



Who is God? Knowing Him by His Names Dominican Republic Mission Trip 2008 Daily Study

The LORD of Hosts, The One who will Save

I have been recently listening to the audio book of Homer's Iliad. It is a poem depicting the legendary battle of the Greeks to take the city of Troy. What I have found quite interesting, and very sad at the same time, is the interaction of the Greek gods with mankind. The Greeks had many gods, the highest being Zeus. The other gods were often beings of lesser power, sometimes the offspring of carnal relations between Zeus and some other god or even a human female. The men of both the Trojan and Aegean armies called on their gods for help. The little gods did their best to meddle in the battles, taking sides, and protecting their favorites. Zeus was understood to be the supreme authority in heaven and on earth, and once he made a decision, it stood. But even then, the other gods may not have been happy with the decision and would "tweak" or subvert his wishes. As long as he wasn't paying attention, or if they found a loophole in his orders, they could get away with it.

Wouldn't it be sad to serve such a god? A god who could demand his way but was not sovereign enough to carry it out completely? We do not serve such a God, my friends. The Bible speaks true when it reminds us that we serve the King of Kings and LORD of Lords! It is fitting, then, that we come to the next name which God has used to reveal Himself – El Sabaoth or Jehovah Sabaoth.

The word Sabaoth ()bc) means "hosts" – a mass of persons or things, especially for war. It can be combined with God, LORD, or both. "God of hosts" is found over 40 times, and "LORD of hosts" over 200 times, most often in the Psalms and Minor Prophets.

If He is the God of "hosts," then we should consider how the Bible defines "hosts."

- Stars or heavenly bodies that were worshipped by pagans. Deut. 4:19, Zeph. 1:4-6, Gen. 2:1, Ps. 33:6
- Armies – Exodus 6:26 translates it "armies."
- Angels or heavenly beings - Joshua 5:14-15.

What does this name of God reveal to us about Himself?

Our God is a God who does not need armies or angels to provide the "muscle" to accomplish His will, but He is none the less the commander of all of these. He rules these "hosts" because He is their creator. I believe God reveals Himself by this name not only to remind us of His might and authority (His supreme ability to carry out His will), but also to remind us that He is Sovereign over all the things that the pagans hold in high esteem – planets, stars, and other 'gods.'

Consider the following passages and see why this name was used here:

- I Kings 18:15 – Elijah stands before this God against Ahab and the false prophets.
- II Kings 3:14 – Elisha stands before the God of Elijah when he is confronted by 3 kings.
- Psalms 46 – The Psalmist does not fear because this God is his God.
- I Samuel 17:45 – This is the name David called on when he faced Goliath.
- Zechariah 3 – It is this God who will bring about salvation and remove the sins of His people.

Now notice how God reveals Himself in Zechariah 3. Why would He use this name here? Look especially at verse 9. Here we have Satan accusing Joshua the high priest in his filthy garments. Jehovah rebukes Satan, gives Joshua clean garments, and declares that "the LORD of Hosts" will bring about salvation and a final and complete cleansing of sin. The reason that Joshua and all those who are God's people can rely on these promises of salvation is because the God who is commander of all of creation has declared it – the LORD of Hosts is His name! See also Isaiah 9:7 where the LORD of hosts will bring about the promised Messiah.

My friends, if God were not LORD Sabaoth, then His promises of salvation could not be relied on. Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him all creatures here below. Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

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