

## What Is God?

If you've been listening, often on Sunday mornings I will replace the word 'LORD' with 'Yahweh' as we go through the scripture text. At first glance it seems like an odd thing to do. However, there is an important reason for it. Whenever you see the all caps 'LORD' in scripture you can know that it refers to the covenant name of God. Another pronunciation you may have heard is 'Jehovah'. Both refer to the same Hebrew name revealed to the patriarchs and to his covenant people.

In Old Testament Israel this covenant name of God was rarely spoken. Even the verb 'I am' was often left out of sentences just to show reverence to him. According to theologian, Herman Bavinck, the name means "I AM THAT I AM" (Ex 3:14) and teaches us a great deal about who God most essentially is.

Let's think about this from a different perspective for a second. If someone asked you "what is man?", you could argue from scripture that man is made up of two parts: a body and a spirit. So, you might say that man is a unified body and a spirit.

But, what about God? Who is He? The answer to that question is in the name that He reveals to us in scripture: "I AM THAT I AM". The name points us to the fact that there is nothing more fundamental than God Himself. He is totally self-sufficient and all things depend upon him for their life (Ps 90:1-2). He is who He is (Ex 3:14). He is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end (Rev 22:13). He is the one who was and who is and who is to come (Rev. 4). And, before Abraham was, He is. (Jn 8:58).

If that is confusing, you are not alone. Thinking about God pushes us beyond the limits of our understanding. There is something incomprehensible about God. We cannot put him in a box. In our own power He is totally out of our reach and unquestionably beyond our control. He does not need us.

So, where does this leave us with the covenant name of God? Well, first of all it gives us insight into a right knowledge of God. When we worship Him it should bring us to our knees to think that He who does not need us would be willing to accept our imperfect worship. It also teaches about how we ought to view ourselves. We have nothing outside of God alone. Our life on the whole and our every breath is dependent upon Him alone.

We would do well to meditate deeply on this truth of God. If we do, it will put our sins, his salvation, and our place in His world into the right perspective. And, it will engender in us humility, mercy, and sincere admiration of Him.

In Jesus,

Tom