

## **SERMON: THE STRENGTH OF THE NAME**

### **Proverbs 18:10**

**The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.**

#### **Introduction**

Proverbs is classified as one of the books of poetry of our sacred Scripture. It is a collection of wise sayings compiled by King Solomon. Although he is considered the wisest man of his time, he made many mistakes. He collected these wise poetic sayings for his sons so that they would not make the same mistakes he made. According to 1<sup>st</sup> Kings 4:32, Solomon could recite from memory three thousand proverbs.

The literary form of most of the proverbs is the couplet. Two related statements, where the second statement immediately follows the first statement. Though one statement preceded the other, the ancient Hebrews saw them as running side-by-side. Thus, scholars describe these couplets as parallel. Hebrew poetry does not have rhyme or meter as our English poetry does. Hebrew poetry consists of parallelism of ideas. Sometimes the second sentence or clause restates in a different way the truth of the first clause. This is called synonymous parallelism. Sometimes the second clause makes the first clause stronger by presenting a contrasting truth. This is called antithetic parallelism. Sometimes, as in the case of our text, the second clause develops the thought of the first and shows the positive advantage or results of the first truth. This is called synthetic parallelism.

Now let's look at our text. This text uses God's personal name. God has many names, titles, and attributes. His personal name that uniquely identifies Him is Yahweh. When the name came to the English-speaking world through Latin and German theologians and linguists it shifted to Jehovah. So, Yahweh or Jehovah is his personal name.

#### **Exposition**

##### **1. The Sacredness of the Name.**

(The Name Should Not Be Trivialized.)

(The Name Was So Sacred It Was Used Sparingly.)

(When A Pen Was Used To Write The Name,  
It Could Not Be Used To Write Anything Else.)

(The Pen Had To Be Ritualistically Buried or Burned.)

## **2. The Safety and Security of the Name**

(The Name Is A Guarded Tower Protected By Soldiers.)

(Civilians Were Allowed To Enter The Tower For Protection.)

(The Height, The Fortification, And The Soldiers Provided Protection  
During Wars And Other Troubling Times.)

## **3. The Salvation of the Name.**

(The Name Jesus Means Jehovah Is Our Salvation.)

(There Is Salvation In The Name Of Jesus.)

(There Is Salvation In The Name Because Jesus Shed His Precious  
Blood.)

## **Closing Thoughts**

I will close with the lyrics of an old school hymn:

“Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,

Pilgrim through this barren land;

I am weak, but Thou art mighty;

Hold me with Thou powerful hand;

Bread of heaven, Bread of heaven,

Feed me ‘til I want no more.”

Give God Glory! Give God All The Glory!

## **Related Scriptures**

**Psalm 9:10; Psalm 91:14; Isaiah 26:1-4**

## **End Notes:**

1. How did we get from Yahweh to Jehovah? This is a frequently asked question. I will give you the short version. The long version would require volumes.

The Hebrews wrote the personal name of God as YHWH. It was called the Divine Name or the “Tetragrammaton,” because it is made up of four letters. In the early days, the Hebrews wrote their language with the consonants only. Of course, they had to pronounce the vowels in order to speak, but the vowels were transmitted orally and not originally written.

In the course of time the Hebrews ceased to pronounce the Divine Name, YHWH. They considered the name too sacred and feared its abuse and misuse. They were afraid they would violate the third commandment. Even when pronounced, it could not be spoken back-to-back. A boy would not be exposed to the sound of the name until he was twelve years old. In His perfect flesh, Jesus probably did not hear the name audibly until He was in Jerusalem at the age of twelve, which is recorded in Luke 2:42. A pen used to write the Divine Name had to be ritualistically buried or burned; it could not be used for any other writing assignment. So, instead of pronouncing the personal Divine Name, the Hebrews simply used the general word “Lord,” which in Hebrew is “adonay” (add-oh-nigh). Eventually, in writing the Scripture they devised a scheme for indicating to the reader when he or she came across the Divine Name, he or she should not pronounce it in its ancient fashion, but say “Lord.” In this scheme they wrote the vowel signs of “adonay” with the consonants YHWH. In the Middle Ages, when Latin was in general use, Christian scholars misunderstood this scheme, and they thought the Divine Name should be pronounced and transcribed just as it was written – that is, Yehowah, or Jehovah, since the Latin J was pronounced Y and V was pronounced W.

Over time the first vowel shifted, by a regular phonetic process and the “a” became an “e,” and thus we have Jehovah. (An example: many people say “suster” instead of sister.)

Therefore, we do not know exactly how the Divine Name was originally pronounced. Some say Yaoweh; others say Yabeh; still others say Yahavah. There is still disagreement today on how to pronounce tomato and pecan.

The most important point is this: the word Yahweh, no matter how it is pronounced, comes from a Hebrew verb that means “to be.” The name appears to have meant “I AM.” This is very simple. However, think of the deeper theological meaning: God is the GREAT I AM.

2. Just think. We have words and names so vulgar, offensive, or hurtful, that people of character refrain from using them. Even when we are quoting someone else who has used one, we have a scheme or stratagem to identify the word without actually saying it. In contrast, the Hebrews had a name so sacred and holy that they refrained from speaking it. They had a scheme or stratagem to identify it without actually speaking it. If they were speaking today, they probably would refer to God as the “G-Word.” This will make you scratch your head in bewilderment. Look how far human culture has strayed from God’s holy and righteous standards.

3. There were times in Hebraic history, that they would not let the enemies in battles hear them speak His personal name. They believed that the name was so powerful that even if the enemy used it, it would work for them.

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