

Come to Understanding

**They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding,
and they that murmured shall learn doctrine. — Isaiah 29:24**

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Glorify Your Name

Which god are you? That was essentially the question that Moses asked when God told him to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt:

13 And Moses said to God, Behold, *when* I come to the children of Israel, and shall say to them, The God of your fathers has sent me to you; and they shall say to me, What *is* his name? what shall I say to them? -Exodus 3

Many of us think that the answer to Moses' question is obvious: God is God. That is because we have lived in a culture that historically accepted the biblical definition of God. However, some of us are becoming increasingly aware that other cultures are bringing definitions of gods, other than the God of the Bible, into our society.

When Jacob and his family went into Egypt to escape the famine that threatened their survival, he spoke prophetic blessings over his sons. He prophesied that Dan was the one that would bring judgment upon his people and also that he would be as a serpent that bites the horses heels and causes the rider to fall backward:

16 Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel.
17 Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that bites the horse's heels, so that his rider shall fall backward. -Genesis 49

(It was the tribe of Dan that promoted the image worship that eventually led to the destruction of Israel (see Judges 18:30; 1 Kings 12:30; 2 Kings 17:16-19).) Right after this ominous prophecy concerning Dan, Jacob called upon the name of Yahweh saying he had waited for His salvation:

18 I have waited for your salvation, O Yahweh. -Genesis 49

After that, the Bible went silent on the name of Yahweh and remained so while Jacob's family, called the "children of Israel," served as captive slaves in Egypt for 430 years!

40 Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. -Exodus 12

During this time, however, the "children of Israel" were exposed to the names of countless other gods besides Yahweh. There are more than two thousand names of

Egyptian gods and goddesses mentioned in religious texts. Every nome (regional government), city, town, and likely large villages had their own gods that they called by name. Each god had a female counterpart and they often had a son. Together, they were called a "triad." One very well-known triad among these gods was the family of Osiris (the father), Isis (the mother), and Horus (the son) (see E. A. Wallis Budge, *A Short History of the Egyptian People*, New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1914, p. 167).

Therefore, it is easy to understand why Moses thought that the children of Israel would ask him the name of the God that sent him to lead them out of Egypt. The response of Yahweh to Moses was to introduce Himself as "I AM THAT I AM," saying that he should tell the children of Israel that "I AM" has sent him to them:

14 And God said to Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shall you say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you. -Exodus 3

"I AM" is written in the Hebrew text as אֶהְיֶה (ahyh) which is יהי (hyh) with an added א (aleph) to mark the suspension of breathing preceding the initial sound. This is also called a "prosthetic aleph," which is "an aleph not strictly belonging to the root, but prefixed to facilitate pronunciation" (see C. T. Wood and H. C. O. Lanchester, *A Hebrew Grammar*, New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1913, pp. 9, 19). The name "HYH" cannot be pronounced without added vowels, as in "HAYAH." Its meaning is "to be" or "to exist." The expression "I AM THAT I AM" effectively means, "I am the one that is." Therefore, all other things are created by Him and for Him.

"I AM" told Moses to call Him יהוה (YHWH), which, with added vowels, is pronounced as YAHWEH:

15 And God said moreover to Moses, Thus shall you say to the children of Israel, Yahweh God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you: this *is* my name forever, and this *is* my memorial unto all generations. -Exodus 3

The short form of His name is YAH, which we praise:

4 Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rides upon the heavens by his name YAH, and rejoice before him. -Psalms 68

**So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,
and caused them to understand the reading. — Nehemiah 8:8**

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Thus, when Yahweh revealed Himself by name to Moses and to Israel as "I AM," He said "HE IS." The meaning of this name is offensive to those that trust in other gods because it means that He is THE God. It means that there is no other nor can there be any other God. Yahweh leaves no room for doubt in His Word. There is no other God but Him. He alone is the One that exists:

- 5 I *am* Yahweh, and *there is* none else, *there is* no God besides me: I girded you, though you have not known me:
- 6 That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that *there is* none besides me. I *am* Yahweh, and *there is* none else. -Isaiah 45

A distinguishing characteristic of Yahweh that differs from other "gods," such as those that were worshipped in Egypt, is that He cannot be represented by any image! That is why He said He did not reveal a likeness of Himself to Moses:

- 15 Take you therefore good heed unto yourselves; for you saw no manner of likeness on the day *that* Yahweh spoke unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire:
- 16 Lest you corrupt *yourselves*, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female,
- 17 The likeness of any beast that *is* on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flies in the air,
- 18 The likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that *is* in the waters beneath the earth:
- 19 And lest you lift up your eyes unto heaven, and when you see the sun, and the moon, and the stars, *even* all the host of heaven, should be driven to worship them, and serve them, which Yahweh your God has divided to all nations under the whole heaven. -Deuteronomy 4

When Moses brought Yahweh's words from Mount Horeb, which is another name for Mount Sinai, He told them:

- 2 I *am* Yahweh your God, which has brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. -Exodus 20

Then He made it plain that His people were to worship no other gods, make no images to bow before, and to

not make his name without meaning (take it in vain). Each of these is addressed in the first three of what has become known as the Ten Commandments:

1st Commandment: 3 You shall have no other gods before me. -Exodus 20

2nd Commandment: 4 You shall not make to you any graven image, or any likeness *of anything* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth:

- 5 You shall not bow down yourself to them, nor serve them: for I Yahweh your God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me; -Exodus 20

3rd Commandment: 7 You shall not take the name of Yahweh your God in vain; for Yahweh will not hold him guiltless that takes his name in vain. -Exodus 20

He has clearly made it known that He is the only God:
35 Unto you it was shown, that you might know that Yahweh *he is* God; *there is* none else beside him. -Deuteronomy 4

Glory and praise belong only to Him and not to images:

- 8 I *am* Yahweh: that *is* my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images. -Isaiah 42

He revealed Himself in the flesh through His Son:

- 16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. -1 Timothy 3

He declares His Son to be God, the righteous King:

- 8 But to the Son *he says*, Your throne, O God, *is* forever and ever: a scepter of righteousness *is* the scepter of your kingdom. -Hebrews 1

It is through the name of the Son, Yahshua (YAH the Savior) (Jesus), that the name of the Father is glorified:

- 28 Father, glorify your name. Then came there a voice from heaven, *saying*, I have both glorified *it*, and will glorify *it* again. -John 12

If we know and believe in His name, we will also know that there is no other God and we will not bow down to another. Then we will trust Him, knowing that He will not forsake us:

- 10 And they that know your name will put their trust in you: for you, Yahweh, have not forsaken them that seek you. --Psalms 9

When others call upon their gods as Lords, we know that YAH is our Savior and there is life through His name:

- 31 But these are written, that you might believe that Yahshua is the Messiah, the Son of God; and that believing you might have life through his name. -John 20

HalleluYAH!

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