

Knowing Who God Is & Knowing God

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Today I want to speak to you about knowing God. Related to it is knowing who God is, because you cannot know someone without knowing something about who he is. On the other hand, you can know everything about a person and still not know the person, because knowing someone involves having a relationship. Scripture exhorts us to know God, and to have an intimate and personal relationship with Him:

John 17:3: “And eternal life is this: to know you, the one true God, and him whom you sent, Yeshua the Messiah.”

Philippians 3:10-11: “Yes, I gave it all up in order to know him, that is, to know the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings as I am being conformed to his death, so that somehow I might arrive at being resurrected from the dead.”

1John 4:8: “Those who do not love do not know God; because God is love.”

Indeed, Scripture tells us that God is our heavenly father, but do we relate to him as a father? A good test is whether we relate to Him as we do (or should) to our earthly father. We talk to our earthly father. Do we talk to God? We listen when our earthly father talks back to us. Do we hear God when He talks to us? Ideally, we love our earthly father (and mother) because they gave birth to us and first loved us. God gave birth to us through His creation and 1 John 4:19 says:

“We ourselves love now because he loved us first.”

So, do we love God the way that Scripture says we should? Deuteronomy 6:5 commands us to:

“.. love *ADONAI* your God with all your heart, all your being and all your resources.

Do we do that? John 3:16-17 says that:

“.. God so loved the world that he gave his only and unique Son, so that everyone who trusts in him may have eternal life, instead of being utterly destroyed.”

Do we love God sacrificially the way that God loved us? In John 14:15 Yeshua said:

“If you love me, you will keep my commands ..”

Some of us try to love God by keeping His commandments and, if we are reasonably successful at it, we may believe that all is fine in our relationship. Well, that is not what the Scripture says we are to do. Notice that, in John 14:15, loving God comes first and keeping His commandments comes as a result of loving God. If I had written the Scripture, I might have expressed it this way:

“If you love me, you will WANT to keep my commands ..”

But Yeshua didn't consult me on how He should say it, so I will not presume. Anyway, you cannot love God without knowing Him, and you cannot know God without knowing who He is, i.e. what He is like. So, I will move on from the subject of knowing God, and spend the rest of this message on who God is.

Now, how do we know who a person is? Is it enough to know his name? Suppose I give you a name – “Albert DeSalvo” for example. Do you know him? Well, you know his name, but do you know him well enough to want to be friends with him? I think not, because Albert DeSalvo was the Boston Strangler of the 1960s. So knowing someone's name is not enough to say that we know the person. Then what is enough? Well, spending time with a person is a good first step in learning about a person because, over time, we experience the person in different situations, and that helps to give us a depth of understanding of who the person really is. But we are talking about God here, so do we spend enough time with God in order to experience Him personally and know what He is like? That's a question that each of us ought to ask ourselves and, if the answer is “no,” then we need to do something about it.

I think it is important to consider how we can spend time with a God that we cannot see. There are two ways. First, we can converse with God. If we are a believer we know that He hears us when we speak to Him, but what is sometimes more challenging is hearing Him when He speaks to us. For those of us that would confess that they rarely hear God or do not hear God at all, I would say that the

first step to hearing Him is believing that we can. Our ability to know God through conversing with Him is a foundational attribute of the New Covenant that we read about in Jeremiah 32(33)-33(34):

“For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” says ADONAI: “I will put my Torah within them and write it on their hearts; I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will any of them teach his fellow community member or his brother [to] 'Know ADONAI'; for all will know me, from the least of them to the greatest; because I will forgive their wickednesses and remember their sins no more.”

You will notice that God says that the New Covenant he will make with the Israelites will result in everyone who is party to the covenant knowing Him as Lord, and that He will achieve it by putting the *Torah* within each of them, and writing it on their hearts. I have no doubt that those who heard Jeremiah prophesy this did not have a clear understanding of how God would achieve it, but we now know that it was achieved (and is achieved) by the Holy Spirit indwelling all who will receive him. For that reason, knowing God in a personal way must involve the Holy Spirit, for without the Holy Spirit we are out of communication with both Yeshua and the Father – in other words, out of communication with God.

Now God has graciously provided us with help for our getting to know Him, and that help is the Bible that tell us about Him; keep in mind that knowing God (which is the goal) is different from knowing about Him, but knowing about Him helps us to know Him. Here are two Scriptures that exhort us to attain knowledge about Him:

Ephesians 1:16-17: “I have not stopped giving thanks for you. In my prayers I keep asking the God of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah, the glorious Father, to give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you will have full knowledge of him.”

Colossians 1:9-10: “Therefore, from the day we heard of it, we have not stopped praying for you, asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will in all the wisdom and understanding which the Spirit gives; so that you may live lives worthy of the Lord and entirely pleasing to him, being fruitful in every good work and multiplying in the full knowledge of God.”

The Scriptures I just read exhort us to know who God is, but they do not themselves tell us who He is. Not to worry, because there are a plethora of

Scriptures that enumerate God's attributes, the sum total of which tell us who He is. There are so many Scriptures and so many attributes that all I can do in the time allotted for this message is to list the attributes of God that I have found, and cite a Scripture that supports each of them. So let's do it in alphabetical order; there are a lot of them:

1. GOD IS A BLESSER OF MEN

Deuteronomy 7:13-14: "He will love you, bless you and increase your numbers; he will also bless the fruit of your body and the fruit of your ground- your grain, wine, olive oil and the young of your cattle and sheep- in the land he swore to your ancestors that he would give you. You will be blessed more than all other peoples; there will not be a sterile male or female among you, and the same with your livestock."

2. GOD IS A COMFORTER

Isaiah 41:13: "For I, ADONAI, your God, say to you, as I hold your right hand, 'Have no fear; I will help you.'"

3. GOD IS COMPASSIONATE

Psalms 103:13: "Just as a father has compassion on his children, *ADONAI* has compassion on those who fear him."

4. GOD IS A CREATOR

Genesis 1:27: "So God created humankind in his own image; in the image of God he created him: male and female he created them."

5. GOD IS OUR DELIVERER & SAVIOR

Isaiah 43:11: "I, yes I, am *ADONAI*; besides me there is no deliverer [savior]."

6. GOD IS AN ENCOURAGER

Joshua 1:9: "Haven't I ordered you, 'Be strong, be bold'? So don't be afraid or downhearted, because *ADONAI* your God is with you wherever you go."

7. GOD IS ETERNAL

Psalms 93:2: "Your throne was established long ago; you have existed forever."

8. GOD IS FAITHFUL

Deuteronomy 7:9: "From this you can know that *ADONAI* your God is indeed God, the faithful God, who keeps his covenant and extends grace to those who love him and observe his *mitzvot*, to a thousand generations."

9. GOD IS THE FATHER OF YESHUA

Mark 1:10-11: "Immediately upon coming up out of the water, he [Yeshua] saw heaven torn open and the Spirit descending upon him like a dove; then a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, whom I love; I am well pleased with you.""

10. GOD IS OUR FATHER

Matthew 23:9: "And do not call anyone on earth 'Father.' because you have one Father, and he is in heaven."

11. GOD IS FEARSOME

Psalms 111:10: ".. the first and foremost point of wisdom is the fear of *ADONAI*; all those living by it gain good common sense. His praise stands forever."

12. GOD IS A FORGIVER OF SIN

Micah 7:18-19: "Who is a God like you, pardoning the sin and overlooking the crimes of the remnant of his heritage? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in grace. He will again have compassion on us, he will subdue our iniquities. You will throw all their sins into the depths of the sea."

13. GOD IS A GIVER OF GIFTS

James 1:17: "Every good act of giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father who made the heavenly lights; with him there is neither variation nor darkness caused by turning."

14. GOD IS GLORIOUS

Psalms 19:2(1): "The heavens declare the glory of God, the dome of the sky speaks the work of his hands."

15. GOD IS GOD OF ALL

Jeremiah 32:27: "Look, I am *ADONAI*, the God of every living creature; is there anything too hard for me?"

16. GOD IS GOOD

Psalms 145:9: "*ADONAI* is good to all; his compassion rests on all his creatures."

17. GOD IS GRACIOUS

Psalms 145:17: " *ADONAI* is righteous in all his ways, full of grace in all he does."

18. GOD IS GREAT

Jeremiah 10:6: "There is no one like you, *ADONAI*! You are great, and your name is great and mighty."

19. GOD IS OUR HEALER

Psalms 103:2-3: "Bless *ADONAI*, my soul, and forget none of his benefits! e forgives all your offenses, he heals all your diseases,.."

20. GOD IS OUR HELPER & COUNSELOR

Hebrews 13:6: "Therefore, we say with confidence, "ADONAI is my helper; I will not be afraid- what can a human being do to me?"

21. GOD IS HOLY

Exodus 15:11: "Who is like you, *ADONAI*, among the mighty? Who is like you, sublime in holiness, awesome in praises, working wonders?"

22. GOD IS IMMUTABLE (unchangeable)

Numbers 23:19: "God is not a human who lies or a mortal who changes his mind. When he says something, he will do it; when he makes a promise, he will fulfill it."

23. GOD IS INCOMPARABLE

Exodus 15:11: "Who is like you, *ADONAI*, among the mighty? Who is like you, sublime in holiness, awesome in praises, working wonders?"

24. GOD IS INVISIBLE

1 John 4:12: "No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God remains united with us, and our love for him has been brought to its goal in us."

25. GOD IS JEALOUS

Nahum 1:2: "*ADONAI* is a jealous and vengeful God. *ADONAI* avenges; he knows how to be angry. *ADONAI* takes vengeance on his foes and stores up wrath for his enemies."

26. GOD IS JUDGE

1 Peter 1:17: "Also, if you are addressing as Father the one who judges impartially according to each person's actions, you should live out your temporary stay on earth in fear."

27. GOD IS JUST

Nehemiah 9:33: "There is no question that you are just in all that has come upon us; for you have treated us fairly. It is we who have acted wickedly."

28. GOD IS KIND

Titus 3:4-5: "But when the kindness and love for mankind of God our Deliverer was revealed, he delivered us. It was not on the ground of any righteous deeds we had done, but on the ground of his own mercy. He did it by means of the *mikveh* of rebirth and the renewal brought about by the *Ruach HaKodesh*, .."

29. GOD IS A LAW-GIVER

Isaiah 33:22: "For *ADONAI* is our judge, *ADONAI* is our lawgiver, *ADONAI* is our king. He will save us."

30. GOD IS OUR LEADER

Psalms 27:11: "Teach me your way, *ADONAI*; lead me on a level path because of my enemies .."

31. GOD IS LORD

Isaiah 42:8: "I am *ADONAI* [Lord]; that is my name. I yield my glory to no one else, nor my praise to any idol."

32. GOD IS LOVE

1 John 4:8: "Those who do not love, do not know God; because God is love."

33. GOD IS LOVING

John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only and unique Son, so that everyone who trusts in him may have eternal life, instead of being utterly destroyed."

34. GOD IS MERCIFUL

Psalms 103:8: "*ADONAI* is merciful and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in grace."

35. GOD IS NEAR

Deuteronomy 4:7: "For what great nation is there that has God as close to them as *ADONAI* our God is, whenever we call on him?"

36. GOD IS OMNIPOTENT

(all powerful)

Jeremiah 32:17: "*ADONAI*, God! You made heaven and earth by your great power and outstretched arm; nothing is too hard for you"

37. GOD IS OMNIPRESENT

(present everywhere)

Psalms 139:7-10: "Where can I go to escape your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I climb up to heaven, you are there; if I lie down in Sh'ol, you are there. If I fly away with the wings of the dawn and land beyond the sea, even there your hand would lead me, your right hand would hold me fast. If I say, "Let darkness surround me, let the light around me be night," even darkness like this is not too dark for you; rather, night is as clear as day, darkness and light are the same."

38. GOD IS OMNISCIENT

(all knowing, wise & seeing)

Job 11:7-11: "Can you penetrate God's depths? Can you find out *Shaddai's* limits? They're as high as heaven; what can you do? They're deeper than Sh'ol; what can you know? ⁹ Their extent is longer than the earth and broader than the sea. If he passes through, puts in prison and assembles [for judgment], who can prevent him? For he knows when people are worthless; so if he sees iniquity, won't he look into it?"

39. GOD IS ONE

Deuteronomy 6:4: "*Sh'ma, Yisra'el! ADONAI Eloheinu, ADONAI echad* [Hear, Isra'el! *ADONAI* our God, *ADONAI* is one];"

40. GOD IS ONE WITH YESHUA

John 10:30: "I and the Father are one."

41. GOD IS PATIENT

2 Peter 3:15: "And think of our Lord's patience as deliverance, just as our dear brother Sha'ul also wrote you, following the wisdom God gave him."

42. GOD IS PRAISEWORTHY

Jeremiah 20:13: "Sing to *ADONAI!* Praise *ADONAI!* For he rescues those in need from the clutches of evildoers."

43. GOD IS OUR PROTECTOR

Exodus 14:14: "*ADONAI* will do battle for you. Just calm yourselves down!"

44. GOD IS OUR PROVIDER

Philippians 4:19: "Moreover, my God will fill every need of yours according to his glorious wealth, in union with the Messiah Yeshua."

45. GOD IS RIGHTEOUS

Psalms 145:17: "*ADONAI* is righteous in all his ways, full of grace in all he does."

46. GOD IS SELF-EXISTENT & SELF-DEFINING

Revelation 1:8: "I am the 'A' and the 'Z,'" says *ADONAI*, God of heaven's armies, the One who is, who was and who is coming."

47. GOD IS SLOW TO ANGER

Psalms 103:8: "ADONAI is merciful and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in grace."

48. GOD IS SOVEREIGN & KING

Psalms 24:10: "Who is he, this glorious king? ADONAI-Tzva'ot- he is the glorious king."

49. GOD IS A SPIRIT

John 4:24: "God is spirit; and worshippers must worship him spiritually and truly."

50. GOD IS A TEACHER

Isaiah 54:13: "All your children will be taught by ADONAI; your children will have great peace."

51. GOD IS TRANSCENDENT

(beyond our understanding)

Isaiah 55:8-9: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, and your ways are not my ways," says ADONAI. "As high as the sky is above the earth are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

52. GOD IS TRIUNE

(Father, Son, & Holy Spirit)

Matthew 28:19: "Therefore, go and make people from all nations into *talmidim*, immersing them into the reality of the Father, the Son and the *Ruach HaKodesh*, .."

53. GOD IS TRUSTWORTHY

Proverbs 3:5-6: "Trust in ADONAI with all your heart; do not rely on your own understanding."

54. GOD IS TRUTHFUL

Psalms 25:5: "Guide me in your truth, and teach me; for you are the God who saves me, my hope is in you all day long."

55. GOD IS VENGEFUL

Nahum 1:2-8: "*ADONAI* is a jealous and vengeful God. *ADONAI* avenges; he knows how to be angry. *ADONAI* takes vengeance on his foes and stores up wrath for his enemies."

Well, we have run out of time but I have provided each of you with a list of the attributes of God I have spoken about and, if you haven't written the Scriptures down, you will find this message on Ohev's web site in a few days. Keep in mind that there are other attributes and many more Scriptures than I had time to share. Also keep in mind that not all, but most of the attributes in the list are attributes that God wants each of us to possess, and that we can possess if we are serious about changing some of our ways and modeling ourselves after Yeshua.