

A reflection on *how* knowing "*who*" God *is* can lead to strengthened courage & faith.



Courage
and the
Names of
God



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Chickening **IN**-from **FEAR** to Courageous **FAITH**

INTRODUCTION

Do you love music? I sure do! I've become spoiled by Apple and Amazon because they've created a tailor-made, commercial free listening environment. However, from time to time I still enjoy tuning into the old-fashioned radio because of the interesting facts and entertaining tidbits of information shared between music sets. On this particular occasion the host and hostess were discussing pet names and that pet owners on average have five names for their pet. I was intrigued so naturally I began to think about all the names I call my dog.

Bella is my German Shepherd's official name. But quickly after naming her I started calling her *Bell-Bell* as a term of endearment or *Bella Bru* (the name of a local coffee shop). Then, my husband added *Slick Rick* which made us laugh because *Bella* is a clever and very smart dog. Soon *Bella Jean* came into play adding the middle name of my middle daughter. Now we find ourselves calling her *Boo-Boo* after *Yogi Bear* and *Boo-Boo*. I think we are up to six names!

Names are important. They describe who someone is and what family they belong to. In Biblical times names carried a deeper meaning than they do today. Often a baby was named for a specific reason or because his/her life represented a given purpose or status. God himself changed people's names to symbolize important changes like Abraham whose name was originally Abram which meant exalted father. After God made a promise to make him the father of many nations a new name was in order and he became Abraham.

Though names don't carry as much weight in the current culture they still paint a picture of who someone is. Like my dog *Bella*, we too have many titles because one name isn't enough to fully know a person. What people call us or what we call ourselves describes things about us like mom, grandma, aunt, doctor, teacher, Christian, sweetie, or honey.

The same is true of God. He has many names that describe who He is, but unlike our names His carry weight. When something carries weight it is said to have the power of influence and is respected. **That means that God's names are not void or empty words that we carelessly toss around. God's names have power!**

To appreciate the power within God's names we first have to know about them. By learning about His names we can understand Him and interact with Him in a deeper and more meaningful way. Because His names are tied to the unchangeable, all powerful, loving characteristics of Himself, knowing God's names will empower us too! God wants nothing more than for us to know Him better and by studying His names we will do just that.

My desire is to deliver content to help you become the bravest version of yourself, and learning God's names is part of that plan. We will explore ten names of God. **The ability to stop chickening out on the important things in life comes from knowing God.** When we invest in knowing Him better our belief in Him grows. When our belief grows, our courage is strengthened and our faith changes from something we talk about to something we are doing. Faith in action is our doing and faith in action is [Chickening IN](#).

Elohim

Almighty Creator God

What is the first thing you tell someone you have just met? Your first name, right? That's the beginning of getting to know another person and it's foundational to the start of a new friendship, work relationship or Bible study group. The same is true of God and He wastes no time introducing Himself to us. The very first scripture, "In the beginning God created..." (Genesis 1:1) is like a warm and welcoming handshake from a new friend. God reaches out His hand to say: "*Hello, my name is Elohim.*" You respond by embracing His hand and reply with, "*Hello, my name is...*"

Genesis is the first book of the Bible and the first opportunity we have to get to know God. If you remember our names may or may not have meaning, but *all* God's names have significance, and in fact, they carry weight. When something carries weight it is said to have the power of influence and is respected. That means that God's names are not void or empty words that we carelessly toss around. *God's names have power!*

So let's get to know the power within Elohim...the name that is revealed at the starting line of the scriptures. And more importantly a name that can help us live a more courageous, faith-filled life.

The word Elohim means mighty one, supreme one or creator God. Pastor Tony Evans defines Elohim as *The Strong Creator God*.

God starts off His introduction with Elohim because He wants us to understand His power. He is the Almighty God who alone created the heaven and the earth and everything within it (Genesis 1:1-2:2). Nothing existed before Him and everything exists because of Him. And only He has the ability to create something out of nothing. In fact, it was His spoken word that brought the world into existence (Genesis 1:3). *Have you ever made something out of nothing?* Everything we create is created with resources. However, God needs no resources because He is the Resource! Let that sink in for a moment!

It's true that Elohim is mighty and powerful...the Almighty Creator God, but that doesn't make Him unreachable like a king in his castle whom no one can interact with. In Genesis we discover that God is personally involved with His creation. God is speaking,

seeing, creating, blessing, and calling His creation good (Genesis 1:1-31). He also walks and talks with Adam and Eve in the garden (Genesis 3:8-9). *Elohim, Almighty Creator is a personal God!* What comfort and strength we can gain from knowing the Almighty who holds the power to create interacts with us individually.

It's important to know that Elohim existed before His creation; He was there at the beginning making "the beginning." God is separate from His creation, but He also is with His creation. This is called omnipresent. He is present everywhere all the time. How amazing is that?! I don't think our minds can fully grasp the magnitude of how GREAT our Creator God- Elohim really is!

Lastly, Elohim made mankind in His image. The Bible says, "Let us make people in our image, to be like ourselves" (Genesis 1:26). God set us a little higher than all other creation because He wanted us to reflect His goodness and glory. Knowing that God created us in His image is a major confidence booster and it can motivate us to be more like Him. We can love, give, forgive, be patient and show kindness when we base our worth on God's design not the world's.

Elohim is the all-powerful, mighty creator God who is everywhere all the time, and who personally interacts with His people whom He has made in His image.

WOW, exploring the meaning of Elohim is already increasing my courage! Do you feel it too? However, we want to be sure to fully digest the awesomeness of this name. I recommend spending time reading Genesis 1:1-2:3. Thirty-five times God identifies himself as Elohim, Creator God! Then, the next time you cook, draw, sew, design, plant, or create anything consider the resources used, and then remember that God needed no resources when He created the earth, the sea, the sky, the animals and even us! Maybe even make a list of your nothingness and pray that Elohim will turn it into something.

Let's face it. Life is tough and we will endure times when we feel depleted, have no resources, no strength, no hope, or no way to get out of the circumstance. It seems impossible and that can make us scared and worried, or maybe even cause us to doubt. That's the moment to raise our voice to the heavens and say, "*Elohim, Strong Creator and Almighty God, it is me...please make something out of my nothingness.*" When we surrender our "lack-of" to His unlimited power to create (not only the entire world, but the solutions to our problems) our courage, faith and trust in God has a chance to grow.

How does knowing about God's name Elohim give you courage? Why?



The DMV has never been a place I look forward to visiting. Long lines, crowds and sometimes “not so nice” people have shaped my view of the trips to renew my license or update my car registration. I guess I expressed my unhappiness one too many times in front of my daughter Courtney because one of her first sentences was, “DMV yuck!” Looking back, I can’t help but laugh!

Thankfully going to the DMV has gotten better over the years because of the ability to schedule appointments. However, even with the better experience I’ve never introduced myself by common name. They know me by my formal name: Jeri J. Gutierrez. My common name is reserved for those whom I want to know, and who I want to know me. It’s personal.

That’s how we meet God in His next name. His handshake just got personal. It’s as if Elohim our Almighty Creator God reached out and said, “My name is Elohim, but you can call me Jehovah.” Just like I would say, “My name is Jeri J. Gutierrez but you can call me JJ.” Of course my names don’t carry any weight like God’s do, but it does illustrate that God just got *cozy* with us.

Jehovah is the English way to say Yahweh and the name used most often in the Old Testament. It means “existing one who is self-completing.” God isn’t lacking anything, and He needs nothing outside of Himself to be complete. It’s the name God gives Moses in Exodus 3:14-15 when Moses asks, “Who shall I say is sending me?” God replies with, “I AM WHO I AM.” I love the way the Amplified version says it,

“And God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM *and* WHAT I AM, and I WILL BE WHAT I WILL; *and* He said, ‘you shall say this to the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you!’”
Exodus 3:14 AMP

I AM and Jehovah are interchangeable, and the very essence of I AM is right now. Here. In the present. God was interacting with Moses exactly where he was. Moses was experiencing God in the *now*. Throughout the Bible we see God amongst His creation and His people from the beginning of the world (Genesis chapters 1 and 2) to the conception of you (Psalm 139)! He is *here* and He is *personally* involved in our today.

That's the power of Jehovah! He is personal and He is someone we can have a relationship with. God's not lording His power over us by looking down from Heaven with a pointed finger. No way! He interacts with us constantly. Just as God reached out to Moses...He comes to you and me too.

Oh sister, there is so much to learn and explore about God's names. I can't do it justice here in a few words nor can I fully comprehend the meanings of His names myself. God is just TOO BIG!

BUT, today as we consider God's name Jehovah, and how knowing *this* name can give us courage, we are reminded that God is always with us. We don't have to walk down the scary unknown roads of life alone. God is available all the time and anytime. With a loud shout or a quiet whisper utter, "Jehovah God I'm scared." Immediately, He is there to comfort, guide and help us in our deepest fear. Our courage can grow when we interact with Jehovah- *the personal, never changing, lacking nothing, God who is right now.*

Next time you are worried, fearful or anxious would you verbally say, "*Jehovah, God who is with me here and now, help me to face my fear and walk in courage and faith because I know I am not alone. You are with me.*"

How does knowing about God's name Jehovah give you courage? Why?



Growing up my daughter Courtney wanted to distinguish her three grandmothers from each other. The name Grandma was too general. She didn't know which one we were referring to and to solve this dilemma she added additional words to each of their names. Their more descriptive names became Grandma Sparky and Grandma Sadie & Angus whose names corresponded with their dogs. And for the grandmother without a dog she called her "Grandma with the white hair" (LOL)! The extra words helped her know more about each grandma...it revealed something further about the person.

Similarly, God's names have combinations too! Jehovah is the foundational name that God couples with six other names to show us more about Himself. These combinations reveal additional insights into who God is and the more we know "*who*" God is the more courageous we can become. The first one is *Jehovah Jireh*. This name will surely bolster our courage and faith!

The name Jehovah Jireh is presented to us in Genesis 22:14. Abraham was about to sacrifice his son Isaac in obedience to God when an angel of the Lord appeared and told him to stop. Then, Abraham looked and saw a lamb caught in a bush...God provided a lamb to take the place of Isaac. The Bible says, "Abraham named the place, 'The Lord Will Provide.'" (Genesis 22:14)

The word provide means to supply. It's an act of giving provision for another's needs. But the meaning of *Jehovah Jireh* is richer and more abundant than that! In Hebrew the word provide means to "experience" or "perceive." And the root of the word Jireh means "to see." When we put them together we can conclude that God sees and experiences our needs and He makes provision for them!

But be careful not to think of God as just a supplier of food, clothing, money, etc...He provides help in our darkest, scariest and most difficult moments too. Consider how afraid Abraham might have felt as he stepped closer to the place of sacrificing his son...the promised son from God. Did he doubt God, did he plead for Isaac's life or did he fully trust in God to provide? We don't know how Abraham was feeling because the Bible doesn't record it, but what we do know is that in this trial Abraham obeyed God and God provided!

Jehovah Jireh is our supplier in times of trials too! And aren't we experiencing a MAJOR trial right now! This world, the culture and life has many of us feeling unsure, fearful and worried. We are walking through our own "land of Moriah." During trials and challenges, we can ask ourselves these helpful questions:

1. What is God teaching me though this?
2. What is God's plan for me?
3. Am I focusing on the world to provide or on God to provide?
4. Am I living in fear or am I living in faith?

It's important to remember that God knows everything before it happens and that He has a purpose and plan (Jeremiah 29:11). For the believer He works out all things for good (Romans 8:28). And God's top priority is our relationship with Him...remember the first name is *Jehovah Jireh* is Jehovah...the relational God who is with us now. We want to avoid thinking of God as merely a gift giver and instead press into having a strong relationship with Him first. That's how Abraham was able to courageously withstand the trial of sacrificing Isaac...because He knew the character of God.

That's how we can courageously endure our trials too! Surely God will provide a positive outcome to "the pandemics of life" or the other difficulties we are facing. But if we don't know Him or His name *Jehovah Jireh* we might be tempted to believe God has abandoned us or that God isn't making a way. Sink in deeply with God in prayer asking Him to illuminate your heart with a greater understanding of His name *Jehovah Jireh*. You can move courageously and bravely through life's scariest moments when you know God more.

Sister, God's provision is real. Though it might not always look like we want it to...ultimately He provides for our greatest need. The need to know Him and to trust Him more than the world we live in.

How does know God's name Jehovah Jireh give you more courage? Why?

Jehovah Shalom

The Lord is Peace

Let's talk candidly for a moment. The world can be a scary place. If you don't believe me just turn on the news for five minutes...it's sure to leave you feeling worried and afraid. Over the last few months the pandemic has overwhelmed every headline and newscast. If it's not the pandemic, then it's a natural disaster, war, a falling economy, or a new threat to our security. We are constantly bombarded with fear-induced information that can leave us feeling unsafe and uncertain about the world we live in.

The next combination name of God on our journey is ***Jehovah Shalom- The Lord is Peace***. And can't we all us a little more peace these days?

God first reveals Himself as *Jehovah Shalom* in the story of Gideon. Let's quickly remind ourselves what was happening. The Israelites had once again rebelled against God and God handed them over to the Midianites for seven years. The Midianites were cruel and attacked the Israelites taking all their food. The Israelites fled to the mountains to hide in caves and dens. In desperation the people cried out to God for help. God responded by reminding them what He'd done for them in the past, how they had disobeyed Him by worshiping false gods, and by enlisting a mighty warrior to rescue them (Judges 1-10).

But the earthly hero of this story didn't look like so much like a hero...he was living in fear just like everyone else. The Bible says, "Gideon was threshing wheat in the wine press in order to hide from the Midianites" (Judges 6:11). Threshing wheat was usually done out in the open atop a hill where there was a breeze to blow away the chaff. But Gideon was afraid the Midianites would attack him so he did his job in hiding. It's in this place...the place of fear and hiding that God came to Gideon.

Three times an Angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon and each time Gideon wanted proof that the angel was indeed from God (Judges 11-21). After all, God was calling Gideon to defeat the Midianites...a God-sized task that looked impossible. He wanted to be sure he was not dreaming or misunderstanding. After God graciously fulfilled each of Gideon's requests, Gideon finally understood who he had been talking to all along. Fear overcame him at the realization it was God and he said "*I have seen the Angel of the Lord face to face!*" (Judges 6:22). Maybe Gideon remembered that anyone *who* sees the face of God no longer lives (Exodus 33:20).

It's in this moment...Gideon's moment of fear, hiding and a messy, desperate situation in life that God reveals Himself as *Jehovah Shalom-the Lord is Peace*. The Bible says, "But the Lord responded to him, 'Peace to you. Don't be afraid, for you will not die'" (Judges 6:23). Gideon built an altar to the Lord and called it The Lord is Peace.

God came to Gideon and spoke peace in the midst of his fear. And, if we let Him, God will speak peace into our scary moments too. **Knowing about Jehovah Shalom can give us the courage to face the world with its worries and fears because we know that God, not the world, is our peace.** If we look to the world to provide peace we will surely be overwhelmed by fear, but if we look to God, the only *One* who can truly give us peace we will be assured and strengthened.

"You will keep the mind that is dependent upon you in perfect peace for it is trusting in you." Isaiah 26:3 CSB

I find that in my fearfulness if I repeat out loud to myself, "The Lord is my peace" an inner calmness washes over me. It's the beginning of surrendering my doubts, worries and fears...those things I hold so tightly to...the visible circumstances and all-consuming feelings I hyper-focus on. When we change our focus to *Jehovah Shalom* it doesn't matter what's happening in the world or in our personal *storms of life*, God will cover us with an umbrella of peace.

Sister, I know our world has grown a little scarier. Earthly life is constantly changing and we have to adapt to a new ways of living. As Christians we don't have to live in fear because though the world has changes...God has not. And though the news, politicians, and even our neighbors might be spewing words of fear and doubt...we can courageously refuse to let those words build a nest in our heart. Instead by knowing about God's name *Jehovah Shalom-the Lord is Peace* we can mediate on this character trait of God and we can allow His peace to flood our hearts.

Isn't it great when we know more about God...by knowing Him more we can walk in courage and faith and face the storms of life with an underlying, strengthening and sustaining peace that only comes from God.

How does knowing about God's name Jehovah Shalom give you courage today? Why?

Jehovah Rohi

The Lord is my Shepherd

One of the most well-known scriptures is the place that God reveals Himself as *Jehovah Rohi*. Psalm 23:1, "*The Lord is my Shepherd.*" I am sure you have read it many times and most likely have it memorized. It might be tempting to dismiss this verse and think, "I already know that one." But hang in there with me...knowing God's name *Jehovah Rohi* has the power to help us overcome *the* fears and worries of today.

It's important to note that King David wrote Psalm 23. As a boy, David cared for sheep and he learned first-hand about these creatures and their dependence upon a shepherd for survival. It's from this knowledge that David describes his relationship with God...God is *his* shepherd; therefore, we can imply that David is *His* sheep.

Would you ever refer to yourself as a sheep? If I correlated myself to an animal, it would be either a lion for its fierceness or an owl for its wisdom. But a defenseless, helpless and vulnerable creature like a sheep...no way! Sheep are 100% dependent upon their shepherd for provision, guidance and protection. Did you know that sheep can't think for themselves either? It's true...sheep are followers. They must follow someone or something because they can't think for themselves.

Thankfully we are not sheep and while it's interesting to learn about them, Psalm 23 isn't focused on the qualities of a sheep but on *Jehovah Rohi- The Lord My Shepherd*. **And right now our world needs "The Shepherd" more than ever.** The news, social media, and parking lot conversations are filled with follow *this* cause, no follow *that* cause. The pressure to join in is strong and sometimes can feel intimidating...almost unsafe. Who can we trust? Whose movement is more important? Whose objectives are worthy of hashtags? *Following is scary and yet, we were made to follow.*

Deciding who or what to follow becomes a critical decision that will affect everything in our lives. With good leadership we will be braver, stronger and led in the right direction. With poor leadership we will be frightened, broken and led astray.

That's why we need to know about Jehovah Rohi- the Lord My Shepherd. He is worthy and trustworthy to follow 100% of the time! Here's what Psalms 23 says about Him:

- God is our personal shepherd (Psalm 23:1).
- God provides everything we need (Psalm 23:1).
- God is our guide, kind of like a GPS navigation system. He will take us down right roads, give us times of rest, and renew our strength (Psalm 23:2-3).
- God will walk beside us and give us courage in our deepest, darkest moments. Even when we pass from this life to the next, we need not fear...He is there (Psalm 23:4).
- God protects us from our enemies (Psalm 23:5).
- God invites us to dwell with Him forever (Psalm 23:6).

In a world where it can be hard to trust anyone or anything, we don't have to be afraid to follow *Jehovah Rohi- The Lord My Shepherd*. With confidence we can "*follow God*" because His motives are pure and good. We can walk through the days and weeks ahead with *courage* and *faith* because we have "*The Shepherd*" leading us. His leadership will never fail. And if you remember the first name of God we studied, *Elohim- Almighty Creator God*, then you know that God created each one of us. No one is more qualified to lead us than our Creator and our Shepherd.

WOW! Knowing about God's names is powerful! May courage abound in your heart today as you confidently follow *Jehovah Rohi- The Lord My Shepherd*.

How does knowing about God's name Jehovah Rohi give you courage? Why?

This is the first half of the book! Over the next five months you will receive the other names via email! I can't wait to hear how *knowing God* more by exploring His names gives you more courage as you *specifically* call out to Him by one of His names.

Live Courageously!

JJ Gutierrez