

GOD-THE 'I AM'

A LOOK AT THE THEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NAME OF GOD

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This paper explores the name, recorded in Scripture, by which God identified himself. First, an investigation of the history of identification by name, the need for identification by name, and the implications associated with the knowing of a name are presented. This is followed by a consideration of God's initial presentation of his name and a selected review of passages. This review will show that God's involvement with mankind reveals that he is one without equal; therefore, his name cannot be qualified by adjuncts – he is the One who cannot be restricted by further definition. It will also show that when Jesus of Nazareth walked upon this earth in the form of a man, he declared himself as God among men when he identified himself as I AM.

INTRODUCTION

Charles H. Spurgeon said, “the mightiest philosophy, which can engage the attention of a child of God, is the name, the nature, the person, the doings, . . . of the great God which he calls his Father” (as quoted in Zacharias, 2012, p. 265). Children have a natural affinity to know their fathers – a desire to model what they observe. Imitation is said to be the sincerest form of flattery, and this can be observed in the simple way a young child imitates every move of his or her father. The child mimics the movements, the words, and even the attitudes of this one whose name is Daddy, desiring to inculcate the attributes he or she observes into their being. In the same way, the child of God desires to know his or her God intimately. An understanding of the name of God will help usher the believer into this deeper relationship; for the name of God reveals his nature, his person, and his attributes.

Identifying places, things, and persons by a name or title is nothing new; it has been part of culture since the creation. In Genesis, the first place in which man resided had a name, “Eden.” Eden

was further identified as the source of four named rivers – the Pishon, the Gihon, the Tigris, and the Euphrates (Gen. 2:10-14). The first duty performed by man was to name the living creatures:

The LORD God (YHWH Elohim) had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them before the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name.” (Gen. 2:19, ESV)

How Adam determined the name he bestowed upon each living creature is not revealed, but one can postulate that he took care in dispensing the names – giving each creature a name that established its distinctiveness. That is exactly what he did in naming the helpmate (Eve) whom God provided: “she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man” (Gen. 2:23b, ESV). Adam gave Eve a name that established both her distinctiveness and their relationship – a name illustrating

their interdependence. Thus, through designation by name, identity, distinctiveness, and relationship are established. No name is more important than the name of God.

DOES GOD NEED A NAME?

As the only essential element in all creation, God is known by a series of names that reveal aspects of his nature, his purposes, his power, and his abiding relationship with mankind. Often, the name of God compounds “*‘el* [with] a descriptive adjunct . . . [such as] *‘el roi* (God who sees; Gen. 16:13) and *‘el olam* (God eternal; Gen. 21:33)” (Elwell, 2001, p. 505). As is evident, the combining of *‘el* with a descriptor reveals how God has interacted with his creation. El, however, is not a unique name for the God of creation. As Nelson’s notes “El. By itself it refers to a god in the most general sense. . . In the Bible the word is often defined properly by a qualifier like “Jehovah”: ‘I, the LORD (Jehovah) your God (Elohim), am a jealous God (El)’ (Deut 5:9)” (Lockyear, 1986). Elohim is the plural form of El, “commonly understood as a plural of majesty. . . In the [Old Testament] the word is always constructed in the singular when it denotes the true God” (Elwell, 2001, p. 506). Therefore, names such as El Shaddai (God Almighty), found in Exodus 6:3 (Lockyear, 1986), are not personal names of God but names indicative of his power and majesty. Often these are names bestowed upon God by human beings in an effort to better explain his activities – names given by humans in an attempt to better comprehend God’s unfathomable person.

In the Hebrew culture “names were not mere labels . . . A name was chosen very carefully, and with attention to its significance . . . Hebrews considered the name an embodiment of the person bearing it” (Erickson, 1998, p. 296). “Giving a name to anyone or anything was tantamount to owning or controlling it (Gen. 1:5, 8, 10; 2:19-20; 2 Sam. 12:28)” (Elwell, 2001, p. 812). A name in the Hebrew understanding implied identity, character, relationship, and power.

Elwell (2001) also points out that “the very fact that the word *name* occurs more than a thousand times in the Bible attests to its theological significance” (p. 812). Genesis 4:25 begins a transition in the historical record, moving from a recounting of the line of Cain to recording the lineage of Seth, through whom would come the Messiah. After the

birth of Enos (Seth’s son), “people began to call upon the name of the LORD (*YHWH*)” (Gen. 4:26, ESV) – an indication that seeking a relationship with God, not evident with the line of Cain, is now the focus of the biblical record, and that the relationship will be established through the “name of the LORD (*YHWH*)” (Gen. 4:26, ESV).

The New Testament attests to the significance associated with a name in John 14:13-14: “Whatever you ask in my name, this is what I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it” (ESV). “Praying in Jesus’ name, therefore, is not mystical reliance on a traditional formula but is praying in accord with Jesus’ character, his mind, his purpose” (Elwell, 2001, p. 812). Praying in Jesus’ name is indicative of an established relationship with God the Father through God the Son – a relationship that includes intimacy and power.

As is evident, a relationship with God is established through the intimacy of his name. When Moses was sent to lead the Israelites from bondage in Egypt, he asked God for his name. Moses needed to know, and convey to God’s chosen people, the identity of the One under whose authority he was operating. God granted Moses’ request and gave Moses his name – a name that demonstrated his unique relationship to all things. He added no descriptive adjuncts or qualifiers to denote his existence, his purpose, or his position – he identified himself simply as the “I AM” (Exod. 3:14, ESV).¹ This identification demonstrated that, instead of God being qualified or defined in some manner, all things are defined by and dependent upon him.

MOSES’ ENCOUNTER WITH GOD

This encounter between God and Moses occurred when the time had come for the miraculous deliverance of the Israelites from bondage in Egypt (Gen. 15:13, 14). God appeared to Moses in the wilderness from an unconsumed burning bush (Exod. 3:2); informing Moses that he was to be the instrument through whom God would bring the promised deliverance of his chosen people (Gen. 15:13, 14). Moses, being reluctant to accept the task, and knowing that the Israelites would be skeptical, asked God for the name of the one for whom he was to act as representative before the people. God replied to Moses saying, “I AM WHO I AM. Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent

me to you” (Gen. 3:14, NKJV). On the surface, this seems a strange reply. In ordinary conversation a reply of “I am” would be followed by a statement to further clarify what is meant, such as, “I am a father,” or “I am a mother,” or “I am a citizen of the United States,” or some other adjectival qualifier. God did indeed add a qualifier to “I AM,” but not one that might be expected; God reiterated “I AM.” Thus, God identified himself as the One of existence and presence without qualification. He is the one essential presence in all of creation. God is the “only noncontingent reality” (Erickson, 1998, p. 624). The Israelites would come to know that the “I AM” was their God.

This recognition of “I AM” with the divine is also evident in the life of Jesus. John 8 records an elongated debate between Jesus and the Jews. The interchange is brought to a close when Jesus states, “before Abraham was, I AM” (Greek *ἐγώ εἰμι*) (John 8:58, NKJV). John 8:59 (NKJV) records the reaction of the Jews to Jesus’ statement, “Then, they took up stones to throw at Him.” The Jews reacted in this manner because they understood Jesus was identifying himself with the divine – he was identifying himself as God among men.

Therefore, it is evident that “I AM” was the name of God, and when Jesus referred to Himself as “I AM” he was proclaiming Himself to be God. Jesus changed water into wine (John 2:1-10), he healed some of perceived incurable afflictions (John 9:1-7), he cast the unclean spirits out of those who were demon possessed (Luke 4:33-36) – he even raised the dead (Matt. 11:4-6; John 11:14-44). Were not his deeds enough to declare his divinity (Luke 4:16-21; 7:22-23)? Why was it necessary for him to identify himself as God by name? Why does God even need a name? Isn’t the fact that he acted as God sufficient to differentiate him from all others?

WHAT’S IN A NAME

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines the noun “name” as:

the particular combination of sounds employed as the individual designation of a single person, animal, place, or thing; . . . I. 2. The particular word or words used to denote any object of thought . . . II 4. The name of a person (or thing) with implications of the individual denoted by it . . . 7. repute, reputation, fame” (Oxford English Dictionary: Vol. VII, 1933, pp. 14-15)

The Oxford dictionary defines a name, then, not only as something by which a person is known, but also as expressing qualities or characteristics descriptive of that person. This coincides with the Biblical principle of naming as “rooted in the ancient world’s understanding that a name expressed essence” (Butler, 1991, p. 1007). Thus, to know the name of God was not only to know how to refer to him, it also gave a glimpse of something essential about his character.

There is a further aspect of a name that needs to be recognized. Not only does a name distinctively identify someone and reveal something about his or her character, it also establishes a relationship between the one named and the one knowing the name. The biblical perspective can be stated as “the knowing of a name implied a relationship between parties in which power to do harm or good was in force” (Butler, 1991, p. 1007). Therefore, in knowing the name of God there was an implied relationship. When God told Moses his name, he implied there was a relationship between himself and Moses that Moses was to convey to the Israelites (Exod. 3:14-22). This relationship was established, in part, by God revealing his name to Moses, imparting to Moses a glimpse into something essential about his character, and endowing Moses with the authority to act in his behalf.

THE NATURE OF THE RELATIONSHIP

A look at the extended periscope of which Exodus 3:14 is a part is needed to get a more comprehensive idea of the relationship between God and Moses and the importance of Moses knowing the name of God in that relationship. In looking at these additional verses, it will become evident that the relationship was not only between God and Moses but extended to a relationship between God and all Israel.

God chose to reveal his name (which included identification of his character, power, and majesty) to Moses while Moses was tending the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, in the desert around Mt. Sinai (Ex.3:1).² The stage was set when Moses observed a burning, yet unconsumed, bush. As Moses approached the bush, God informed him that the ground on which he was standing was holy ground. Next, the voice from the bush told Moses “I am the God (*Elohim*) of your father – the God (*Elohim*) of Abraham, the God (*Elohim*) of Isaac, and the God (*Elohim*) of Jacob” (Exod. 3:6, NKJV). This phrase

²The New King James Version identifies the area as Horeb, which MacArthur (1997) points out is another name for Mt. Sinai. (p. 96).

appears twice more in the third chapter of Exodus (3:15, 16). In essence, God told Moses that he had an established relationship with the Israelites – he is the God of their forefathers, the God who called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldeans (Gen. 11:28), the God who promised Abraham innumerable descendants (Gen. 13:16), the God who promised a land for the Israelites to possess (Gen. 13:14, 15), the God who promised a seed through whom all the nations would be blessed (Gen. 12:3). This repeated (reiterated three times) statement (listing of the patriarchs) reinforced an established, continuing, covenantal relationship between Moses and God.

Another pertinent aspect of the established relationship evidenced in this chapter is God's knowledge of the plight of the people in Egypt. First, God told Moses "behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them" (Exod. 3:9, NKJV). Later in the chapter, God told Moses to tell the elders of Israel "I have surely visited you and seen what is done to you in Egypt;" (Exod. 3:16, NKJV). God's relationship with the Israelites was so intimate that he had been keeping a watchful eye upon their condition, visiting them, ever listening to their pleas.

There is a bedrock principle pointed out in this chapter that further illustrates the solidified relationship between God and Moses – God promised Moses his presence. Before informing Moses of his name, God said to Moses "I will surely be with you," (Exod. 3:12, NKJV). Little can solidify a relationship more than continued presence – "God says 'I will be with you.' That should galvanize any man against any foes and any fears. It was Moses' armor, inside and out" (Paschall, Hobbs, 1972, p. 55).

The reaction of Moses to the presence of God needs to be noted. When Moses first saw the burning, yet unconsumed bush, he said to himself, "I will turn aside to see this great sight" (Exod. 3:3, ESV). Upon hearing God's voice, and being told, "Do not come near, take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground . . . Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God" (Exod. 3:5-6, ESV). Moses' attitude changed from curiosity to reverence; from confidence to an understanding of his inadequacy in the presence of the incomparable God. At first Moses thought himself investigating a natural anomaly; in an instant, he was told he was standing on holy ground and re-

alized his unworthiness to gaze upon the God of his ancestry. R. C. Sproul (2012) points out it was not the location nor the geological composition which made this ground special – that set it apart from the other ground in Moses' view; it was the presence of God that transformed the ground from profane to holy (April 20, 2102).

God already had an established relationship with Moses and Israel, even though they may not have been cognizant of that relationship. Further, God protected Moses from harm when he entered His presence. God established the relationship, maintained the relationship, watched over the relationship, and promised His presence to enhance and continue the relationship. By giving Moses His name, "I AM," God was revealing something more of His character and deepening the existing relationship.

THE SANCTITY OF THE NAME

Dictionaries have given insight into the revealing nature of a name and the implied relationship in the knowledge of and use of a name. The initial significance for this writing is to understand what the name of God ("I AM") meant to the Jews. Then, application will be made for the Christian.

Most study Bibles contain explanatory notes on various verses of the Scripture to help the layman better understand the import of the passages. John MacArthur's notes on Exodus 3:14 are extremely helpful as he points out both the characteristics the "I AM" name conveyed and the attitude of the Jews regarding that name. First, MacArthur (1997) says, "This name for God points to His self-existence and eternity; it denotes 'I am the One who is/will be'" (p. 97). Through the name "I AM," God is revealing his unique quality; he is one of eternal self-existence – existing not only in the present, but also in eternity past and future. He alone can claim this characteristic.

MacArthur (1997) further points out the attitude of the Jews by saying, "since the name *Yahweh* was considered so sacred that it should not be pronounced, the Massoretes inserted the vowels from *Adonai* to remind themselves to pronounce it when reading instead of saying *Yahweh*" (p. 97). The Jews stood in awe of the name of God, awe that produced deep respect coupled with the fear of offending the One to whom the name referred.

THE DIFFICULTY OF THE TRANSLATION

Conservative scholars are in general agreement

regarding the overall interpretation of Exodus 3:14-15, but the exact literal rendering of this passage is difficult. Elwell (2001) notes there is a “parallel structure” in the passage, “which supports the association of the name Yahweh with the concept of being or existence” (p. 507). He adds that “the name ‘I AM’ is based on the clause ‘I AM WHO I AM’ found in 3:14, which, on the basis of the etymology implied here, suggests that Yahweh is the 3. p. form of the verb ‘*ehyeh* [אֶהְיֶה] (Green, 1986, p. 49) (I am)” (Elwell, 2001, p. 507). Others explain the association as “before the name [of God] is revealed an explanation of it is given. I AM WHO I AM – three words in the original – reveals and withholds at the same time” (Howley, Bruce, Ellison, 1979, p. 179). The difficulty of the literal rendering of this phrase “‘*ehyeh aser ‘ehyeh*” [אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה] (Green, 1986, p. 49), can be seen in the ways it is translated in the various texts, “‘I am that I am’ (KJV), ‘I am who I am’ (RSV, NIV), and ‘I will be what I will be’ (RSV margin)” (Elwell, 2001, p. 507). The Septuagint rendering of this section is “*λεγων ἐγὼ εἰμὶ*” which one translator has rendered “I am THE BE-ING” (Exod. 3:14, Septuagint, 1972). The renderings are similar, with each offering a slightly different nuance to the translation; however, each points to the idea of an unchanging God who reveals himself to men as a God who is both active and eternal.

Yahweh is the tetragrammaton of the consonants Y – H – W – H, appearing in Exodus 3:15 as “LORD,” its usual rendering in the Scripture. Because of the parallel structure of the passage, there is a link between “I AM WHO I AM” of verse 14 and “LORD” of verse 15 (Howley, et al, p. 179). One explanation of this link is that it “establishes the connection between the divine name Jehovah/ Yahweh and the Hebrew verb ‘to be’ (*hayah/hawah*)” (Howley, et al., p. 179).

J. Vernon McGee (1981) sees an even stronger link when he states, “the name ‘I AM’ is a tetragram, or a word of four letters. We translate it JEHOVAH. It has also been translated as YAHWEH” (p. 211). Though most scholars see at least a link between the names “YAHWEH” and “I AM,” both McGee and MacArthur view them as virtually synonymous. To this understanding Merrill (2009) adds, “Yahweh is the personal name of God whereby he reveals himself to man; it is the covenant name of him who is immanent and who deigns to have close relations with man” (p. 50).

GOD IN THE MIDST OF MEN

The greatest act of deliverance in the history of mankind is the deliverance that Jesus Christ provided for the sinner by sacrificing his life to atone for sin and usher believers into a right relationship with the Father. This atoning work was performed by the pre-existent One – the One the apostle John identified as “the Word” (λόγος) who was “with God” in the beginning and who “was God” (John 1:1, ESV). The construction of this sentence in the Greek “*Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος.*” (John 1:1, Green, 1986 Interlinear New Testament); demonstrates that Jesus (“the Word”) was not only present with God in the beginning, Jesus (“the Word”) was God. John continues by asserting, “All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made” (John 1:3, NKJV). Henry Morris (2011) points out that “the emphasis in John’s opening statement about ‘the Word’ is that He was God from eternity past, equal in every respect as the Son of God within the Trinity, yet He ‘was made flesh’ and entered the world that He had created in order to redeem those whom He had created” (p. 35). John’s prologue uses λόγος (the Word) as a personal identification, or name, that establishes Jesus as God. Vines (1981) points out that John 1:1-2 establishes “(1) His distinct and superfinite Personality, (2) His relation in the Godhead . . . (3) His creative power” (p. 230). John emphatically testifies that Jesus is the uncaused One who is the cause of all creation; he is the essential One whose life defines all existence.

Perhaps one of the more sobering verses in Scripture appears at the end of John’s introductory statements in his gospel. Referring to Jesus as the “life . . . [and] light of men” (John 1:4, NKJV), John says “And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it” (John 1:5, NKJV). Ample evidence was available, both from the Hebrew Scriptures and from the life of Jesus, to validate that Jesus was indeed the Messiah (Luke 7:22); yet, the religious leadership of His day refused to comprehend His self-revelation (John 11:49-54).

The gospel writers record numerous instances in which Jesus used “*ἐγὼ εἰμὶ*” (I am) to identify a certain characteristic or quality of His divine nature, such as “I am the bread of life” (John 6:48, NKJV), “I am the light of the world” (John 9:5, NKJV), “I am the good shepherd” (John 10:11, NKJV), and “I am the resurrection and the life”

(John 11:25, NKJV), to name a few. I am, ἐγώ εἰμί, is a simple yet profound statement. Both words are first person singular; ἐγώ, a personal pronoun (Peschbacher, 2008, p.115), is joined with εἰμί, a present indicative verb (p.119). Mounce (2003) points out “the indicative mood describes a fact or asks a question” (p.151). In the context in which these statements by our Lord are made, Jesus is stating unequivocally that He personally is the active force that is involved in the action described. On at least two occasions, the assertions made by Jesus were so evidently linked to the “I AM” name of God that they caused the religious leaders to take action in an attempt to silence Him.

One occasion is recorded in the eighth chapter of the gospel of John. Jesus began His interchange with the Pharisees by proclaiming, “I am the light of the world” (John 8:12, NKJV). One commentator links the setting for this comment with the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles by saying, “Jesus again uses one of the ceremonies of the feast to explain his own mission. At dusk they lit four great golden candelabra to symbolize the pillar of fire by which God guided his people through the desert by night” (Alexander & Alexander, 1973, p. 541). With this backdrop, it would have been hard for the religious leaders to miss the assertion Jesus made with His comment in verse 58. Between verses 12 and 58, Jesus engaged in a discussion with the Jews regarding their refusal to recognize and acknowledge Him as the promised Messiah. After proclaiming, “Abraham rejoiced to see My day,” (John 8:56, NKJV) Jesus asserted “before Abraham was, I AM” (John 8:58, NKJV). Irwin (1928) explains, “The peculiar phrase, ‘I am’, evidently refers to the name Jahveh or Jehovah . . . expressing His eternal self-existence; and it was fully understood to do so, as the people immediately prepared to treat Jesus as a blasphemer” (p. 426).

The other occasion of importance for this writing, found in the gospel of Mark, occurs after Jesus’ arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:32, 46). He had been brought before the Sanhedrin for trial where false witnesses had testified against Him (Mark 14:56). The high priest questioned Jesus repeatedly, with no response from our Lord. The high priest then asked Jesus directly, “Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” (Mark 14:61, NKJV). Jesus broke His silence and answered, “I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of

the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven” (Mark 14:62, NKJV). This reply by Jesus caused the chief priest to tear his robe and declare Jesus a blasphemer (Mark 14:64). The word used by the high priest in his accusation against Jesus, βλασφημιας, is also translated “evil speaking, railing” (Strong, 1890, p. 926) and “is practically confined to speech defamatory of the Divine Majesty” (Vines, 1981, p. 131). Jesus’ reply to the high priest identified Jesus himself with the eternal, self-existent God—the “I AM” of Exodus 3:14. The high priest understood Jesus’ claim but failed to acknowledge the validity of it. Instead of hiding his face in reverence and awe, as Moses had done, the high priest accused Jesus of “railing” against God – the very thing of which the high priest himself was guilty.

John 11:45-53 records the plot hatched by the high priest and the Pharisees because, after Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, “Many of the Jews . . . believed in him” (John 14:45, ESV). At a meeting of the council, Caiaphas (the high priest) stated “it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not the whole nation should perish” (John 11:50). Caiaphas was concerned about his position of power and the continuance of the nation of Israel under the banner of Rome (he had no idea of the spiritual reality of which he prophesied). After the trial by the Sanhedrin and the acquiescence of Pilate to the demands to crucify Jesus, Caiaphas probably felt he had succeeded; however, one last time before his death upon the cross, the covenant name of God would be linked to Jesus in an unmistakable way. John 19:19 records that Pilate placed an inscription on the cross, “written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin” (John 19:20, NKJV) that read “JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS” (John 19:19). This caused the chief priest to go to Pilate and ask that the inscription be change to “He said, I am the king of the Jews” (John 19:21), but Pilate refused. Missler (2004) points out this final association between the covenant name of God and the inscription Pilate placed on the cross:

This may have more significance than is apparent in our English translations.

The Hebrew [read right to left is]:

HaYehudim v'Melech HaNazarei Yeshua

Jesus of Nazarei and King of the Jews.

What we [do not] notice in the English translation is the potential acrostic made up of the first letter of each word which would spell out the Tetragrammaton, YHWH, Yahweh יהוה" (p.87).

As Jesus hung upon the cross, taking upon himself the sin of mankind, the placard placed on the cross by the Roman authorities identified Jesus as the God of creation; the God whom appeared to Moses in the wilderness, the God who was once again revealing himself to mankind, the God who gave himself to establish a relationship with men.

CONCLUSION

Moses asked God for his name so that he could tell the elders of Israel the identity of the One who had sent him with the message of deliverance from captivity. "Moses felt he must have a fuller disclosure of the character of the God who was calling him. In asking for His name, he was also asking to be told more about His nature" (Alleman and Flack, 1948, p. 213). God replied, "I AM WHO I AM" (Exod. 3:14, NKJV), showing that there was no way to qualify, quantify, or describe God apart from Himself. There is nothing in nature or the experience of humanity that is adequate in describing God or His characteristics. He is the essential being of creation.

Jesus identified himself as this same incomparable, indescribable God. Even though he used numerous characteristics, (the bread of life, the light of the world, the good shepherd, the resurrection and the life, and many more) to help people understand more about his nature, these are only aspects of who he is. If all of these sayings were accumulated, they would still be incomplete in giving a full description of God. That is why he claimed the name "I AM," the essential, eternal essence that cannot be limited by qualifiers.

The authority of the "I AM" is to what people

will respond, one way or the other. The apostle Paul stated it this way: "Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11, NKJV).

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