

What a privilege for us to have God's name revealed to us for our salvation. God did not have to give us His personal name on which to call in our trials and troubles: to do so was an act of grace every bit as profound as His taking on human flesh as our Savior. After all, God is by nature *ineffable*. *Ineffable*, from the Latin *ineffabilis* (indescribable), means "incapable of being described in words, as too wonderful, infinite or sacred to be uttered." May this week's notes inspire us to new gratitude as we contemplate the privilege of knowing that God has indeed condescended to our weakness by giving to us His name to understand and use.

Mon/Tues: Read Judges 13:15-23 & 2 Thessalonians 3:16

The God of Peace

From the beginning of time, mankind has sought to inquire into the nature of the name of God. The response to Manoah's request for a name for the Angel of the Lord still holds true (Judges 13:18): "Why do you ask my name? It is **beyond understanding**." (NIV) Or, "And the angel of the Lord said to him, "Why do you ask my name, seeing it is **wonderful**?" (ESV)

The word here means *absolutely and supremely wonderful*. We have an ineffable God whose infinite and holy nature we cannot comprehend because of our finite state, fallen reason, and sin nature. No wonder Manoah was terrified upon discovering that this "Angel" was actually the Lord Himself (Judges 13:22)! He had not understood the holy nature of the One who spoke to him! How comforting Manoah's wife's words of peaceful assurance: His wife answered, "If the Lord had meant to kill us, he would not have accepted a burnt offering and grain offering from our hands, nor shown us all these things or now told us this" (Judges 13:23).

The first name we are permitted to give God, by virtue of His willingness to grant us forgiveness through sacrificial blood, is "God of Peace." Manoah's wife realized that there was peace between this Divine, angelic visitor and Manoah's family because the sacrifices had been accepted and had risen to Heaven with a sweet, sacrificial savor! To underscore how pleased the Angel of the Lord was with their sacrifice, He ascends in the very flames of the sacrifice back to God's throne.

Meditate and Pray: How comforting for us that our ineffable God has revealed Himself to us as the God of peace. At the conclusion of both his Thessalonians letters, Paul refers in prayer to God the Father as the "God of peace" (1 Thess. 5:23), or the "Lord of peace" (2 Thess. 3:16). With all the problems which threatened the young Thessalonian church, Paul had confidence, by virtue of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross, God was at peace with these Thessalonians and would undertake *everything that was necessary* to preserve that peace between them and Himself! Just so with us -- we have abundant grounds for thankful prayer today, knowing that Christ Jesus has purchased peace for us by His blood.

Meditate and Pray: "Lord, give me peace of conscience; here is Christ's blood, the price of it." (Charles Spurgeon)

Wednesday: Read 2 Thess. 1:1-2 and 3:16-18**He Grows a Garden of Peace**

At our conversion we first call on the “God of peace” to provide us with peace of conscience through Christ’s blood. But such peace is to expand and deepen beyond those early days of Christian faith, because it is connected to the living presence of the risen Lord Jesus Christ. “Peace I leave with you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid” (John 14:27). It is *Christ’s own peace* which He gives to us – by virtue of His personal presence with us as our gracious Savior. Because He abides with us in grace, we are to grow with Him in peace.

God gives us grace only in and through the Lord Jesus Christ, as 1 Corinthians 1:4 declares. It is by such pardoning grace that we are saved, and this not of ourselves – it is the gift of God (Ephesians 2:8-9). Because such saving grace is purchased for us, once and for all, perfect and complete, providing all that we need – no wonder that such grace always brings peace with it! It is the *quality* of God’s saving grace towards us in Jesus Christ which conveys peace! This is why Paul opens and closes almost all of his letters with that precious couplet: “Grace and Peace.” He expects that peace to grow as we increase in appreciation for the perfections of Christ’s work of saving grace!

Meditate and Pray: Thank the Lord Jesus Christ for this name of God which we can appeal to in all our daily, desperate needs: “The Lord of grace.” Thank Jesus especially that it is His personal presence which especially is identified with grace. It is His grace which is sufficient for us in all our afflictions and circumstances! Sing about such grace as it issues in peace in hymn # 699 in our *Trinity Hymnal*:

*Like a river glorious, is God’s perfect peace,
Over all victorious, in its bright increase;
Perfect, yet it floweth, fuller every day,
Perfect, yet it groweth, deeper all the way.
Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are fully blest
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.*

*Hidden in the hollow of His blessed hand,
Never foe can follow, never traitor stand;
Not a surge of worry, not a shade of care,
Not a blast of hurry touch the spirit there.
Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are fully blest
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.*

*Every joy or trial falleth from above,
Traced upon our dial by the Sun of Love;
We may trust Him fully all for us to do.
They who trust Him wholly find Him wholly true.
Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are fully blest
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.*

Thurs/Fri.: Read 2 Thessalonians 3:16-18 and Deuteronomy 12:11**Dwelling in His Name**

God so closely associates Himself with the gifts and saving graces He gives that He wraps these gifts within the very structure of His names! Neither peace nor grace are commodities which we can order online when we run low. They are gifts which come only from the Lord's personal presence with us through His names. That is why, in the Old Testament in places such as Deuteronomy 12:11, God required that His people seek for all needed spiritual help at the place "where He caused His Name to dwell." It was only there, where His Name could be accessed through the proper priesthood and in accordance with the required blood sacrifices, that Israel was to fulfill the vows which they had taken in God's Name, as well as enjoy the glory of His presence in worship. Wherever the Name was to be found, there was power and glory.

Meditate and Pray: Ask the Lord to give your church family access in worship to the power and glory of the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us depend on Christ in accord with all the saving grace His Name promises us, using *Trinity Hymnal # 378*

*Here, O my Lord, I see Thee face to face;
Here would I touch and handle things unseen;
Here grasp with firmer hand eternal grace,
And all my weariness upon Thee lean.*

*This is the hour of banquet and of song;
This is the heavenly table spread for me;
Here let me feast, and feasting, still prolong
The hallowed hour of fellowship with Thee.*

*I have no help but Thine; nor do I need
Another arm save Thine to lean upon;
It is enough, my Lord, enough indeed;
My strength is in Thy might, Thy might alone.*

*Mine is the sin, but Thine the righteousness:
Mine is the guilt, but Thine the cleansing blood;
Here is my robe, my refuge, and my peace;
Thy Blood, Thy righteousness, O Lord my God!*

Sat/Sun: Read Judges 13:18 & Genesis 32:29

Holding on to the Name

Since primitive times, mankind has held that to know the *name* of someone powerful is to have influence over that person. Leaving aside any superstitious beliefs in spells which use names as magic charms, it is nevertheless true that both Manoah (Judges 13:18) and Jacob before him (Genesis 32: 29) sought to know the Name of the Angel in order to comprehend such an awesome Visitor.

Meditate and Pray: Father, show us how to draw comfort from the power of your name, revealed so long ago to Israel. Our Savior – who by nature is so Divinely infinite and therefore beyond any Name we could ever give Him – took on Himself the lowly Name “Jesus,” knowing full well how that Name would be blasphemed. Yet He took that Name anyway, knowing how it would be abused, and even promised to listen to us every time we use that Name. Father, thank you for answering God Manoah’s request in Judges 13:18 to know the Name of God, by giving us that Name to hold onto!