

The name of God: What 'Ehyeh asher Ehyeh' means #1

Hi all,

Unless you know Hebrew, the above title may have you wondering what 'ehyeh asher ehyeh' means. It is what the Lord said of Himself when He spoke to Moses from the burning bush in Exodus 3: 14.

When Moses asked for His name He responded (in English): "I am what I am, (ehyeh asher ehyeh) therefore you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you." The phrase 'I AM; being the summary of 'ehyeh asher ehyeh'.

Translated literally from the Hebrew it reveals a future tense that doesn't come across in English: "I will be what I will be". That is certainly 'I AM' which is the timeless and ever-present sovereign God, but for us it also carries a future element - I will be what I will be.

The names of God

A couple decades ago there was a lot of teaching about the redemptive names of God. Especially prominent in the teaching was El Shaddai, the 'all sufficient one', or 'the One who satisfies (fulfills His word)' of Genesis 17:1 when He appeared to Abraham and Sarah.

Then in Genesis 22 at the ram being sacrificed instead of Isaac, Abraham calls Him 'Jehovah Jireh', God my provider. And later we see Jehovah Rapha the healer at the waters of Mara in Exodus 16, and Jehovah Nissi in Exodus 17 when Moses was giving thanks for victory over the Amalekites, calling Him 'God my (victory) banner'. In Jeremiah 23: 5-6 He is called God of Righteousness (Tsidkenu) as well.

All those and the other redemptive names of God are for then and there. They are revealed at an event. They are finite. They have a specific use - the One who fulfills His Word to me in one area, the One who provides in another, the One who gives me the victory in another area.

We live in a finite world

We define our lives by milestones good or bad. We live in seasons of life and death, good and evil, building and tearing down. To us having a finite God who is one moment the provider and another the banner of victory, comes naturally.

And many have rightly referred to Him as 'just' the I AM: You can see Jesus' I AM statement in John 8: 58 when He told the rulers: "Abraham rejoiced to see my day. He saw it and was glad...truly, truly I tell you; Before Abraham was, I AM."

Jesus also called Himself the I AM at His arrest in John 18: 5-6 where it says when they asked for Jesus of Nazareth, He replied the text tells us: "I AM. And when He had thus said 'I AM', they were moved backwards and fell to the ground."

Jesus also claims to be the I AM in Matthew 14: 27-29 He came walking on the water to them, saying literally: "Take courage: I AM; Now stop being afraid. And Peter said, 'Lord, if you are (the I AM) command me to come to you on the water.' Immediately Jesus said, 'Come.'"

(You may be interested in my series, 'I AM; Who Jesus is and Where He Came From' available on our website)

But this 'I AM' of Exodus carries in the Hebrew an element of the sovereign ever-present one: I will be what I will be.

The glorious age is yet future - your best days are ahead of you

All the other names of God have closure - He was the provider, He did fulfill His promise. He was the victory banner over an attack of the enemy. Over and done with, happily ever after, we move on.

But when He calls Himself 'I will be what I will be' or I AM in English, that is both present and future tense.

Think of it this way: We as believers in Jesus, are the only people on earth whose best days are ahead of us. This is revealed in 'ehyeh asher ehyeh'. I will be what I will be.

Ephesians 2: 6-7 agrees with this, saying in v6 we are raised up and seated in the heavenliness with Christ at the right hand of the Father God, and that is given us "...so that in the ages to come He (Father) may continue to show us the riches of His kindness which is towards us in Christ Jesus."

"Now are we the sons of God, but it isn't yet revealed what we shall be." I John 3: 2

Consider the world around you

Consider that evolutionists say we are nothing more than accidents of nature, and therefore morals, ethics, and all right and wrong are for us to determine. But at our core, we are a product of our DNA and bound to that. There are no absolute truths, no absolute at all. When you die you are like a dead bug on the ground - that's it, live for all its worth for that's all there is.

Following this logic leads us to the inevitable conclusion therefore that your life doesn't matter for you are an accident of nature. Therefore life has no value; life and death are for the masses to determine the value of your life. What hopelessness!

If not evolution, then psychology that tells us we are governed by sub-conscious motivations and feelings and if you sort them out then maybe you can find a certain amount of answers and peace. And you probably hate your mother. lol.

If not evolution or psychology, then was Marx right that destiny is determined by economic and societal forces, or like the ancient Greeks is our present and future determined by the stars, or the 3 goddesses called the Fates?

God says He is our God, both present, AND future - He says the ages to come will continue to reveal His goodness and kindness towards us through Christ Jesus. That future you and I have stands in stark contrast to the world around us, and more than that, it makes our faith relevant to the world. We are the only people on the planet with a guaranteed future of blessing and wholeness.

"I will be what I will be", or 'ehyeh asher ehyeh' summed up in I AM, is a revelation of more than a name of God for a specific event, but the core of His very being. He is El Shaddai, and Jireh and Nissi and Rapha and Tsidkenu - all those and more.

But at His core, He is defined not be 'coming through in a time of need' and therefore the preceding names, but He is the One who has promised a glorious future in the timelessness of His realm. He will be what He will be: I AM.

Next week - what this means for free will. Until then, blessings,
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'ehyeh asher ehyeh' #2 - means you are bigger on the inside

Hi all,

The English phrase 'I will be what I will be' or 'I AM', means it is not yet seen what God has in the future.

Because we are in Him it means we too 'will be what we will be'. In short;

You are bigger on the inside than what your life currently reflects on the outside.

Jesus compared the kingdom of heaven to a seed. How many apple trees are in one apple seed? A seed is larger on the inside than it is on the outside. It doesn't matter whether we are talking about mustard seeds, apple seeds, or a coconut, that seed is larger on the inside than it is on the outside, because it has innumerable trees and fruits within it.

The hope and dreams, gifts and talents, you carry in your heart and soul mean you are larger on the inside than what your life reflects on the outside right now. Using myself as an example, I can say that I gave up professional art lessons at age 12 after my dad left our family because I just didn't care about anything after that for several years, until I met the Father when I was 16.

But I still love art, Monet' and Rembrandt in particular. But my all time favorite painting is 'The Shepherdess' painted in 1889 by Bouguereau and hangs in the Philbrook Museum of Art in Tulsa. I have a copy in my office - it reminds me of my wife when we were teenagers, her heart for the Lord, and the Lord's heart as a Shepherd as well. It hangs next to a birthday gift Barb gave me over 30 years ago - a single page from a first edition King James Bible printed in 1611 - of John chapter 10: The Good Shepherd. You didn't know I was such a romantic did you, lol. It's how the Father made me, lol.

At one time I wanted to be an oceanographer or Marine Biologist, and if not that, work in a National Park. I took flying lessons when I was a teen and my dad owned a plane - I still enjoy flying. I love the ocean, and I'm fascinated with gemstones. I'd love to have the time for a real wood shop to make furniture and small boats and truly craft things made of wood. I think wood is one of the most amazing things the Lord invented - it is amazing in variety and uses, and trees, well, I could hug them all day long, lol. I think they are amazing.

What you will be, you will be. We are in Him, He in us. If He will be what He will be - so will we. He is I AM and we are within Him and the Kingdom of I AM. (My apologies to all you translating these words into various languages, sorry to make you jump through linguistic hoops, lol)

How are you larger on the inside than on the outside?

It would be easy to look at our human ailments and limitations, our eventual death and reunion with loved ones and friends in heaven and sigh over dreams unrealized and gifts undeveloped - but that isn't all. Ephesians 2: 7 says the Father will in the ages to come, continue to show forth the riches of His kindness towards us.

If you don't get to see Israel in this life, don't worry about it. Zechariah 14 says the nations of the earth will come to the city every September for 1000 years in a row to worship the King at the Feast of Tabernacles. I can wait.

If you don't have time to unleash and develop those talents God your Creator put inside of you in this life - don't worry, He didn't give you those gifts, didn't create them in you only to never be developed - you have ages to come. Behold, now are we the sons of God, but it doesn't yet appear what we shall be, for we will see Him as He is.

Look at light

The white light we see every day is actually made up of 7 colors, as you may recall from school: ROYGBIV. Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, Violet. At least that is how it is in English, and remembering Roy G Biv helped many a school kid pass a science test.

If you were to take crayons and draw those colors one on top of the other on a piece of paper, you would not have the color white. Nor yellow. Nor anything resembling sunlight. We are reminded of these individual colors during sunrises and sunsets, blood moons and harvest moons, when the light of the sun shines shallow enough across the land to pass through the dust in the atmosphere, which filters out all but the red and orange and sometimes blue wavelengths. Otherwise we'd have no idea white sunlight is made up of those 7 colors.

Your life is like that. An art or music gift here, a talent for numbers there, a love of words here, and a love of flowers there. An ability to work with your hands here, and a natural cook there - all seemingly unrelated gifts, talents, and naturally occurring-in-you interests, yet they all combine to make you 'what you will be you will be' in the ages to come. But right now, they make up you - unique, there has never been anyone like you nor will there ever be.

The Father God is massive enough and creative enough that He is able to take slivers of His personality and create them in us - for we came from Him so He of course must first possess these qualities. As a composite therefore like a giant jigsaw puzzle, we as a whole make up the body and

personality of Christ. Everything from our sense of humor to sense of justice - it all came from Him. Every single person conceived starts with elements of His personality that come together to form us.

When Jesus said in Luke 6: 38 when you give it shall be given back to you, good measure, shaken together, pressed down and running over; He said giving in the Lord never leaves your life, it merely enters into your future to provide for you at some future date. Your giving enters into your future and will be a provision in the future.

When we give our love, resources, lives and wisdom to others, none of that leaves us for people are eternal. All we give to others merely enters into our future and will be sent back to us when our time catches up to that future time. Nothing is wasted that involves giving to people, pouring out our lives for them.

The phrase: "ehyeh asher ehyeh" or "I will be what I will be: I AM has spoke to you" from Exodus 3:14 told ancient Israel while still slaves in Egypt, that they had a future. They had a promised land, for He knew they were only slaves on the outside, but were much larger on the inside. We are already living in eternity. We don't die and enter eternity, we are right now in eternity. You will never really die, you just change addresses for awhile. You will be what you will be...

Continuing next week....until then blessings.

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Name of God: ehyeh asher ehyeh means hope #3

Hi all

As we close out this study of the 'I AM' name of the Lord, or 'I will be what I will be', we need to realize how His exclamation to Moses set Israel apart from all other nations, and indeed, all other philosophies even to our day.

God invented hope

Before Abraham, God had not revealed Himself in such a way since the days of Noah, and wouldn't again until Moses. Abraham is the only person of the Old Testament called the friend of God. Think of that - not Adam, not Noah, not Moses or Elijah. Only Abraham is called the friend of God in the Old Testament. (II Chronicles 20: 7, Isaiah 41:8, James 2: 23)

Abraham lived among pagan religions whose greatest hope was that the gods wouldn't be angry with them. There was no escape; appeasing the gods by sacrifice was how mankind lived, without hope of breaking free into a state of blessing.

When the Lord appeared to Abraham everything changed. Now a person could know the Lord, actually know Him. He and Abraham were friends, and God offered the promise of that friendship to Abraham's offspring as well.

We could say then that God, and Israel, invented hope for the whole world. "I will be what I will be" by itself would mean nothing to mankind, for it is God's statement of self-existence. It would mean nothing to mankind unless He also extended an opportunity for man to enter into covenant with Him - to be one with Him: He in us, us in Him. And that's exactly what He did.

The friend of God

When He became Abraham's friend, and when He appeared to Moses to expound upon that relationship with Abraham's descendants, that change everything. Hope was extended to mankind: You have a future in Me. The burdens and pain of this world will not last forever, in Me there is peace and a certain future. "I will be what I will be: Come along with Me!"

Israel was different from the pagan nations around them. Those people lived and died and as far as they knew, that was that. Maybe they would come back in a lower animal form, maybe man ceases to exist after death. Maybe it was like the Egyptians who believed the 'ka' (body in death) and 'ba'

(personality/soul) just go to a kingdom of the dead. Up to the point of Abraham, nobody knew what lay beyond.

And when God appeared to Moses and said "I will be what I will be" He was saying "I am what lies beyond death" and essentially, "I want to be in covenant with you, and you with me, that where I am you may be also". It gave mankind hope and certainty. The future according to God and those in Him, is bright, and He is already there in our future. He is the I AM. He is already there. God through Israel brought hope to the world.

What is hope?

The Bible definition of hope is 'a favorable and confident expectation'. That is different from the modern, often American and western use which suggests 'hang in there baby' like a kitten clinging to a tree branch by its claws - just hang in there, hope for the best, just a while longer! That's not Bible hope. Bible hope is 'a confidence expectation'. That's why "I will be what I will be" is a revelation of certainty, of hope, of an expectation of a known future.

Hope is of the mind, the soul, the emotion and thoughts. Hebrews 6: 17-20 lays this out for us concerning Abraham:

"God also bound himself with an oath, so that those who received the promise could be perfectly sure that he would never change his mind. So God has given both his promise and his oath. These two things are unchangeable because it is impossible for God to lie. Therefore, we who have fled to him for refuge can have great confidence as we hold to the hope that lies before us. This hope is a strong and trustworthy anchor for our souls. It leads us through the curtain into God's inner sanctuary. Jesus has already gone in there for us..." New Living Translation

Hope is the anchor for our souls - our emotions, thoughts, feelings, reasonings. An anchor is firmly planted unseen on the sea floor, and it allows the boat to swing with the path of least resistance to the storms. The boat of your life may swing this way and that with the storms coming against you, but that anchor is firmly attached, unseen, holding your soul steady. Hold fast to your hope.

Hope springs from revelation, in the context above, revelation from God who gave a promise to Abraham, then confirmed it by promising the same to him. From revelation comes hope, and from hope, faith is born. Faith is the evidence (witness in our spirit) of things hoped for (in our soul by revelation), the certainty of things for now unseen.

Notice that hope though it is of the soul, goes 'within the veil'. Hope enters heaven to give us that certainty. That is your anchor, fixed in the hope of heaven where Jesus has already gone ahead for us.

We may not yet know heaven by experience, but we know it. We have that revelation, that certainty, inside us. That revelation fills our souls with hope, with joy, with peace, knowing our lasting citizenship is there and we are travelers passing through this dying world.

God invented hope by revealing He is the I AM, the 'I will be what I will be', and saying, 'Come along with Me!' What grace! What peace! Our world needs hope now as much as ever, and you and I are stewards of that hope for them. New subject next week, until then, blessings,
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