



This vibrant and colorful mosaic print glorifies the Name above all names! Be blessed by the Shema of Deut. 6:4—words in both Hebrew and English.

Dear Mishpochah in Yeshua,

### Giving Thanks...to His Name

At this season of Thanksgiving, we desire to stop and pause to thank God for His Name which, like God Himself, is greater and more all-encompassing than our finite minds can fathom. Over and over in the Holy Scriptures we are exhorted to give thanks to the name of the Lord:

*"Rejoice in the LORD... and **give thanks** at the remembrance of **His Holy name**."* (Psalm 97:12)

*"Where the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, to the testimony of Israel, to **give thanks** to the **name of the LORD**."* (Psalm 122:4)

*"Surely the righteous shall **give thanks** to **Your name**..."* (Psalm 140:13)

*"Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, **giving thanks to His name**."* (Hebrews 13:15)

Which name? God has many. He is so awesome, so majestic, so powerful and so great that one name would never be sufficient for Him. Names in the Hebrew mind, especially in ancient times, were very important. They carried much more significance than they do today. A name was more than a title or a label to distinguish one individual from another. Rather, a person's name was believed to reveal his essence, character, reputation or destiny. Knowing a person's name helped you know the person. In the same way, knowing God's names enables us to know Him better. We have chosen just a few of His names to meditate on this month, but we are thankful for all of them—and for all of Him!

### The Sacred Name: יהוה (YHWH)

When God called Moses to deliver the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage, Moses asked the Lord how he should respond to the question, "...What is His name?..." (Exodus 3:13). "And God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM...' (Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh). He continued by saying, "...The LORD יהוה God of your fathers, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations." (Exodus 3:15) Because of the similarity of אהיה (I Am Who I Am) and יהוה, some scholars believe that YHWH, also known as the "Sacred Name," is some form of the verb "to be." No one knows for sure.

What we do know is this: There was a time in history when the Levitical priests knew how to pronounce the sacred name of God. Over time, the vowels have been lost, making an accurate pronunciation of this Name impossible. Therefore, to avoid mispronouncing God's holy name, most Jews use substitutions. Bible translators have wrestled with how to translate יהוה. The King James Version of the Bible substitutes LORD in capital letters for the Sacred Name. Other versions use *Yahweh* or *Jehovah*. Traditional Jewish versions vary. Some say *HaShem* (literally, the name). Others use *Adonai* (Lord) instead of יהוה. Still other texts, such as the **Hertz Daily Prayer Book**, **The Chumash**, and the **Jewish Publication Society Tenach** actually make an attempt at the vowel points יהוה. This would be pronounced, *YehoVAH*.

Pronunciation difficulties aside, *Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh*, (I Am that I Am), clearly reveals a special aspect of God's nature: He is a constant, solid, dependable, ever-present reality. He is. He always will be. As He revealed Himself to Moses, He reveals Himself to us, and we are blessed. How we thank Him for condescending to enter into our world as Yeshua who boldly proclaimed to His Jewish brothers, "...Before Abraham was, I AM" (John 8:58).

### ***El Shaddai***

We give thanks to *El Shaddai* this month, God Almighty, The All Sufficient One, the Source of all our blessings. When some of you sing, "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow," know that you are thanking and praising *El Shaddai*. This name of God reveals His giving, nurturing, life-sustaining essence.

The name *Shaddai* is derived from the Hebrew word **שָׁדַי** (*shad*), a woman's breast. Therefore, *El Shaddai* could also be translated, "God the Breasted One." We are most familiar with the father nature of God, but do not often consider that He loves like a mother as well! He nurtures His children, provides for them, sustains their life, and cares for them as a devoted mother cares for her children. The name *Shaddai*, or simply the Hebrew letter *shin* **שׁ**, often appears on the door posts of Jewish homes on a mezuzah. This name of God as the Source of all blessing is certainly appropriate to accompany the verses inside the mezuzah (Deuteronomy 6:4-9). In addition, the three Hebrew letters that comprise the word *Shaddai*, **שׁדַּי**, are also the first letters in the Hebrew phrase, *shomer daltot Yisrael*, "protector of the doors of Israel."

The "*El*" of *El Shaddai* is a separate Hebrew word that is also part of some of God's other names. "*El*" by itself means God. King David said in Psalm 77:14, "*You are the El who does wonders...*" It also means might or power. When "*El*" is applied to the One true God, it always assumes His power. When *El* is combined with *Shaddai*, the power that is expressed is the power of great bounty or fruitfulness.

It was *El Shaddai* who appeared to Abram at age ninety-nine, entering into covenant with him, and promising him great blessing and fruitfulness (Genesis 17:1-8). *El Shaddai* confirmed this everlasting covenant with Abraham and his descendants by appearing to all three patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

We are experiencing a supernatural manifestation of *El Shaddai* as Nurturer, Life-giver, and One who pours forth life as a parent in our congregation here in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Jewish men and women, well advanced in age, like Abraham, are being touched by *El Shaddai* in life-giving ways. Rose, in her late eighties, sat next to Jamie at our *Kol Nidre* (*Erev Yom Kippur*) service. Jamie had on white clothing, a traditional Day of Atonement custom. Rose was upset because she forgot to wear white. She told Jamie that her father always wore white, and would be happy that she sat next to Jamie. As the service progressed, Rose was visibly moved. Jamie felt led to get the white lace head covering from the *Shabbat* table and drape it over Rose's shoulders. After Neil's message, Rose said to Jamie, "My father is pleased that I am here with you." The wall of resistance to the Gospel (which we have been sharing with her for about two years) came tumbling down, and Rose prayed to receive Yeshua's atonement for her sin. After she prayed, she exclaimed, "I feel so wonderful!"

The following *Shabbat*, Pauline, age 93, sat next to Jamie. Her daughter, Wendy, sat on the other side. Jamie met Pauline at Curves. Yes, Pauline still exercises and even cleans underneath tables. Amazing! After months of interacting and inviting, Pauline finally agreed to attend a temple service. Sometime during the praise and worship part of the service, Pauline turned to Jamie and said, "My parents sent you to me. They perished in the Holocaust with the rest of my family, but they brought me here today." All barriers came down. Both Pauline and Wendy asked *El Shaddai* to forgive them of their sin, and they received Yeshua as their Messiah.

We are believing that Julie, age 102, is next. She recently commented, "Why haven't I known about this place all these years?" She now comes with her aide every week and wants to attend the Seniors' Bible Study. (Julie stopped working as an accountant at age 99!) Please pray for us. *El Shaddai* is wrapping His arms around these precious elderly sons and daughters of Abraham and supernaturally countering one of



the major objections and stumbling blocks that Jewish people have when presented with the Gospel: "What would my parents say?" Somehow they are sensing the approval of their parents in the Spirit.

This is *El Shaddai*, the God who supplies all our needs and pours out His blessings upon us, even in our old age (Philippians 4:19). As King David said in Psalm 90:2, "...Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are *El Shaddai*."

### ***El Zokher***

We give thanks for *El Zokher* (El ZoKHER, guttural, kh), the God who remembers. *El Zokher* remembered Noah (Genesis 8:1) and all the other living creatures on the ark and delivered them safely to dry land. (Yeshua is the Ark of our salvation, and when we are in Him, we too will be delivered safely!) *El Zokher* remembered His people Israel and His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and rescued them from Egyptian bondage (Exodus 2:24). He still remembers Zion, and, as both *El Shaddai* and *El Zokher*, will fulfill His promises to His people: "*But Zion said, 'The Lord has forsaken me, and my Lord has forgotten me. Can a woman forget her nursing child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, yet I will not forget you. See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands...' "* (Isaiah 49:14-16).

*El Zokher* has not forgotten you! If you have received Yeshua as your Messiah and Lord, your name is in His book (Malachi 3:16). He remembers every prayer that you have prayed, and every tear that you have shed, *El Zokher* also remembers every promise that He has given to you, and will faithfully fulfill them in His time.

### ***Mikveh Yisrael***

*Mikveh Yisrael* is a little known but very important name of God. It means "Hope of Israel" and is found in Jeremiah 17:7-8, 13: "*Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, and whose hope is the LORD. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river, and will not fear when heat comes; but its leaf will be green, and will not be anxious in the year of drought, nor will cease from yielding fruit...O LORD, the hope of Israel [Mikveh Yisrael], all who forsake You shall be ashamed. Those who depart from Me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living waters.*"

The word *mikveh* in Hebrew has a double meaning. It means hope and also means a ritual bath. *Mikveh* can mean a gathering of water, a reservoir or a pool. The ideas of cleansing and purification are present in the word *mikveh*. This Hebraic concept is found in the New Covenant in 1 John 3:2-3. "*Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.*"

Hope and purification. Hope and cleansing. They are connected. While *tikvah* is the most common word for "hope" in Hebrew, *mikveh* is the one applied to God. We see in the verses from Jeremiah 17 that *Mikveh Yisrael* is the "fountain of living waters." All who come to the Fountain are cleansed. There is hope for even the vilest sinner, like the woman caught in adultery mentioned in John chapter 8. Could it be that after proclaiming that He was the source of living water, on the last great day of *Sukkot*, (John 7:37-39) this woman was totally cleansed by *Mikveh Yisrael*, while her accusers saw their names written in the dust as having forsaken the "fountain of living waters."

We give thanks to *Mikveh Yisrael* for cleansing us of all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). We also thank Him for fulfilling in our day the promise of Ezekiel 36:24-27 to the House of Israel: "*For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.*" There is no need to despair. *Mikveh Yisrael* cleanses us and gives us hope. "*Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out [like living water] in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.*" (Romans 5:5)

## יהוה Tzva'ot

We are so thankful that our God is also *Adonai Tzva'ot* (tz-va-OAT) or Lord of Hosts. He is the Lord of Heaven's Armies. *Adonai Tzva'ot* is the final name of God revealed in the *Tenach*. It is found mostly in the Prophets, especially in the context of Israel's failure to obey the Lord. *Adonai Tzva'ot* is mentioned eighty times in Jeremiah and nearly fifty times in Zechariah.

This name of God reveals Him as a God for needy people, for people who fail. That's us! We have problems, we need help, and *Adonai Tzva'ot* comes to our rescue. He tells us to be still and know that He is God (Psalm 46:10). The next verse says, *"The Lord of hosts (Adonai Tzva'ot) is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."* (Psalm 46:11) Although *Adonai Tzva'ot* punishes His people for their unfaithfulness, He also smites their enemies and brings deliverance to His people as in Isaiah 31:5, *"Like birds flying about, so will Adonai Tzva'ot defend Jerusalem. Defending, He will also deliver it; passing over, He will preserve it."*

When we acknowledge our own weakness, and our utter dependence on the Lord, *Adonai Tzva'ot* enters the battle and fights for us. Repentance and a contrite heart bring *Adonai Tzva'ot* near to us. The psalmist expressed this truth in Psalm 80:4, 7: *"O LORD God of hosts, Adonai Tzva'ot, how long will You be angry against the prayer of Your people?...Restore us, Adonai Tzva'ot; cause Your face to shine, and we shall be saved!"*

## Yeshua

Above all, we give thanks for the name of Yeshua, the name which is above every name, given by God the Father to His Son. At the name of Yeshua (Jesus in English) every knee will one day bow, and every tongue will confess that He is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (See Philippians 2:9-11.)

What does the name Yeshua reveal to us about God? Yeshua (ישוע) is derived from the Hebrew verb *yasha*, to save or to deliver. The central idea of *yasha* in the Hebrew Scriptures is to liberate, to deliver from evil, and to free from oppression. Therefore, the name given by an angel to a virgin before her child was conceived in the womb, literally meant "salvation" (Matthew 1:21). Yeshua's name revealed His destiny as well as the very essence of His being. He came to save, and to set people free from the bondage of sin, sickness and self.

"Be thankful to Him, and bless His name." (Psalm 100:4) Love, *Mel & Jamie*

P.S. Don't miss **His Names Are Wonderful**. 140 Hebrew names of God and Bible locations.

P.P.S. **Praying the Names of God** is a 26 week study, one name of God per week. Excellent.

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## Jewish Jewels Television Airtime Schedule - November 2009

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FL	Miami/Ft. Laud.	WHFT TV 45
FL	Tallahassee	WVUP TV 45
FL	West Palm Beach	WFGC TV 61
GA	Columbus	WYBU TV 16
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FRI 6:00 PM
SUN 1:30 PM
<b>MON 7:30 AM</b>
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SUN 12:00 PM
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