

# NAME ABOVE ALL NAMES

## YAHWEH THE SELF-EXISTENT ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Exodus 3:1-22 & John 8:48-59

The first time we encounter the name Yahweh is in Exodus 3:14-15, when God appears to Moses in the burning bush. Moses asks what name he should give the Israelites to validate his mission, and God replies: “I AM WHO I AM... Say this to the people of Israel: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” God then identifies Himself as Yahweh, “the God of your fathers... This is my name forever.”

The name Yahweh comes from the Hebrew root hayah, meaning “to be.” It expresses God’s self-existence, eternal nature, and unchanging character. He is not defined by anything or anyone else. He simply is. Yahweh does not evolve or grow; He is complete, perfect, and constant. In a world of shifting sands, Yahweh is the unmoving and unchanging Rock.

This name reappears consistently throughout the Old Testament (over 6,000 times!), reminding God’s people that He is not a distant deity but their covenant Lord—eternally faithful and intimately present. One striking echo of this truth comes in John 8:58, when Jesus tells the Pharisees, “Before Abraham was, I am.” He wasn’t just using strange grammar—He was claiming the divine name. Jesus is Yahweh in the flesh: ever-present, ever-powerful, and worthy of our worship.

So what does it mean to walk with a God who simply is? It means He is always with you, always faithful, and always sufficient. You don’t have to wonder if He’ll change His mind. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8). And you can stake your life on that.

### BREAK THE ICE

**If you had to introduce yourself to a room full of strangers using just one word, what would it be?**

### READ IT

**Read Exodus 3:1-22 & John 8:48-59**



In Acts 17:25, Paul affirms that God is “not served by human hands, as though he needed anything.” John Piper reflects on this in light of Exodus 3: “The burning bush blazes without fuel. That’s the point. God depends on nothing to be what He is. He is absolute. He is the fuel of His own flame. And yet, He sends Moses. That’s not necessity—it’s mercy.”<sup>2</sup>

3. If God doesn't need anything (Acts 17:24–25), why do you think He chooses to involve people like Moses—or us—in His redemptive work? How does that shape how you view your own calling?
4. How would your relationship with God change if you believed more deeply that He is completely self-sufficient and doesn't need your performance, effort, or validation—yet still chooses you?

Though Yahweh is self-existent and transcendent, Exodus 3 reminds us that He also draws near. He sees, hears, knows, and comes down (vv. 7–8). Tony Evans says, “God’s transcendence does not keep Him from involvement. Yahweh is high and lifted up, but He is not removed. He is intimately engaged with His people’s pain and deliverance.”<sup>3</sup>

5. Moses felt inadequate for the task God gave him, but Yahweh's response wasn't about Moses' ability—it was "I will be with you." How does God's presence, not just His power, give us strength when we feel unworthy or overwhelmed?

<sup>2</sup> Piper, John. "I AM Who I AM," *Desiring God*, Jan. 9, 1984.

<sup>3</sup> Evans, Tony. *Theology You Can Count On*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2008, p. 175.

6. Exodus 3 shows Yahweh as a God who sees, hears, knows, and comes down to rescue. What does this say about the immanence of God? How have you experienced Yahweh's nearness in your own life?
7. Why is it important to worship a God who is both transcendent (above all) and immanent (with us)? How does Yahweh's name help keep that balance in your understanding of who God is?

Yahweh introduces Himself as "the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Exod. 3:6). This signals that the God who was faithful in the past is faithful still. Sinclair Ferguson writes, "The name Yahweh is not merely a theological statement; it is a covenantal pledge. He has bound Himself to His people and will not go back on His word."<sup>4</sup>

8. How does God's unchanging nature—as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—anchor our faith today? In what ways has Yahweh shown Himself faithful to you over time?

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<sup>4</sup> Ferguson, Sinclair. *The Whole Christ*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2016, p. 103.  
Studies were compiled and questions were written by the VBC Pastoral Team.