

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

7-DAY MINI STUDY



A GATHERING WELL BIBLE STUDY

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WHAT'S IN A NAME?

An 7-day Mini Study designed to draw you into God's Living Word.

This study is meant to help you grow closer in relationship to God.

Just like how all our relationships look different, so too do each of God's relationships with His children. You are one of those children!

God's relationship with you will look a little different than others around you, and that's a good thing! God is a personal and intimate God.

We encourage you to actively engage in this study.

It's recommended that you find a quiet space free of clutter and dedicate time to your study.

Answer the response questions as thoroughly and thoughtfully as you can. Find the Scripture references in your Bible and explore the surrounding context.

You have permission to be confused about things. The fun part about studying the Bible is seeking out and discovering the answers!

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Printable Bookmarks and Flashcards

Icon Key

This study follows the basic layout below. Please note that some Days have multiple pages, and that some Days have more or less content than others.



Directions and reflection question(s).



*Read this
Scripture*

Space to write a response.

Information to read about the Scripture, questions, reflections, and other thoughts to guide you through the study.



A “deep dive” section that is completely optional. Usually requires background knowledge to complete.

Space to write a response.



A prayer that you can say outloud or write in a journal.

This line indicates the end of content for that Day.

Introduction

I'm MJ to a stranger, Ms. Jones to my former students, Miriam to my friends, and Mimi to my family. I'm a former-teacher, coworker, friend, daughter, sister, and so on. I'm many people, and at the same time, one whole person.

I make myself known by a more impersonal name to someone I don't know. Those who know me better, know my more meaningful names. **They're all pieces of me, but not one of these names or roles completely defines who I am.**

And so it is with God.

The Trinity - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

He's Creator, Master, Lord, King.

He's Father and Shepherd and Beloved.

He's Friend, Counselor, Healer, Helper.

He is the Alpha and the Omega, everything. He made everything in his image. So all of our relationships can point us to a side of who God is.

Strangers to him can't know his real names. Some are strangers to him because they don't try to get to know him, or because they form assumptions about him. Many don't know him yet because they haven't been told that they can or invited to do so. He reveals his names to those who seek him.

Just like how we get to choose to reveal ourselves more and more to those who love us, so too does God. Each of our relationships are unique, and so too it is with God.

God wants to be loved, just like we do.

God yearns to be sought.

God longs to be known.

Can we blame him? Do we seek anything less from those who truly love us? How much more so it is with God.

Throughout the course of this study, you'll explore the idea of "name" as it applies to God, the Bible, and you. My hope is that you'll leave this study closer to yourself and God than you were when you began.

miriam jones

Writer and Designer for
Content Development at TGW



What do you already know about the names of God, or the power of our words?

If these topics are new to you, what are you hoping to get out of this study?



“God, I’m looking forward to drawing close to you through your Word over the next several days. What do you want to show me? Here I am. Help me be present and listen. In Jesus name, amen.”

DAY 1

seeking



Read the verses, then answer one set of the following questions based on your experience.



Jeremiah 29:13

1 John 4:19

If you're new to seeking God:

In what ways have you seen or heard of others seeking God?

.....

.....

In what ways do you want God to show up for you?

.....

.....

.....

If you've sought God for any length of time:

In what ways have you sought God?

.....

.....

In what ways has God shown up for you?

.....

.....

.....

Even if we've been avid God-seekers our whole lives, sometimes we fall short of what we think the standard might be. But the best part about being in a relationship with God is that he still loves us, and more than that, is always pursuing us. We don't always see it. Still, he loves loving you.



"God, thank you for making yourself known to humanity, and to me, even though I might not see it right now. Please give me eyes to see and ears to hear. I can't wait to learn more about you! In Jesus name, amen."

DAY 2

names God gave himself



Read the chapter, then answer the following questions.



Exodus chapter 3

Topic verse: 3:14

Other than acknowledging himself as the same God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, what name does God give himself? If you're able, look up as many variations of this name as possible.

What does this name mean? Give it your best guess.

God reveals himself as "I Am Who I Am." The English-equivalent spelling of the original language is YHWH. You might be familiar with the vowels added, Yahweh, or in another version, Jehovah.

When God says "I Am Who I Am" it implies authority and finality. God is who he says he is. Not who anyone else says he is.

What does it mean for God to be God?



Reflect on the stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. If you had to come up with one sentence or phrase that summed up the meaning of each of these men's lives, what would it be?

Hint: what kinds of promises or struggles did they have with God?

Abraham:

.....

Isaac:

.....

Jacob:

.....

Based on the question above, what does God mean when he says he's the God of a specific person, based on the meaning of their name?

For example: Since God changed Jacob's name to "Israel," which means, "he who wrestles with God," who does that make God the God of?

.....

.....



"Yahweh, you are the Great I Am. I'm intrigued by your name. Holy Spirit, please continue to help me understand who you say you are. In Jesus name, amen."

DAY 3

names God gave others



Read the following characters' stories. As you read, consider, what new names does God give them and why? Then, fill out the chart.

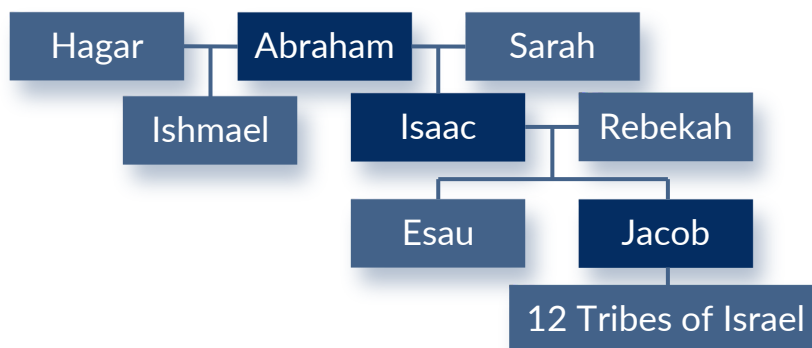
	Old Name	New Name	Why was their name changed?
Genesis 17:1-8	Abram →
Genesis 17:15-22	Sarai →
Matthew 16:13-20	Simon →

Looking at the name changes of Abram to Abraham and Sarai to Sarah, you'll notice the new name of each now has an "h."

Look both ways to make sure no one's looking, then make the "h" sound out loud (as if you're about to say "hat")... what do you notice about your breath when you do this?

You might have heard the phrase, "God's breath of life." Some scholars believe that God adds this "h," or breathing-out sound, to AbraHam and SaraH's names to represent how he has breathed life into their family line.

As you continue your studies of God's Word, you'll learn more about the timeline of the Bible, and will see that Abraham and Sarah are the genesis of God's chosen people, the Israelites. In Day 6 we'll continue to explore how the genesis (or "beginning") of anything in this world starts with God breathing a word.



Think back to yesterday to some of the versions of God's name. One of them is Yahweh. Say the name "Yahweh" out loud...

This English version of the Hebrew name includes vowels so that we can better pronounce it, but a more appropriate spelling is YHWH. Try saying this out loud...

What do you notice about the way your breath and mouth moves when you say it?

Some people believe that YHWH emulates the rhythm of breathing in and out, so that we would be saying God's name in every breath we take - as we breath in and out. Others consider this name to be inutterable, to represent the mysteriousness of God.

There will never be any human word that can fully express who God is in a single name. Similarly, is there a single word that can sum up all of who you are? How much more complex and mysterious is God than us!



God, thank you so much for your breath of life in me. Every breath I breathe is a gift from you, and a reminder of how much I need you. Help me to take a deep breath and be present in every moment today. In Jesus name, amen."

DAY 4

names others gave God



Read the following characters' stories. As you read, consider, what "nick-names" did they give God and why? Then, fill out the chart.

If you are able to look up both the original Hebrew and the English translation of each name, please do so.



Genesis 16

Exodus 17:8-16

Person	God's Nick-Name	Why this nick-name?
Hagar
Moses



If you have access to the internet, look up "Names of God in the Bible." What other names did we miss from above? Who gave the name and why? What are the Hebrew words for them?

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"God, you are the One Who Sees Me. You are my Banner. Please continue to reveal to me what these names mean. Who are you to me? Who am I to you? Thank you that even when I don't feel like anyone understands me, you see me and fight for me. You are here. In Jesus name, amen."



Read the chapter, then answer the following questions.



Genesis
chapter 1

What action does God do to make things come to life or into being? What actions are not required?

As beings that are made in God's image, what can we learn about the power of our words based on this text?

While we aren't God and can't make things appear out of nowhere just by saying them, we *can* speak either life or death into things based on the way we think about, talk to, and talk about things.

What words have others spoken over you that impacted you the most?

What words do you tend to speak over yourself?

.....

.....

.....

What words do you tend to speak over others?

.....

.....

.....

Take a moment to read back over your responses to the previous questions.

Consider, do your words tend to be positive or negative, encouraging or destructive? Is there a pattern to the types of words used across the 3 questions? What else do you notice about your responses?

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Zephaniah 3:17



“God, please help me to see where my words are speaking death. I see that that’s not how you made me to be. I’m sorry for speaking that way. Please forgive me. Thank you for Christ who died for me, and thank you for your forgiveness through Him.

As your image bearer, show me how to speak life like you. Help me to create an environment around me that speaks life into myself and others.

God, you speak life, because you are Life. What words do you speak over me? I know they’re good. Help me hear what you sing over me!

In Jesus name, amen.”



Search scripture for what God says about you. It’s His *Living Word*. Follow His lead and see where he takes you. Remember that he loves you more than anything, and can’t wait to show you what he thinks of you.

Write down what he reveals to you and keep it somewhere you can see it regularly.

After taking some time to soak in God’s love for you, notice what you say about yourself and others throughout the day. If they tend to be negative, ask God to show you the next step he wants you to take in transforming your interactions into positive ones.

Consider writing the names of 3 people below that you spend a lot of time with, and write a few genuine phrases you could say to them that would encourage them. Then, find time to tell them!

DAY 6

the original job of man



Read the chapter, then answer the following questions.



Genesis
chapter 2

Besides tending the Garden, what else does God have Adam do?

.....

Why might God let Adam name the animals?

.....

Think about your friends and family. Is it more fun for them to watch you do an activity, or for them to join you in it? What kinds of things do you enjoy doing with friends and family?

.....

.....

.....

Take a moment to reflect, when have you noticed you feel closest to God? What were you doing? Does it have to do with any skills or gifts God has given you?

.....

.....

.....

.....

What can you learn about God's character based on the time you spend with Him?

As you continue throughout the week, make a mental note about what you're doing when you feel closest to your loved ones and to God.



"Holy Father, thank you for inviting me to be involved in your world. Help me notice when you invite me to spend time with you today. And, help me continue to practice speaking life instead of death. In Jesus name and by His Holy Spirit, amen."



DAY 7

what's your name?

What's your name? Literally, what's the name on your birth certificate? What do people call you?

Hopefully you've learned by now that all names have meaning. Words are meaning. So - what does your name mean?



Reflect and answer the following questions.

If you're able, ask your parents why they named you what they did. Is it a family name? Did it have a particular meaning for them? Did they like how it sounded?

What about your last name? Do you know what your family name means? If you still have any living great -grandparents, -aunts, -uncles, etc., what can they tell you about your family heritage? What does their name mean to them?

Regardless of if you have access to family members or records, look up your name. First, middle (if you have one, or multiple), and last.

What does each of your names mean? What language do they come from? When you put them all together, what kind of story does it tell?

Ask God in prayer what your name means. And, regardless of what you're called on earth, ask God what he says your name is!



“Hey God, I’m excited to learn more about my name. Please help me learn all that I can about it. What’s my real name to you? What do I mean to you? Who did you create me to be?”

I know that as I seek to know your name more, you’ll show me more about my name. You are Good, and I can’t wait to hear from you. Please give me ears to hear.

- In anticipation, from your son/daughter, [your name], in Jesus name, amen.”



Revelation 2:17

So, let me ask again, what is your name?

You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.

JEREMIAH 29:13

we love because

he

first loved

us

1 John 4:19

God said to Moses

I AM *who* I AM

Exodus 3:14

The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.

Zephaniah 3:17

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white name, written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.



Revelation 2:17

Flashcards: What's in a Name?

Printable double-sided flashcards



Jeremiah 29:13

1 John 4:19

Exodus 3:14

Zephaniah 3:17

Revelation 2:17

Flashcards: What's in a Name?

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<p>We love because he first loved us.</p>	<p>You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.</p>
<p>The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.</p>	<p>God said to Moses, "I Am Who I Am." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'I Am has sent me to you.'"</p>
	<p>He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.</p>



THE GATHERING WELL

Helping Everyday People Become
Everyday Leaders Who Know, Follow
and Grow with Jesus.

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