**Mt. Carmel Missionary Baptist Church**

**Session #1 – The Names and Attributes (characteristics) of God: What do you know about God?**

**The personal names of God, do you know them?**

**Names for God found in Sacred Scripture**  
and some of the passages in which these names are found:

* **Elohim – (EL-OH-HEEM)** = "God" (plural) as in the Creator: *In the beginning God (Elohim) created the heaven and the earth* ([Genesis 1:1](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis1.htm#v1)).
* **El Elyon – (EL-EL-YAWN)** = "God (singular) Most High": *And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of [El Elyon] God the Most High.  And He blessed him and said, ''blessed be Abram of God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand* ([Genesis 14:18-20](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis14.htm#v18)).
* **El Roi – (EL-ROY-EYE)** = "God Who Sees": *Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, 'You are a [El Roi] God who sees'; for she said, 'Have I even remained alive here after seeing Him?'  Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi (BEAR-LAH-AY-ROY-EYE) [well of the living one who sees me]* ([Genesis 16:13-14](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis16.htm#v13)).
* **El Shaddai – (EL-SHAD-EYE)** = "God Almighty" or "God the All-Sufficient One"; the etymology is so ancient that Biblical scholars do not agree on the meaning of this name: *I AM El Shaddai.  Live in my presence, be perfect, and I shall grant a covenant between myself and you, and make you very numerous.  And Abram bowed to the ground* ([Genesis 17:2-3](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis17.htm#v2)).
* **Yahweh – (YA-WHEY)** = found in Scripture as the consonants YHWH, known as the "Tetragramaton" is God's holy Covenant name.  The letters  form a word or words from the verb "to be" and most scholars translate it as "I AM who I AM" or "I will be who I will be", or "the Self-Existent One: *Moses said to God, 'Look, if I go to the Israelites and say to them, The God of your ancestors has sent me to you, and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what am I to tell them?'  God said to Moses, 'I AM He who is.  Tell them that I AM who I am sent you* ([Exodus 3:13-14](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus3.htm#v13)).
* **Adonai – (A-DON-AY)** = "Lord" (Whenever you see LORD, all in capital letters is a substitution out of reverence for God's covenant name "Yahweh"): *Then Moses said to the LORD, 'Please Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither recently nor in time past, nor since you have spoken to  your servant; for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue. And the LORD said to him, 'Who has made men's mouth?  Or who make him dumb or deaf, or seeing or blind?  Is it not I, the LORD?'* ([Exodus 4:10-12](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus4.htm#v10), NAB).
* These names begin with **Yahweh**, you may better know them with **Jehovah.**
* **Yahweh-jireh (JI-RAH)** = "Yahweh will provide" or "I AM will provide": *But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, 'Abraham, Abraham!'  And he said, 'Here I am.'  And he said, 'Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, form Me.' Then Abraham raised his eyes and looked, and behind him he saw a ram caught up in the thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the place of his son.  And Abraham called the name of that place [Yahweh jireh] The LORD will provide, as it is said to this day: On the Mountain Yahweh provides* ([Genesis 22:11-14](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis22.htm#v11)).
* **Yahweh-rapha** = "Yahweh who heals": *If you will give earnest heed to the voice of Yahweh your God and do what He regards as right, if you pay attention to His commandments and keep all His laws, I shall never inflict on you any of the diseases that  I inflicted on the Egyptians, for I am Yahweh your Healer [Yahweh rapha]* ([Exodus 15:26](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus15.htm#v26)).
* **Yahweh–nissi** = "Yahweh My Banner": (after willing a battle with God's assistance ) *Moses built an altar, and named it Yahweh is My Banner [Yahweh-nissi] ...*([Exodus 17:16](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus17.htm#v16)).
* **Yahweh-mekoddishkem – (ME-KO-DISH-KIM)** = "Yahweh Who Sanctifies You": *And Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, 'But as for you, speak to the sons of Israel, saying, "You shall surely observe My Sabbaths; for this is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am Yahweh who sanctifies you [Yahweh-mekoddishkem]...*([Exodus 31:12](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus31.htm#v12)).
* **Yahweh-shalom = "**Yahweh is Peace": *He said, 'Alas, my Lord, Yahweh!  Now I have seen the Angel of Yahweh face to face    ' Yahweh answered, 'Peace be with you; have no fear; you will not die.'  Gideon built an altar there to Yahweh and called it Yahweh is peace [Yahweh-shalom]* ([Judges 6:22-24](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/judges/judges6.htm#v22)).
* **Yahweh-sabaoth (of everything)** = "Yahweh of Hosts" (the "hosts" are the army of angels who serve God): *Who is He, this king of glory?  Yahweh of Hosts [Yahweh-saboath], He is the king of glory* ([Psalm 46:7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/psalms/psalm46.htm#v7), NJB); *The LORD of Hosts [Yahweh-sabaoth] is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold* ([Psalms 22:10](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/psalms/psalm22.htm#v10), NAB).
* **Yahweh-raah** = "Yahweh My Shepherd": *The LORD [Yahweh raah] is my shepherd; I shall not want ...*([Psalms 23:1](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/psalms/psalm23.htm" \l "v1), NAB).
* **Yahweh-tsidkenu – (TIS-KEE-NEW)** = "Yahweh Our Saving Justice": *Look, the days are coming, Yahweh declares, when I shall rise an upright Branch for David; He will reign as king and be wise, doing what is just and upright in the country.  In his days Judah will triumph and Israel live in safety, and this is the name He will be called  Yahweh-our-saving-justice [Yahweh-tsidkenu]* ([Jeremiah 23:5-6](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/jeremiah/jeremiah23.htm#v5)).

**ATTRIBUTES (CHARACTERISTICS) OF GOD**

**Omniscient**

God knows everything and His knowledge is complete. This is called His omniscience. Isaiah said that Israel had not seen everything that God had planned (Isaiah 40:28). Job said that God had all [knowledge](http://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/10-bible-verses-about-knowledge/) (Job 37:16). The psalmist said that God’s understanding was infinite (Psalm 147:5). The New Testament also claims God’s omniscience in 1 John 3:20 and Romans 11:33.

**Omnipotent**

God is able to bring to pass everything that He chooses. He has no external limitations. His only limits are those He places upon Himself. The book of Job (42:2) says that He can do all things and that nothing can restrain him. Genesis 18:14 simply asks, “Is anything too hard for the LORD?” The answer, of course, is “no.”

**Omnipresent**

God’s omnipresence speaks to the fact that He is present in all places at all times. While God is in [Heaven](http://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/what-does-the-bible-say-heaven-is-like/), His throne, He is also present in every place. Proverbs 15:3 says that His eyes are in every place. Jeremiah says that God is close at hand and that no one can hide himself from God (Jeremiah 23:23, 24). The classic passage on God’s omnipresence is Psalm 139:7-12 where the psalmist says that he can never be out of the sight of God.

**Immutable -** unchanging over time or unable to be changed:

By nature, God is absolutely unchanging. For this reason, the attributes He possessed before the creation of the world are the same ones He has today. Psalm 90:2 says that before anything was created God was eternal and existed in the same state that He is in now. Malachi 3:6 says, “I am the Lord, I change not.”

**Holy -** Holiness is a quality of perfection, sinlessness, and inability to [sin](https://carm.org/dictionary-sin) that is possessed by [God](https://carm.org/dictionary-god) alone. As Christians, we are called to be holy ([1 Pet. 1:16](http://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/1%20Pet.%201.16)). But this does not refer to our nature. Instead, it is a command of our practice and thought. We are to be holy in obedience ([1 Pet. 1:15](http://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/1%20Pet.%201.15)). God has made us holy through his Son [Jesus](https://carm.org/dictionary-jesus) ([Eph. 1:4](http://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/Eph.%201.4); [1 Pet. 2:9](http://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/1%20Pet.%202.9)).

Though all the attributes of God are important and dependent on one another, the fact of God’s holiness seems to be the one He wishes us to put emphasis upon. When God revealed Himself to man (Moses, Job, Isaiah, Mount of Transfiguration, etc.) each encounter mentions His holiness. Isaiah called God “the Holy One” more than 30 times. Psalm 99:9 says, “the Lord our God is holy.” Because of His holiness He cannot accept, nor even look upon sin (Habakkuk 1:13).

**Righteous -** (of a person or conduct) morally right or justifiable; virtuous:

God’s holiness is manifested in His righteousness. Because He is holy, He is righteous. This attribute of righteousness is the way His holiness is expressed when dealing with men. Psalm 116:5 and Ezra 9:15 say that God is righteous. Many verses declare His righteousness (Exodus 9:23-27; Psalm 129:4; 145:17; Jeremiah 12:1; 1 John 1:9)

**Sovereign -** a group or body of persons or a state having sovereign authority.

God’s sovereignty is how He rules His creation. This is what makes Him free to do what He knows is best for us. Though He is in complete control, He has also given us a free will to obey or reject His leading. The first verse of the [Bible](http://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/bible-verses-by-topic-inspirational-scriptures-by-subject/) says that God does what He chooses to do. The entire first chapter shows God’s authority and sovereignty over His creation. The Bible is full of passages that show God leading or commanding people to do certain things.

**Love**

If there is one attribute that people love to embrace, it is the fact that God is [love](http://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/bible-verses-about-love-25-awesome-scripture-quotes/). This word encapsulates for us His mercy, grace and loving-kindness. God is not like the deities of other religions who are thought of as angry and hateful. God is loving towards His creatures. He wants to share a personal relationship with us. 1 John 4 talks extensively about God’s love. Not just that God *has* love, but that He *is* love.

**Merciful**

God’s mercy has been defined as God not giving us what we deserve. We, as sinners, deserve eternal punishment away from His presence, yet in His mercy He has chosen to offer us a way for salvation (Ephesians 2:4; Romans 5:8). Deuteronomy 4:31 and Psalm 103:8 say that God is merciful. A beautiful picture of [God’s mercy](http://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/15-inspirational-psalms-about-mercy/) is shown in the parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15.

**Trinity -** the Christian Godhead as one God in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

While God is one, He manifests Himself in three distinct persons: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus) and God the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament often the plural form of the Hebrew word *God* is used when speaking about Him (Elohim). The Bible refers to the “Angel of the Lord” several times. This is a reference to a physical manifestation of God (Genesis 16, 18). The Holy Spirit is also mentioned in the Old Testament (Genesis 1:2; Judges 6:34).

The doctrine of the Trinity is taught even more clearly in the New Testament. The baptism of Christ in Matthew 3:16, 17 shows the three persons of the Trinity. God speaks as the Holy Spirit descends from heaven to Jesus. Another example is the way in which we are instructed to be baptized in Matthew 28—in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Jesus also said that He would ask God the Father to send the Holy Spirit as a comforter in John 14. The Bible also claims that each one of the three are God (the Father, Romans 1:7; the Son, Hebrews 1:8; the Spirit, Acts 5:3, 4).