



Lesson Two

Who is Yahweh God?

God is Real

Many people today question the existence of God. Since we cannot see God, people today take that as evidence that God does not exist. While it is true that the existence of God cannot be *scientifically* proven, that does not mean God doesn't exist. Certainly, there is evidence that points to the existence of God. Let's look at three key ways God shows Himself to man:

1) Creation:

Many aspects of creation point to the existence of God. The universe did not come out of nowhere, yet scientists fail to explain what caused the universe to come into reality. The bible says that creation reveals God's invisible qualities. That is to say, creation itself reveals God to mankind (Romans 1:20)



Creation reveals God's invisible qualities

2) The bible

In our last chapter we discussed the bible as having come from God. Theologians consider the bible evidence of God's existence as well. The chances of so many prophecies occurring exactly as described is just too small to be plausible. The only natural explanation for the phenomenon of bible prophecy success is that a divine author - one with foreknowledge of what was to come - had to have authored it.

3) Jesus

Jesus was a man living in Nazareth, who had an extraordinary life to say the least! Throughout his ministry, Jesus revealed the truth of God to thousands of people, and eventually his teachings would become the foundation of the New Testament. We will study more about Jesus in the next lesson, but for now, it is important to understand that the teachings of Jesus prove that God is, indeed, real.

Now that we've looked at three things that show the existence of God, you may have questions such as, "What is God like?", "Do I need to know about God?", or even "Is God a good person?"

In this lesson, we will go over these questions and more to get to the bottom of Who is Yahweh God?

What is God Like?



God is a spirit creature, invisible to the eye (John 4:24). How, then, can we know what God is like?

Just as historians today come to know the characters of history by reading things people have written, we, too, can get to know God through His written work, the bible. Unlike historical documents, which often don't contain personal affects of the person who authored them, God makes great effort to reveal His personal character in the bible. That's because God *wants* us to know Him! God wants to be our friend (Revelation 3:20).

What does the bible say about God's character? Let's look at some of the things we

find in scripture.

PATIENT

The bible says that God has infinite patience (2 Peter 3:9). We can see evidence of God's patience in how He deals with humanity. Although He is angered by the unrighteousness, He still turns no one away who seeks an honest and true relationship with Him.

LOYAL

"I will never leave you nor forsake you." (Read: Hebrews 13:5). Even though humanity betrayed Yahweh God's trust in the Garden of Eden, God still loves mankind. He promises loyalty to those who seek Him, and shows His

dedication to His followers through all of the things He has done for us.

LOVE

1 John 4:8 reveals that "God is love.". God loved us so much that He sacrificed His only son for our atonement! The bible even says that we love, because He loved us first (1 John 4:19)

Discussion: Read John 3:16 and discuss with your bible teacher the following:

How does the sacrifice of Jesus reveal God's love?

POWERFUL

God is the most powerful creature in all of existence. No god or creation of man can match God's power (Psalms 86:8-10). By His power, God created all

things, including the heavens and the earth (1 Chronicles 29:11)

JUST

God is a God of justice (Isaiah 30:18). When something bad happens to any one of His children, it angers God. Moreover, He calls upon His followers to be just in their actions, making righteous choices in place of selfish ones.



By His power, God created the heavens and the earth

GOD HAS A NAME

One of the most overlooked aspects of God's personality is the fact that God is a person. To many, God is a nameless, faceless entity that we appeal to for good fortune. But God is a person, with a personality to match, and a personal name! Although not many people use it, God wants us to know His name.

God's name is YHWH, or *Yahweh*. This special name points to the attributes of God in its meaning. The name Yahweh means "I am what I am" or "I am what I choose to be". God shows us how He can be a doctor when we are sick, a friend when we are alone, or a father when we need guidance. His Holy Name proves His willingness to do whatever it takes to give His

people whatever it is that they are in need of.

Some people say that we should not use God's name because of a superstition. It was once believed that using God's name at all was forbidden. Indeed, the bible does say that we are not to take His name in vain. However, the bible does *not* say we shouldn't use His name at all! In fact, the bible encourages us to use the Holy Name in a variety of situations. We are to praise the Holy Name (Psalm 30:4, Psalm 97:12), trust in the Holy Name (Psalm 37:4-5), profess the Name (Isaiah 42:8), and shield ourselves with the Name of God (Proverbs 18:10). By using God's name, we respect His desire to make His name known. Moreover, we show to God that we love Him and want to be His friend.

Discussion topics for the Header "*What is God Like?*"

Discussion 1: What other qualities does the bible reveal about God?

Discussion 2: Why do people hesitate to use the Holy Name?
Why shouldn't we?

God Cares About Us



Looking around at all the horrible things we see in the world today, it is easy to see why so many people question God. The world is filled with pestilence and poverty. Natural disasters strike upon the unprepared. Even in places of relative wealth, people are often greedy and rude. Every day people call out to God in distress, but it doesn't always seem like He's answering, or even listening. Is it true what some people say, that God is cruel?

We have read in the bible that God is patient, loving and just. So why is there so much suffering? The bible teaches that God is *not* the source of these trials. (Read: James 1:13). Furthermore, the bible establishes that

God does not cause evil. "Therefore, hear me, you who have sense, far be it from God that He should do wickedness... Of a truth, God will not do wickedly, and the Almighty will not pervert justice." (Job 34:10-12). This scripture proves that all the bad that we see in the world today does not originate with God.

If God does not cause evil, then why is there evil in the world? Has He abandoned us, as some say? The bible touches on this topic, as well. "For He has said, "I will never leave you or forsake you." (Hebrews 13:5). This scripture is referring to the time when Israel was about to enter the land of Canaan which they were promised. It is written,

"Be strong and bold; have no fear or dread of them, because it is Yahweh your God who goes with you; *He will not leave you or forsake you.*" (Deuteronomy 31:6, NRSV). The repetition of the scripture emphasizes its importance! God wants us to know that He has not abandoned us.

What we learn from this is that God is neither cruel, nor has He abandoned humanity. Perhaps you are now asking why there is so much suffering if God has not abandoned us?

Understanding where suffering comes from is the first part of understanding why God allows suffering. Like everything, it all goes back to the Garden of Eden, where our first parents disobeyed Yahweh. Did God know that Adam and Eve

would disobey? Most certainly. The next logical question is, could God have stopped Adam and Eve? Probably, but *should* He have?

We are not slaves to Yahweh's word. When He created us, He gave us free will. This gift of free will allows us to choose our own course of action. God created us to be His companions. What kind of friend would we be if we couldn't make decisions for ourselves? Likewise, what kind of friend would He be if he took away our free will? God is all-knowing, all-powerful, and all-loving, but "the greatest of these is love" (1 Corinthians 13:13). Therefore, God sacrificed some of His power out of love for us, that we could make our own decisions on what actions we would take.

Another factor at play here is the key character of *Satan*. You have probably heard about him. Satan is a character in the bible that appears repeatedly. Satan serves as an adversary of God. From the beginning of the bible in Genesis all the way up to today, Satan has misled and deceived the followers of God. It was Satan who told Eve to eat the forbidden fruit in the first place. But why would he do that?

Satan didn't begin this rebellion because God was unjust. Rather, Satan is *jealous* of God. He wants what Yahweh has: **he wants to be ruler of the world.** God is our Creator and the Creator of all that we have and see. It rightly belongs to Him, as a house that you build ought to belong to you. We are His children (Romans

8:14). Rulership belongs only to God.

When Satan tempted Eve, he didn't do so because he thought God was denying her a particular tasty fruit which she ought to be entitled. Satan was challenging God's rulership. Adam and Eve, by listening to Satan and disobeying God, were rejecting God's rightful, divine sovereignty. Humans *need* God; without Him, we have fallen into sin and disgrace.

Discussion: Read Jeremiah 10:23 and consider the following:

Think of how a child needs their parents. In what ways do we need God?

Although the sin of Adam and Eve took place thousands of years ago, the

effects of their decision still resound today. When our first parents rejected God, their children inherited that state of rebellion (Romans 5:12). For that reason, *all of us on earth* have inherited sin. Sin is defined as disobedience to God (Read: 1 John 3:4). There is suffering in the world because humankind rebelled against our Creator. God allows suffering because He does not force anyone to follow Him. If He swooped in and saved the day, there could be a chance for another rebellion. By allowing us to try every option of ruling ourselves, God is preventing further rebellion in the future.



Adam and Eve rejected God's sovereignty in the Garden

Even though God is allowing us the chance to rule ourselves, there is still a key biblical figure who helps call the shots: that is none other than Satan himself! The bible goes so far as to say *Satan* is the ruler of this world! Not God, not man, not even Jesus.

Discussion: Read 2 Corinthians 4:4 and discuss the following:

What are the implications of Satan being the ruler of this world?

Does that mean that God is going to do nothing about our plight? ***Absolutely not!*** In fact, God has already taken steps to save mankind. We will discuss His plans in greater detail in our next lesson. For now, it is important to know that God has not abandoned us, nor

does He enjoy our suffering, even if He allows it.

When we are struggling in today's world, it is important that we lean on God and His understanding. God is the wisest of all! Through His word we can find even temporary relief from our anxieties. To the prophet Isaiah, Yahweh revealed, "*When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;*" (Isaiah 43:2. ESV). This scripture shows that when we endure trials, God is with us through them all, and suffers beside us. We can draw strength from knowing that God is there with us even in hard times.

Discussion Topics for the Header "God Cares About Us"

Discussion 1: How do we know that God has not abandoned mankind?

Discussion 2: If evil does not originate with God, where does it come from?

Discussion 3: Who is Satan? Why is he manipulating mankind?

This Means Everlasting Life



To many, the idea that we can personally know God seems outlandish, even outrageous. How can we ever understand someone so powerful and important? Yet the bible shows us that not only can we get to know God, but that God wants us to know Him! God is not some far-away entity, but, in fact, "He is actually not far from each one of us" (Acts 17:27).

Discussion: Read Acts 17:27 and discuss the following:

What are the implications of God not being far off?

Jesus of Nazareth said, "And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you

have sent." (John 17:3) This verse impresses upon us the importance of getting to know God; it isn't just about finding friendship with our Creator - in of itself already a wonderful gift! But to know God puts us on the road to everlasting life!



Getting to know God puts us on the path to everlasting life

Friendship with Yahweh is one of the greatest friendships you can ever have. Maybe you are wondering how that would work? After all, we can't see

Yahweh God. He is an invisible spirit. How, then, do we get to know Him?

We can get to know God through bible readings. When we read God's word, we see the choices He has made, the plans He has formed, the actions He has taken on our behalf. We learn the morals that God possess through His laws and commands, and receive His comfort through the many messages He gives. Daily bible reading is a key part of friendship with God.

Another key aspect is that of prayer. Prayer is the way that Christians on earth can communicate directly with our Creator. Whether we pray out loud or in thought, Yahweh hears our prayers. This our way of letting God get to know us. We can share with Him our worries,

celebrate successes, gives thanks and praise, and even ask Him questions on difficult topics. In return, God answers prayers, although not always in the ways we expect or want.

Nobody loves you as much as God does. Not even you. Yahweh is always available to listen to your anxieties (1 Peter 5:7). Whenever you are in need, God is there for you.

Discussion: Read Psalm 94:18-19 and discuss the following:

How does Yahweh God prove to be there for those who seek Him?

Friendship with God can change your life. Yahweh loves everybody, but "His friendship is with the upright" (Proverbs 3:32). As God's friend, He wants to see

you make decisions that are good for you. As your Creator, Yahweh God knows what is best for you.

Therefore, He gives guidance on how to live the best life. When you become His friend and His confidant, He wants to see you make changes in how you live.

Discussion: Read Romans 12:9 and discuss the following:

What does it mean to hate what is bad? Why is it a sign of true love to abhor evil?

You may feel that you are unable to live up to God's standards, and that's okay! Nobody on earth is perfect (Romans 3:23). Yahweh knows this. As long as we believe in His standards and strive to do what is right, God will love us, even when we fail.

Friendship with God is an active and two-way street. It involves work on our part, the effort of reading His word and praying, of doing what is good and avoiding what is bad. But did you know that God does work for you?

Some of the gifts that God has given us include:

- Creation
- Salvation
- The resurrection
- His word

God created this earth for us to live on it for eternity. Although we have fallen from grace, Yahweh still offers us a path to that glorious future. Furthermore, all who have died are promised to come back (Isaiah 26:19)! We'll examine the resurrection in greater detail in a future lesson.

Knowing God is the key to everlasting life, for you and your loved ones. When you have friendship with God, you hold a precious gift, one that needs nurturing and tending. In turn, drawing close to Yahweh will draw Him closer to you (James 4:8).

In our next lesson, we will tackle the latter part of that gift: Getting to know Jesus Christ, whom God sent.

Discussion Topics for the Header “This Means Everlasting Life”

Discussion 1: How is it possible to draw close to Yahweh?

Discussion 2: Why is it important to get to know Yahweh God?

