



SERMON BASED STUDY GUIDE

Pastor Charlie Riley

MORE THAN A NAME WEEK 1

OPENING & PRAYER:

Humanity has always struggled to see God clearly, and the biblical names of God function as deliberate revelations that correct distorted images and steady faith. From the opening words of Genesis—where Elohim, a plural and covenantal title, announces creative power and communal divinity—each Hebrew name identifies an attribute, an action, and a response God intends toward people. Names are not casual labels in Scripture but promises to be claimed: Jehovah Rapha as healer, Jehovah Shalom as peace, Jehovah Jireh as provider, and the sacred tetragrammaton Yahweh (YHWH) revealed to Moses as the present, self-sufficient “I AM.” These designations address concrete human needs and shape faithful expectations.

“Lord, thank You for bringing us together at this moment right now. We ask that You would stir our hearts and minds to be curious about You and kind to one another. Please reveal more of Yourself to us as we grow closer to You and one another. We thank You for this small group time we’re about to have. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

SCRIPTURE:

The name of the Lord is a fortified tower; the righteous run to it and are safe. **Proverbs 18:10**

that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, **Philippians 2:10**

Genesis 1:1 "In the beginning God..." (Elohim)

Genesis 1:26 "And God (Elohim) said, Let Us make man in Our image,..."

When God made His promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for Him to swear by, He swore by Himself, saying, "I will surely bless you and give you many descendants." And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised.

Hebrews 6:13-15

I will praise You forever, Because You have done it; And in the presence of Your saints I will wait on Your name, for it is good. **Psalm 52:9**

But let all those rejoice who put their trust in You; Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them; Let those also who love Your name Be joyful in You. **Psalm 5:11**

But let all those rejoice who put their trust in You; Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them; Let those also who love Your name Be joyful in You. **Psalm 5:11**

Our help is in the name of the Lord, Who made heaven and earth. **Psalm 124:8**

"Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high, because he has known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him. Psalm 91:14-15

O Lord, I pray, please let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant, and to the prayer of Your servants who desire to fear Your name; and let Your servant prosper this day, I pray, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man." **Nehemiah 1:11**

Then I called upon the name of the Lord: "O Lord, I implore You, deliver my soul!" **Psalm 116:4**

And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord Shall be saved.' **Acts 2:21**

For "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." **Romans 10:13**

GO DEEPER:

The teaching traces the human tendency to question God's goodness back to Eden, where doubt about God's provision led to a false belief that God was withholding life and status. In response, God systematically disclosed himself through names that meet need and confirm His covenant. These names were given by God, not invented by people. The name Elohim in Genesis signals both omnipotence and an oath-keeping character: God as the all-powerful, covenantal Lord who brings his word to pass. The revelation of YHWH to Moses emphasizes God's immediacy and sufficiency—"I am who I am"—a present-tense assurance for daily dependence.

Knowing these names makes God's actions predictable in motive, if not in outcome, and deepens worship, prayer, and trust. Names invite specific reverence. We call on the God who heals, the God who is peace, the God who fights for his people. So that His hope, joy, protection, and power arise from confident dependence rather than vague sentiment. The Old Testament's manifold names also form the hermeneutical grid that identifies Jesus in the New Testament as the fulfillment of those attributes, tying salvation to the revealed character of God. The names therefore function as both theology and practice: doctrinal windows into God's nature and practical tools for claimable faith in trouble, healing, covenant, and salvation.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. Names reveal God's character. Knowing the names is not an academic exercise but a route into the reality of who God is. Each Hebrew title highlights motives, emotions, and actions—what God loves, resists, and accomplishes—so a believer can expect consistent divine behavior rooted in covenantal character. That clarity reshapes prayer, obedience, and endurance in suffering. **[05:45]**

2. Elohim declares divine plurality. The opening name Elohim carries plurality and covenant weight, signaling creative power exercised in relational fullness. Recognizing Elohim prevents flattening God into a solitary abstraction and points toward the relational, oath-bound nature of divine action toward humanity. This informs how people understand authority, intimacy, and promise. **[20:08]**

3. YHWH is present: "I AM". The tetragrammaton YHWH—rendered as "I am who I am"—focuses faith on God's immediate sufficiency rather than past glories or future plans. This name comforts when needs are urgent; it insists that God's presence and power meet the present moment, not merely theological categories. Worship anchored in "I AM" becomes trust in a present God. **[30:37]**

4. Claim specific divine names. God gives names to meet needs, and believers are invited to call those names in prayer and crisis. Invoking Jehovah Rapha, Jehovah Shalom, or Jehovah Jireh aligns human hope with divine promise and makes prayer more precise and expectant. That practice cultivates courage, hope, and perseverance rooted in divine character. **[16:41]**

LEARNING AND GROWING:

1. In Genesis 1:26, the text uses the words "us" and "our." How does the Hebrew name *Elohim* explain this usage, and what does it reveal about the nature of God right from the beginning? **[21:40]**
2. The sermon notes that in our English Bibles, different Hebrew names are often all translated simply as "Lord" or "God." How does this translation limitation potentially rob a reader of the richness of God's specific character attributes in a given passage? **[19:16]**
3. The enemy often tries to convince us that God is "holding out" on us, just like he suggested to Adam and Eve. In what specific area of your life—whether finances, relationships, or career—are you currently tempted to believe that God is withholding His best from you? **[03:58]**
4. Proverbs 18:10 says the name of the Lord is a fortified tower where the righteous run for safety. When stress or trouble hits, we all have places we run to for comfort (food, entertainment, venting to friends). How can you practically "run" to God's character instead when you feel overwhelmed? **[06:24]**
5. *Elohim* is the all-powerful Creator who keeps His word. Is there a promise in Scripture that you have stopped believing because it seemed impossible? How does remembering God as *Elohim*—the one with all power who swears by Himself—help revive your hope in that promise? **[25:02]**

CLOSING PRAYER:

"Father, thank you for the opportunities to grow in our faith. We will continue to lean on Your Word as we grow to bring people to know you. In Jesus' name we pray, amen."