

Jehovah Shammah: The Lord is There

הוהי שמה

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Text: Ezekiel 48:35

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Series: Drawing Near to God through His Name

Midweek Prayer Meeting

Introduction: Open your Bibles to **Ezekiel 48:35**. We continue our series entitled, “Drawing Near to God through His Name” and today we are going to learn that God is “Jehovah-Shammah: The Lord Who is There”.

Strictly speaking, Yahweh Shammah is a name for a city rather than a title of God. But it is so closely associated with God's presence and power that it has often been equated with a name for God, at least in popular parlance. The name in the New Testament that is most closely associated with it is Immanuel, "God with us," a name that was given to Jesus. Jehovah Shammah, "The LORD is there", reminds us that we were created both to **enjoy** and to **manifest** God's presence.

We were not created for ourselves. God's primary purpose in the world is not redemption, but it is to manifest His glory. Creation and redemption manifest the glory of God. We are not the center of the universe, God is.

Tonight's name is: Jehovah Shammah, the LORD who is there. It comes from **Ezekiel 48:35** (ESV) — "The circumference of the city shall be 18,000 cubits. And the name of the city from that time on shall be, The LORD Is There."

It is the last verse in the book of Ezekiel. The first 32 chapters, Ezekiel prophesied doom and destruction because of Israel's disobedience. The last 15 chapters he prophesies hope for all who repent and trust the LORD.

Illustration-Mom's Death

The time I felt most alone, the Lord was there for me. It was New Years Eve 1989. The clock turned midnight. My sister called to me and said, “Something's wrong with Mom.” I found my mother and knelt by her. I prayed. I didn't know but my mother had died of a massive heart attack at 49 years of age.

That night, I understood Jehovah Shammah. The Lord was THERE for me.

Introductory application: There are times when we feel forsaken and alone and fearful. 365 times in the Bible God says fear not, and the primary reason He gives that we should not fear is: I am with you!

Isaiah 41:9–10 (ESV) — “you whom I took from the ends of the earth, and called from its farthest corners, saying to you, “You are my servant, I have **chosen** you and not cast you off”; 10 fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for **I am your God**; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.””

I. The **Promise** of God to His People.

Understanding the Name

Genesis is the story of beginnings. For a short while, it portrays an easy intimacy between God and the man and woman he made. But as soon as sin enters the picture, that intimacy is destroyed. Sensing that sin has rendered them unfit for God's presence, Adam and Eve tried to hide. But God finds them and casts them out of paradise, barring the way back.

Nevertheless, he doesn't entirely abandon sinful humanity. Instead God begins to reestablish his relationship with them. He starts by choosing a people for his own. Then he delivers his people from their slavery in Egypt, as Deuteronomy 4:37 says, “by his Presence and his great strength.” God dwells with his people first in the form of a pillar of cloud and fire, then in the movable tabernacle in the wilderness, and later in the Jerusalem temple.

But still, God's people sin. Tragically, the prophet Ezekiel witnesses the glory of God departing from the temple because of their continued unfaithfulness. God is no longer there. The temple becomes “Ichabod”, which means “The Glory has Departed”.

II. A **City** Named “God is There”.

A. Ezekiel's Prophecy (Eze. 37:21-28; 48:35).

God assures Ezekiel and Israel, that he will gather them from their nations and bring them back to their land and save them, predicting a time of restoration, when “the name of the city from that time on will be: THE LORD IS THERE.”

Ezekiel 37:21–28 (ESV) — “then say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone, and will gather them from all around, and bring them to their own land. 22 And I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. And one king shall be king over them all, and they shall be no longer two nations, and no longer divided into two kingdoms. 23 They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols and their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions. But I will save them from all the backslidings in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. 24 “My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall walk in my rules and be careful to obey my statutes. 25 They shall dwell in the land that I gave to my servant Jacob, where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children's children shall dwell there forever, and David my servant shall be their prince forever. 26 I will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will set them in their land and multiply them, and will set my”

sanctuary in their midst forevermore. 27 My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 28 Then the nations will know that I am the LORD who sanctifies Israel, when my sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.”

Ezekiel 48:35 (ESV) — “The circumference of the city shall be 18,000 cubits. And the name of the city from that time on shall be, The LORD Is There.”

Isaiah 62:12 (ESV) — “And they shall be called The Holy People, The Redeemed of the LORD; and you shall be called Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken.”

1 Peter 2:9 (ESV) — “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”

The city’s new name is to be **The Lord Is There**, for its name indicates its true character. This name recalls the observation in the introduction to this vision complex: this vision, and by extension the book, is about the actualization of God’s presence among his people.

Isaiah 43:2 (ESV) — “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.”

B. New Testament promises.

John 14:1–3 (ESV) — “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. 2 In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.”

1 Corinthians 6:19–20 (ESV) — “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, 20 for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.”

1 Corinthians 3:16 (ESV) — “Do you not know that you [plural] are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?”

Hebrews 13:5 (ESV) — “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

Revelation 21:1–5 (ESV) — “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. 4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” 5

And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

This is the constant theme of Scripture, and it comes directly from the Old Testament... **Ezekiel 11:19–20** (ESV) — “And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, 20 that they may walk in my statutes and keep my rules and obey them. And **they shall be my people, and I will be their God.**”

Ezekiel 37:23; 27 (ESV) — “They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols and their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions. But I will save them from all the backslidings in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. ...27 **My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.**”

Genesis 17:8 (ESV) — “And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and **I will be their God.**”

Jeremiah 24:7 (ESV) — “I will give them a heart to know that I am the LORD, and **they shall be my people and I will be their God,** for they shall return to me with their whole heart.”

Jeremiah 32:38 (ESV) — “**And they shall be my people, and I will be their God.**”

Zechariah 8:8 (ESV) — “...I will bring them to dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in faithfulness and in righteousness.”

C. God was with us and loved us **before** we loved Him!

God says to **Jeremiah 1:5** (ESV) — “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”

Jeremiah 31:3 (NKJV) — “The LORD has appeared of old to me, saying: “Yes, I have loved you with an **everlasting** love; **Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you.**”

The Psalmist said in **Psalms 71:6** (ESV) — “Upon you I have leaned from **before** my birth; you are he who took me from my mother’s womb. My praise is continually of you.”

The truth is, God foreknew us and predestined us to be conformed to Jesus Christ. **Romans 8:29** (ESV) — “For those whom he foreknew he also **predestined** to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.”

It comes down to this...

1 John 4:19 (KJV) — “We love him, because he **first** loved us.”

Romans 5:8 (ESV) — “but God shows his love for us in that **while we were still sinners**, Christ died for us.”

Genelle Guzman-McMillan

Genelle Guzman-McMillan survived a trial that the rest of us have only encountered in our nightmares. She is the last survivor pulled out of the rubble of the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center.

After the second plane hit, she raced down fifty-one flights of stairs in high heels, and she stopped for a moment on the thirteenth floor. As she bent down to remove her shoes and go the rest of the way, the north tower collapsed on top of her.

Like millions of others, I watched the horrifying scene via live TV, convinced that no one had survived the collapse of the second tower.

God was calling Genelle to salvation, had loved her with an everlasting love, and was going to save her soul in the midst of this disaster.

Here is her testimony: “One hundred ten floors were coming down around us. I knew I was being buried alive. The noise was deafening. . . . When I woke again I told myself I had to do something. But what could I do? “God, you've got to help me!” I prayed. “You've got to... show me a miracle, give me a second chance. Please save my life!” My eyes were so caked with grime that the tears couldn't come, but I felt it in my heart. I was talking to God as though he were right there. I told him I was ready to live my life [in His way]. “Lord Jesus, just give me a second chance, and I promise I will do your will...”

Genelle had prayed to the God she had ignored for most of her life, and He had been there for her. After twenty-seven hours she was pulled out of the rubble and then spent seven weeks in the hospital recuperating.

She began attending the Brooklyn Tabernacle and trusted Christ. She was born again and was baptized at the Tabernacle.

Hour after hour Genelle had cried out for help. It took more than a day for the rescue crew to locate her but only an instant for God to pinpoint her location. When a psychiatrist, probing for symptoms of posttraumatic stress, interviewed her in the hospital, Genelle told him that **God was her psychiatrist**.

Genelle says, quote, “He had made sure I was found. He had comforted me and given me a new life [in Christ].” Like few others, Genelle knows the saving power of the One who revealed himself to her as Yahweh Shammah, the Lord who is there.

III. A Place where God is Not There (Matt. 25:31–46).

Finally, let us remember that biblically, though there is a city for God's people and a new heaven and new earth that God gives to those in Christ, that there is also a place where people are separated from God's love and only experience His justice.

Back in Israel, God gave a stunning shadow of what was coming. People started naming their children "Ichabod" because as Ezekiel said, **Ezekiel 10:18** (ESV) — "...the glory of the LORD went out from the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim."

There is a time when God will remove His gracious presence and display only His justice. That day of no tears for believers is a day of horror and terror for those who do not know Christ. Christ speaks of it in Matthew 25.

Matthew 25:31–46 (ESV) — "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. 34 Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' 37 Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? 38 And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? 39 And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' 40 And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.' 41 "Then he will say to those on his left, '**Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.** 42 For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' 44 Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' 45 Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' 46 **And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.**"

Illustration: Tonight my wife's cousin Nate is dying. He has leukemia. He thought he had longer. I don't know if he knew the Lord or not. I do know one thing. He is going to live forever somewhere. If you are a believer, know that this life is only temporary, and you are never alone. And death is only the gateway to glory!

Thank God that Jesus Christ satisfied the full and infinite justice of God and you are free to go. You are like Genelle McMillan who was given a second chance.

Conclusion: We are citizens of a city called "Jehovah-Shammah": God is There!