



# GOD THE FATHER – I AM (2)

## START HERE:

### EXTRA THINGS

#### **Backstory History:**

Abraham,  
father of Isaac,  
father of Jacob,  
father of twelve sons,  
moved to Egypt.  
(Bible Project: Genesis 12-50 gives more details.)

*"In time, Jacob's sons died, ending that entire generation. But their descendants, the Israelites, had many children and grandchildren. In fact, they multiplied so greatly that they became extremely powerful and filled the land."*

(Exodus 1:6-7)

The king of Egypt panicked.

*"So the Egyptians made the Israelites their slaves. They appointed brutal slave drivers over them, hoping to wear them down with crushing labor ... they worked the people of Israel without mercy. They made their lives bitter..."* (Exodus 1:11-14)

God chose Moses to lead his people to freedom. "Let my people go" was his catchphrase.

In the ancient world of the Hebrew Scriptures (aka the Old Testament), each nation worshipped its own local god. The Canaanites worshipped Baal and Asherah. The Moabites worshipped Chemosh. The Philistines worshipped Dagon. The Babylonians worshipped Marduk. The Ammonites worshipped Molech. And that's just for starters.

In those ancient cultures, personal names were thought to be powerful, especially names of gods. People believed that if you knew a god's name, you could somehow tap into its inherent hidden power.

The God of the Hebrew people was different from all those other gods. First, and most important, he is the one and only true God. Second, he willingly revealed his personal name to his people. And (surprise!) it isn't God. That's more like a title of respect — like today's "Doctor" or "Your Honor" or "Professor." His personal name is Yahweh, sometimes written as Jehovah in older Bible translations. In most modern Bibles, it's written as LORD, with all capitals. In Hebrew it's just four letters:

יהוה

When you read the Bible, keep your eyes open for these different words:

**lord** - a general reference to someone with authority or power

**Lord** - a specific title of respect for the one true God

**LORD** - indicating the personal name of the one true God of Israel

Our God wants us to know not only that he exists, that he is powerful, and that he is the creator of everything. He also wants us to know him by name. In other words, he invites us to know him personally.

**READ THIS:** Exodus 3:1-17

## THINK ABOUT:

The story of God revealing himself to Moses is filled with paradoxes.

There's fire within a bush — but the bush doesn't burn. (The fire is God's presence.)

Moses stands on earth's plain ground — and God calls it holy. (Because God is there.)

What additional paradoxes (or unexpected pairs, connections, comparisons) do you see in the story? What do you learn from those?

### EXTRA STUFF

For more about the background history of this story, watch Bible Project's video "Genesis 12-50."

For more about the story of Moses, watch Bible Project's video "Exodus 1-18."

## AM / PM

After reading the scripture for today, finish this thought for the day that lies ahead (today if you read in the morning, tomorrow if you read at night): "Today (tomorrow) I will ..."

At the end of the day, reflect back on how God taught, challenged, corrected, encouraged, comforted, revealed himself, etc. and finish this thought: "Today God did..."