

KNOWING GOD... better

Do You Know God's First Name?

Text: Genesis 1:1

INTRODUCTION: If I asked you if you know God, I hope most of you would say, "Yes!" with conviction. This week we will mark the anniversary of Hurricane Michael. Surely we have learned more about God through and after the storm. More of His faithfulness, providential care, His love, and more of His tender mercies. But who of us can say we know God in all of His fullness? Even Paul, who I would imagine knew God through faith in the Lord Jesus better than any other man ever did, said, "That I may know Him in the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings ..." (Phil. 3:10)

I am like Paul in at least one way: I want to know God better. Just knowing Him as much as I do is not enough. I want to know Him more. Do you? Do you? I hope so. In this series we are going to try to get to know God better and better and better. Wherever you are starting, our goal will be to move forward in knowing God better than we do today.

And do you know, God wants us to know Him. God reveals Himself through His Word. God the Father has revealed Himself perfectly through Jesus Christ, God the Son. But what we know about the Son of God, we know through the Scriptures, the Word of God. We have confirmation of many of those things revealed in the Word about Jesus in our daily experiences of walking with Christ, but we do not learn anything through our experience that is not revealed already in the Word.

And understand, our purpose in this study of knowing God better is not just to accumulate information. Knowing God better can change us. As we learn different things about God, I will try to suggest some ways that knowing God like this can impact our life, but I will never be able to capture all the possibilities. The more we know God, the more we can be transformed by Him.

So, how does God let us know Him?

- We can learn about Him through His actions, what He did and does.
- We can learn about God through His words, what He has spoken.
- We can learn of God through His names, revealed in both the Old and the New Testament.

Speaking of God's names, do you know God's first name? No, I do not mean a first name like Mike or Mark as in Mike Claunch or Mark Bateman. I mean the first name God gave to us when He began to reveal Himself to mankind.

And you may be thinking, "Well, the answer to that is 'God' because Genesis begins with

Genesis 1:1 NKJV In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

But in all honesty, we miss the name here in the translation "God." Not that the translation is wrong, but God is a more general term. The original Hebrew uses a more specific name than "God." Listen to the Hebrew of Genesis 1:1 and see if you can pick out the name. You have probably heard it before.

bershith bara elohim ath hashamayim ve ath haaretz

You heard it, didn't you? **Elohim. This name of God is used more than 2,500 times in the Old Testament. I call it the foundational name for God.** I have so labeled it because the things we learn about God from that name are foundational for our faith and our walk with the Lord.

I. THE NAME ELOHIM TELLS US THAT GOD MADE US AND ALL THAT IS.

- A. It is no mere circumstance that the first thing the Holy Scriptures declare about God is that He created the universe and everything in it by His miraculous commands.

1. The Bible declares that God created the universe in six 24 hour days.

- a. But some say, I know men who say that Gen. 1 means God made everything in 6 ages, each age being millions, perhaps hundreds of millions of years, using evolution as His tool. Philosophers call this theory theistic evolution.
- b. I know some men say this. Some of them are good men who love the Lord.
- c. But I am telling you, that is not what the text says. I do not know of a single person who is proficient in biblical Hebrew who after reading Gen. 1 would not tell you that the intent of the author in writing these words was to communicate that God created the universe in six 24 hour days.
- d. Read it yourself. It translates well into English.

Genesis 1:5 God said, 'Let there be light, and there was light.' God called the light day; and the darkness He called night. So the evening and morning were the first day.

And so on in equally clear fashion: “evening and morning, the third day, ... the fourth day... the fifth day.”

- e. Now there are certainly people who try to attach explanations to these words to change the message, but who can miss the plain intent of the author? And who is the author?

2 Timothy 3:16 NKJV All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

2. Other passages of the Bible affirm that God created the universe by His miraculous commands.

Psalm 148:1–5 NKJV 1 Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; Praise Him in the heights! 2 Praise Him, all His angels; Praise Him, all His hosts! 3 Praise Him, sun and moon; Praise Him, all you stars of light! 4 Praise Him, you heavens of heavens, And you waters above the heavens! 5 Let them praise the name of the LORD, For He commanded and they were created.

B. It is also not circumstantial that one of the primary lies of the devil is to declare that God did not create the universe by miraculous command.

1. The strategy of the evil one is not to totally deny Genesis 1 and 2, but to pervert the testimony to make it mean something different than what it says. **The devil’s strategy is to substitute the theory of evolution for the biblical testimony of instantaneous creation.**
2. Contrary to popular opinion, the theory of evolution cannot be harmonized with Genesis, Chapter 1.

Evolution says	Genesis 1 says
The beginning of the universe was in an infinitesimally small body of indescribable mass which exploded in a big bang, ultimately producing all that we see in the universe.	The universe began from nothing; it was formless and void: empty, nothingness. Then God spoke all things into existence.
It took billions of years for the earth to be formed to its present recognizable state, long after the stars and other heavenly bodies.	God began with the earth as the focus of His creative activity, and the other heavenly bodies were created three days later.
Primitive life developed by chance and	All of the plants, simple and complex,

evolved over time into complex forms.	were made before any of the animals. Genesis says that plants and animals were each created according to kinds and did not change from kind to kind.
--	---

- 3. **If the theory of evolution is true, the Bible is not.**
- 4. **If the Bible is true, the theory of evolution is not.**
- C. The purpose of our study is not to examine the vast quantity of evidence available that affirms the biblical account of creation and the erroneous nature of the theory of evolution. Information about this evidence is readily available. I recommend the website answersingenesis.com. This organization offers information online and offers access to numerous books and publications that will help you understand what the Bible says about creation and ties it with a vast amount of scientific evidence as well.
- D. I am here to tell you, if you do not believe that God created the universe just as the Bible describes that He did, you are being deceived by the evil one, and you are missing great blessings which come to those who know God as Elohim, the Creator God.
 - 1. I was one of you.
 - 2. But God delivered me from that well without water.
 - 3. Apart from my salvation, coming to the understanding that God, Elohim, created me, the heavens and the earth just as the Bible says He did, did more to change my life and ministry than any other single event.
 - 4. Knowing God as Elohim, our Creator, and the divine Creator of all that there is changes your entire perspective of God.

II. THE NAME ELOHIM TELLS US THAT GOD IS A TRIUNE GOD.

- A. **Elohim is a noun in plural form that takes a singular verb.**
- B. **It is the ideal name for embodying the truth of the Trinity.**
- C. **God is One God.**

Deuteronomy 6:4 NKJV Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!

- D. **God reveals Himself in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**

E. Elohim revealed the truth of His Trinitarian nature in the very first chapter of the Bible.

Genesis 1:1–3 NKJV 1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. 3 Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.

The opening words of the Gospel of John help us fully understand the first three verses of Genesis.

John 1:1–3 NKJV 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

These verses in John 1 help us understand Genesis 1 like this –

Genesis 1:1–3 NKJV 1 In the beginning **God (THE FATHER)** created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of **God (THE HOLY SPIRIT)** was hovering over the face of the waters. 3 Then **God (THE SON, THE WORD)** said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.

Genesis 1:26 also clearly reveals a Triune God.

Genesis 1:26 NKJV Then God said, “Let **Us** make man in **Our** image, according to **Our** likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

F. The entry point for knowing Elohim, the Triune Creator God is through knowing the Son, Jesus Christ.

1 John 2:23 NKJV Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

My friend, knowing that God is Elohim, the triune creator God who made us and everything that is changes a person's total perspective on life. I believe that is one of the reasons that Jesus Himself affirmed the creation account in Genesis chapters 1 and 2.

Matthew 19:4-5 NKJV 4 And He answered and said to them, “Have you not read that **He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’ 5 and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’ ?**

- Jesus said God made Adam and Eve at the beginning.

- Here is a picture of the evolutionary timeline of the universe spanning 13.8 billion years.
- Evolutionists tell us that the first fully developed homo sapiens did not appear until 42,000 years ago, meaning the rest of creation occurred well over 13.79 billion years before. That is hardly at the beginning.
- But Jesus, the Son of God, our Savior, who was Himself at the creation, said the first man and woman were made at the beginning. This concurs with Genesis 1 which says they were made on day six of creation week.

III. THE NAME ELOHIM TELLS US THAT GOD IS THE SOVEREIGN GOD.

- A. Elohim's sovereign rule over the universe and all that is in it is based upon the fact that Elohim created the universe and all that is in it.
- B. A multitude of Scriptures declare God's sovereign authority.

Isaiah called Him the God of the whole earth.

Isaiah 54:5 NKJV *For your Maker is your husband, The LORD of hosts is His name; And your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; He is called the God of the whole earth.*

God called Himself the God of all flesh.

Jeremiah 32:27 NKJV *"Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?*

Isaiah said He is God of all the kingdoms of the earth because He made heaven and earth.

Isaiah 37:16 NKJV *"O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, the One who dwells between the cherubim, You are God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth.*

- C. The sovereignty of God does not remove the choice of man; it means that man is responsible to God for the choices he makes.

1. In the Garden of Eden

- Adam and Eve were told they could freely eat of the fruit of every tree except one.
- If they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they would die.

- They had a choice to obey or disobey.
- But the choice had a consequence determined and enforced by God.

2. Israel in the Sinai Covenant

- They were offered the privilege of being a “special treasure” to God.
- If they would obey His voice and keep His covenant.
- They had a choice to obey or disobey.
- But the choice had a consequence determined and enforced by God.

3. Every sinner

- We can have our sin forgiven and be given eternal life.
- If we choose to trust Jesus as our Lord and Savior.
- We have a choice.
- But the choice has an eternal consequence determined and enforced by God.

John 3:16–18 NKJV 16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that **whoever believes in Him** should not perish but have everlasting life.

17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

18 **“He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already,** because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

CONCLUSION: This God has revealed Himself to us as Elohim, Sovereign, Triune, Creator God who can be known through Jesus Christ His Son.