

Who is My God?

Sermon, May 16, 2021

Scripture reading: Exodus 20:1-17

Golden verse: *"I AM that I AM."* Exodus 3:14

Dear Beloved,

Today we continue to study the prayer which the Lord Jesus Christ taught to his disciples, giving them an example of HOW to pray.

The very first and most important question we have to clarify here is: **WHO IS MY GOD?**

Studying the world's religions, we notice that different nations and different cultures created their own gods based on their own imagination. People tried to imagine what gods would do, how gods would look, and they tried to give them an image. Some cultures sorted out their gods' tasks and responsibilities. To some of the gods, people gave more or less power or respect. Different cultures believe in different gods who are destroying things, who are fighting with each other, or who are furious and mad at people. Even the Israelites, after they left Egypt, created a golden calf, saying: *"These are your gods, oh Israel, who brought you out from Egypt."* (Exodus 32:8)

The God Almighty told us who He is and what His plans are with us. His main plan is to make us happy, satisfied, and joyous. He said: *"I am your God. You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath."* (Exodus 20:3-4)

We did not create our God. God came to us and introduced Himself to us first through the prophets. Based on His actions, in the Old Testament, God has different names.

I would like to present to you a few names of God in the Bible. This list of names of God helps us experience how majestic God is and how deeply He loves us.

Yahweh - The self-existent One. He has always existed and will always exist. You can always rely on Him because He is your eternal source of strength.

Adonai - God is the Lord over all. He is the King of kings and the Lord of lords, He reigns forever. Therefore, you find safety in Him and Him alone.

Yahweh-Maccaddeshem - The Lord your sanctifier. He forgives our sins, and His Holy Spirit works in our lives to become like He is: pure, loving and true.

Yahweh-Rohi - The Lord my shepherd. He cares for you, the way a shepherd tends his sheep. He leads you to still waters and green pastures.

Yahweh-Shammah - The Lord who is present. He never leaves you, nor forsakes you. He is with you forever. Your best friend, who never betrays you.

Yahweh-Rapha - The Lord our healer. *“By His stripes we were healed”* declares the Bible.

Yahweh-Jireh - The Lord will provide. He cares for us and we never need to worry about provision. He is our source of life, in every way.

Yahweh-Shalom - The Lord is peace. Whenever there are storms in your life, hide in Him. He is your shelter in the storm. He gives peace beyond understanding, even when circumstances are chaotic. He is our shelter and our shield.

Yahweh-Sabaoth - The Lord of Hosts, the Captain of the armies of heaven.

Elohim - God is creator, powerful and mighty, Lord of lords. He is the Lord Most High, stronger and mightier than anyone or anything. When you face impossible circumstances or adversaries, know that your God is stronger.

El-Elyon - The most high God. There is none above Him.

El-Gibhor - Mighty God. The Lord is mighty to save. His arm is not too short. Whatever problem you are facing, know that your God is El-Gibhor, MIGHTY!

El-Olam - The everlasting God. God is eternal, while your problems are temporary. His love will never change. His promises are true.

El-Roi - The strong one who sees. When you feel lonely and abandoned by people, know that God is with you. He sees you and He knows you. He hears the cry of your heart and He loves you more than you can imagine. He will lead you through and fill your heart with His praise.

The Ultimate Name of God: I AM. When Moses encountered God at the burning bush, he asked what His name was. God replied: *“I AM that I AM... You must say this to the Israelites, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”* (Exodus 3:14) God made it clear

to Moses that He is eternally present. He has always been, He is now, and He will always be. This name of God also speaks about His eternal presence with His people. He is present to help us, comfort us, guide us, and so much more. His presence never leaves you, and He will always be with you. That is the greatest comfort we can ever find, and we learn it from the very name of God: I AM. When God revealed His name, He said: 'I AM ALWAYS WITH YOU!'

Two thousand years ago, God came to us as a human being in Jesus Christ.

Since Jesus Christ, our God's name is OUR FATHER. Paul reminds us in Romans 8: 15: *"The Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by Christ we cry, 'Abba, Father.'"*

Who is my God? Based on what Jesus Christ taught us, God is OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN: our heavenly father who loves and cares and provides. God is my Father and your Father, who is holding our fragile lives in His huge hand, which created heaven and earth, and the whole cosmos, including millions of stars and innumerable galaxies.

I heard about a young woman, who lost her husband at a young age. After the funeral service, she arrived home with her 4 young children. The youngest was 9, the oldest 15. As they entered into their apartment, and as she faced reality, she said she took a chair, because she was exhausted both physically and mentally. Her four children took a seat as well. They were quiet. Then, suddenly, she said: "Let us pray." Later, she said that she had no energy for anything, but to pray at that moment. As she started to pray, she said: "Our Father in heaven, you see us ... we are broken ... we are desperate ..." After she finished her prayer, one of her children said: "Our Dad is gone, but we still have our Heavenly Father." Oh, what a confession.

I heard about another young father, who was having chemotherapy as he was dealing with cancer. A friend of mine visited with him at the hospital, and my friend found this young but seriously ill man in his bed crying. He confessed that he was crying because he could not imagine how his children would grow up without their father. Who is going to care and provide? My friend had a funny sense of humour. He said to this crying man: "Bud, you should continue to cry, because your faith is very little. If you have a strong faith in our caring Heavenly Father, then you should not cry. Do you believe that God can take better care of your children than you would do? If you believe that, then you should stop crying. But if you cannot believe that, you should continue to cry."

Dear beloved, we, who embraced God's only Son Jesus Christ, have the privilege to be called God's children, and we can call God our Heavenly Father. I really hope you feel this enormous privilege, which was offered to you in Christ, that you can call GOD your Father.

When you are coming to the church or to a service, singing hymns, participating in Bible study, you are coming to YOUR dear, loving, and caring FATHER, who loves you with an unconditional love. You don't have to be afraid of Him, since He is your Loving Heavenly Father.

When we are coming to Him in prayer, we don't have to show Him our best attitude, because He knows very well who we are. Every time, when we pray, we have an opportunity to talk to our Father, and we can ask Him to re-organize our lives.

When we are gathering as a Calvin family, we are coming to OUR Father, since we all are called Children of God, because we ALL embraced our Saviour, His Son, Jesus Christ.

When we pray together, we pray to OUR Father. As we pray, we join each other and we are joining all the saints in heaven, who are worshipping our Lord, as we see in The Book of Revelation.

When we pray, we confess that WE ARE ONE. We are a Family here at Calvin: sisters and brothers in Christ Jesus.

All Christians are saved by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. When we pray the same Lord's Prayer, no matter in which language, in which country or continent, we confess that we belong to each other. We are ONE in Christ, we are ONE at the throne of God, and we have the same Heavenly Father.

And since we all are the ONE Father's children, we have to care for each other's needs.

Please never forget, when you open your wallet to your sisters and brothers in need, God will open for you His heart and all His righteousness. We cannot overpay God.

Let us embrace each other now in our hearts, and may we always rejoice that we have a loving Heavenly father who cares. May you and I continue to care for our Father's children. Amen