precious name and never forget that He was “wounded for our transgressions” and that “He bore our sins in His own body on the tree.”

Our precious Lord, may we have all joy and peace in believing that our salvation is built upon a solid Rock, standing through all ages. Amen.

The Rock, my Savior - NIV

THE LIGHT OF THE MORNING

And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds. (2 Samuel 23:4)

No single name or picture of our Lord could possibly reveal Him as the full supply of all our need. Our Lord is to His people not only “the Morning Star,” but when the lights of night shall fade in the dawning day, He becomes “the Light of the Morning.” When all of earth’s years have passed, when all earth’s visions fade and flee away, when the great glory of that morning of our eternal life in heaven shall break upon us, we shall find that He who guided our entire earthly pilgrimage is still our source of life and guidance over there.

Lord God, precious Saviour, Your mercies are new every morning. May the bright star of Your love shine in our hearts, bringing joy at beginning of day. Amen.

THE DAYSMAN

Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both. (*Job 9:33*)

When the day of reckoning comes, when by His just decrees I should hear the sentence which my sins deserve, when I shall stand before the Father, stripped of all pretense and sham, then will I fear no evil, for my "Daysman," Mediator, Arbitrator, will stand and speak for me. Can I do less than bow upon my face and worship Him, now and throughout eternity?

Jesus, You stand in the gap on my behalf, covering my sin. May no evil come between us, but only unbroken fellowship through the mediator of the covenant of grace. Amen.

Arbitrator - NIV

MY SHIELD

But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head. (*Psalms 3:3*)

The storms of life assault us in many forms—demonic oppression, illness, financial worries, weaknesses of many kinds. But our great Shield protects us from them all. Just as at the cross, Christ stands in for us and is able to take the fierce onslaught of all evil, sin, and death.

O God, let us always and everywhere seek the covering of Your mighty Shield in order to remain strong. Amen.

MY GLORY

But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head. (*Psalm 3:3*)

That God is "glory"—or "excellence"—beyond our understanding, none can deny. But do our hearts look up to Him today in humble, earnest worship, and know the truth, and speak the truth—"You are *my Glory*"? Our safety lies in the fact that He possesses us. Our deepest, holiest joy comes only when we humbly say in the hour of secret worship, "You are mine."

O, Lord my Glory, be my shield this day. My head shall lift up to the heavens to Your majesty, and I shall hold my head high, because of Your mighty protection. Amen.

THE LIFTER UP OF MINE HEAD

But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head. (*Psalm 3:3*)

So often our heads are bowed down with worry, guilt, and shame. We should always look up and see the God who is "above" all our circumstances, working to reveal His glory on our behalf.

Oh, You who have given
Your glory to me,
Anoint my blind eyes
Till Your glory I see.
Lift up my bowed head,
Be my shield and my light,
Till Your radiant glory
Shall banish my night.

Lord Jesus, we often glory in earthly things. Put our eyes on things above, where You reign, to know the glory of heavenly things and await Your coming from heaven. Amen.

MY FORTRESS

The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower. (*Psalm 18:2*)

"A mighty fortress is my God," and no evil may reach the soul that shelters there. There is no saint of God who may look back through all the troubled years of any earthly pilgrimage, and not say, if he shall speak truly, "I have been kept by the power of God." Every failure of our lives and each defeat has come when we have sought some earthly fortress rather than our Lord.

I am hiding, Lord, in You. Your walls are impregnable, so I can withstand life's onslaughts. Let our praise to You be as incense, O Lord. Amen.

MY SHEPHERD

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. (*Psalm 23:1*)

To say, "The Lord is *my Shepherd*," must carry with it in our understanding not merely grateful praise for the infinite grace and tenderness of the Great Shepherd who leads us by still waters and in green pastures, but confession of our own helplessness and need of a Shepherd's care. And a remembrance also of our lost, undone condition, until

"All through the mountains, thunder-riven,
And up from the rocky steep,
There arose a glad cry to the gates of heaven,
'Rejoice! I have found My sheep!'"

Lord Jesus, tender Shepherd, lead us forth this day in glad service for You. Feed, care for, and protect us from wolves and allow us to feed in Your green pastures. Amen.

RESTORER

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. (*Psalm 23:3*)

We wander from God and from the paths of righteousness—from following Him beside the still waters—till we lose the way, lose joy, lose the sound of His voice. Then the Master “restores [the only use of this form in the Old Testament] our soul”; “brings us back into His way,” into the paths of righteousness.

O, gracious “Restorer,” bring back my wandering soul as a straying sheep and lead me on in the paths of righteousness “for Your name’s sake.” Lead me in the everlasting way as Your obedient servant. Amen.

THE LORD MIGHTY IN BATTLE

Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. (*Psalm 24:8*)

No life can be lived for God in these difficult days without terrific conflict. Foes within and foes without assail each saint continuously. Principalities and powers are arrayed against the child of God who seeks to serve his Master. We have no might with which to meet “this great host that comes out against us,” but Jehovah, Mighty in Battle, is our Saviour, our Intercessor, Our Elder Brother, our ever-present Friend.

I must fight if I would win; increase my courage, Lord, and save me from the massive array of foes. Protect me from all evil and harm and fill me with Your Holy Spirit. Amen.

KING OF GLORY

Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory. (*Psalm 24:10*)

Jehovah Jesus, the glorious King! Not merely a king, but glorious, excelling all others in mighty truth and power, grace and love. We almost forget for a time His absolute sovereignty as we bow in humble worship before His matchless glory, and cry again and again, "Thy kingdom come," O Glorious King.

Lord Jesus, let us open the gates of our heart so that the King of Glory might come in. You are our hope of glory. Prepare us to be glorified with You. Amen.

MY STRONG ROCK

Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily: be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me. (*Psalm 31:2*)

No sorrow of men is so deep and dark and bitter as to be without a refuge, a rock, a safe retreat. However deep our sorrow, however dark our sin, however hopeless our lot among men, the Man of Sorrows bore our sin in His own body on the tree. He carried all our grief. He is our "Strong Rock." A strong, safe house, in which I am defended from flesh, the world, the devil.

Lord, You are the rock on which we have our testimony. We shall not be moved because You are our solid foundation, a house no one can destroy. Amen.

Rock of refuge - niv

NAMES OF
THE
HOLY
SPIRIT

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THE SPIRIT ABOVE THE WATERS

*Now the earth was formless and empty,
darkness was over the surface of the deep, and
the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.
(Genesis 1:2)*

"In the beginning God created." With these five majestic words, the Bible declares that God Himself stands alone before the creation of the universe. How does He create the world? What is His first step? Genesis 1:2 informs us that the Holy Spirit was "hovering" above the waters. The word "hovering" suggests a bird tenderly protecting her helpless children in the nest.

Although much is shrouded in mystery, we may be sure of this: God's Spirit was there in the beginning, taking the formless mass, moving through the darkness, filling the emptiness, preparing the way for God to speak the creative word and bring light into the world.

Think of it! The mighty Spirit of God hovers over all creation. Without the Spirit, nothing that is made will come into being. He is there in the beginning, He moves through the chaos and darkness, He protects the prenatal creation.

We may be encouraged that God's Holy Spirit still hovers over the darkness today. Though we may not see Him or feel Him or reach out and touch him, yet He is there. He still moves through the emptiness of life, preparing the way for God to bring us out of the darkness and into the light once again.

O Lord, as Your Spirit once hovered over the dark chaos of creation, help me to believe that in the darkness of my life You are still there, still watching, still protecting. Thank You that the light of Your presence will shine again in my life. Amen.

BREATH OF LIFE

And the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being. (Genesis 2:7)

The Hebrew word *ruah* can be translated "breath" or "spirit." The phrase "breath of life," therefore, refers to more than simply the air that Adam breathed. It is the animating life force that comes only from God's Spirit. By itself, the body is simply "the dust of the ground"—a collection of chemical elements bound together as water and protein. But life comes only from the inbreathing of God's Spirit.

All that we are and have we owe to God who has brought us to life by His Spirit. What a contrast to many who boast of their worldly achievements—money, fame, and power. But those things do not last forever. All of it returns to the dust eventually.

Life comes only from God—a fact true both on the physical and spiritual planes. Just as we owe our physical life to the Spirit of God, we also owe our spiritual life to Him as well. For without the "inbreathing" of God's Spirit in the work of regeneration, we could not be born again.

Thank You, Father, for giving me the breath of life. Thank You also for the gracious work of Your Spirit in breathing into me new life through Jesus Christ. Amen.

MY SPIRIT

Then the Lord said, "My Spirit will not contend with man forever, for he is mortal; his days will be a hundred and twenty years." (Genesis 6:3)

Racing across the generations, we come to the evil days before the great Flood. Instead of getting better, mankind had gone steadily downward. From the beauty of Eden, man swam in the gutter of open sin. The mighty sons of God (perhaps human rulers indwelt by evil spirits) saw the daughters of men (women willing to give themselves to immorality). The result of this ungodly union was the "nephilim"—mighty heroes who were themselves "fallen ones" (the literal meaning of the Hebrew word). Though powerful and mighty and able to "fall upon" others, they were sinners doomed to death like all other men.

The world was ripe for judgment because God saw evil covering the earth like a dirty blanket. Every thought of man's heart was rotten and corrupt. But even in this desperate situation, God's Spirit was not absent. He was "striving" or "contending" with mankind. Because He is the Spirit of truth, He constantly strives with men to move them toward truth and righteousness.

But the warning is clear. God's Spirit will not strive with man forever. Those who refuse His voice will eventually face God's judgment. In the days of Noah, God withheld final judgment for 120 years, but the rains of judgment finally fell from heaven,

and a mighty flood covered the entire earth. Only Noah and his family were saved.

No one knows when judgment will finally fall, but sooner or later those who reject God's mercy will face His wrath.

Spirit of God, give me listening ears to hear Your voice speaking to me. May I never take You for granted, but respond quickly to Your leading in my life. Amen.

THE SERVANT

So he said, "I am Abraham's servant."

(Genesis 24:34)

A quick scan of Genesis 24 reveals that the Holy Spirit is mentioned nowhere. What we find instead is a delightful story of the aged Abraham sending his servant five hundred miles to find a bride for his son Isaac. Where is the Holy Spirit in this story? Many Bible students see the servant as a beautiful illustration of the Holy Spirit's work in salvation. In a general sense, we know that Abraham's offering of his son Isaac on Mount Moriah (Genesis 22), is a picture of the Father offering His Son at the cross. A similar symbolism may be seen in Genesis 24. Just as Abraham sought a bride for Isaac, even so our Heavenly Father seeks a bride for His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:26-27). Furthermore, the servant was sent on a particular mission—to find a bride. He travels a great distance with but one goal in mind—to find a bride for his master's son. In the same way, the Holy Spirit moves across the earth wooing and winning men and women for Jesus Christ. The servant says nothing on his own behalf but takes every opportunity to speak well of Isaac. Even so, the Holy Spirit speaks not of Himself but glorifies Christ (John 16:13). When the servant found Rebekah, he gave her gifts just as the Spirit gives gifts to those who are in the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:11). Finally, the servant

personally accompanied Rebekah on the journey to meet Isaac. In the same way, the Holy Spirit draws us into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Perhaps the very length of Genesis 24 (67 verses) shows us something of God's heart for sinners. It was not an easy thing for the servant to find a bride for Isaac. It entailed a long and dangerous journey into unfamiliar territory. But the servant would not be turned away. Neither will the Holy Spirit be turned aside from His holy calling to find a bride for the Son of God.

Thank You, Father, for sending Your Spirit into the world to draw me to the Savior. Amen.

THE SPIRIT OF GOD

So Pharaoh asked them, "Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God?" (Genesis 41:38)

In this case, Pharaoh spoke beyond his own wisdom. As a pagan ruler, he could hardly be expected to know about the Holy Spirit. Yet he recognized something different in Joseph's life, a power that gave him the ability to correctly interpret dreams. Perhaps Pharaoh thought that Joseph was following one of the many gods worshiped by the nations surrounding Egypt. Or perhaps he did in fact know (because Joseph told him) that this was the work of the Spirit of God.

But Pharaoh saw something in Joseph that couldn't be explained through any natural means. It was partly the ability to interpret dreams and partly the wisdom of the man himself. Both came from the Spirit of God.

When the Holy Spirit moves in our lives, even unbelievers will know the difference. Just as Joseph was promoted to become the Prime Minister of Egypt, even so the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives will open doors for greater service to God and man.

Holy Spirit, fill me with Your power so that even those who don't know You may see the difference You make in my life. Amen.

OIL

So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power. (1 Samuel 16:13)

Once the Lord rejected Saul as king, that meant a new ruler had to be found. But where should Samuel begin looking? The Lord directed him to go to "Jesse of Bethlehem," for the Lord had chosen one of his sons to be the next king. But which one would it be? One by one, Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel. Each time the Lord told Samuel, "Not this one." Only one son was left, the youngest, a boy named David, but he was out tending the sheep. When David was brought before Samuel, the Lord said, "He is the one." Whereupon Samuel anointed David with oil, and the Spirit of the Lord came upon him in great power.

Oil is a familiar biblical symbol of the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament, priests and kings were anointed with oil as a means of setting them apart for special service to God. Oil also was used as fuel for lamps and for cleansing and sanctifying. In the New Testament, Jesus sent out the Twelve to minister in His name. They cast out demons and anointed sick people with oil (Mark 6:7-13). In James 5:14 we find instructions regarding elders anointing the sick with oil.

Just as the priests and kings must first be anointed with oil before service can begin, so the power

of the Holy Spirit is necessary for all effective service for God. Just as oil is necessary for the lamp to give off light, so it is the Holy Spirit who gives us power to shine as the light of the world. Just as oil sanctifies priests and lepers, so the Holy Spirit sanctifies the children of God. Anointing the sick with oil reminds both the sick and the well that all true healing rests in God's hands alone.

Psalm 133 compares the oil running down Aaron's beard with the blessing of unity among the people of God. The oil of the Holy Spirit lubricates the body of Christ, bringing together Christians who would otherwise be separated from one another.

Psalm 45:7 mentions the "oil of joy," while Psalm 104:15 speaks of oil that makes the face shine. In Psalm 23:5, David praises God who anointed his head with oil. These passages typify the ministry of the Holy Spirit in bringing joy to the heart of the believer.

Father, Thank You for the oil of the Holy Spirit. May the "good oil" of the Spirit flow through me today. Amen.