

## **Names of God from the Bible**

### **36 – Shield and Great Reward**

*All God's Names are eternal names – so He is still Shield and Great Reward for us today.*

#### **Reading: Genesis 15:1-21**

How awesome is that? Abram, a human being, who had just had to rescue his nephew Lot, his family and the people of Sodom and Gomorrah from their enemies, received a direct message from God, *“Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield and your very great reward.”* The Great I AM had spoken and given a personal message and promise to Abram.

After rescuing Lot, Abram was met by Melchizedek, king of Salem. Melchizedek was the priest of God, I AM. Having received Melchizedek's blessing, we find Abram presenting the king with a tenth of all the plunder he recovered.

In gratitude for his deliverance, the king of Sodom asked Abram to take all the rest of the plunder for himself. However, Abram replied that he would take nothing from him because Abram never wanted the king to be able to say that he had made Abram rich.

It was following this encounter that God gave Abram the amazing promise.

We see from this incident that not only was Abram a brave and courageous man, but he was also a man of integrity and generosity. He must have recognised that God had granted him the victory over his enemies so, in gratitude, he gave the first fruits, the tenth or tithe, to the high priest, as God's representative.

Please note that Abram gave the tenth to Melchizedek prior to the time Jacob made his promise to God in anticipation of receiving God's blessing and prior to the tenth or tithe being proscribed under the law of Moses. Abram's gift was given, not out of duty but in response to love flowing from a grateful and worshipful heart.

Abram found that he could not out-give God. God would always give Abram more than what Abram would be able to give God in return. Abram recognised that everything he had or received came directly from God.

When Abram had given a tenth to Melchizedek, God followed up by promising to be Abram's *“very great reward”*. What would that reward be? A miracle child born to Abram and Sarai. Furthermore, God promised that Abram's 'children' would be as numerous as the stars in the sky. What a reward. And yet that was only the start – because, in one way, the next reward was even greater. The Bible says that Abram believed God and as a result *“(God) credited it to him as righteousness.”* (The final reward was the reward of physical territory.)

No human being is righteous before a holy God, and yet Abram was *“credited with righteousness”* by faith through believing what God had said. Here we have the seed of a spirit-filled life.

Christianity is not a religion nor does it comprise a set of rules and regulations that have to be followed. Primarily, it is a relationship with God established through faith. In simple terms, by faith, we believe in God the Creator, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, who died in our place as our Saviour, and that we obtain eternal life through the Spirit of God living within us. In response, God credits to us His righteousness.

## **Names of God from the Bible**

We also need to notice that God did not tell Abram that He would be Abram's sword. God said He was Abram's shield. He would protect Abram in a hostile world and, additionally, God would be his *very great reward*.

Jesus said that God rewards those who pray in secret. God will *reward* those who seek Him in earnest and humility, rather than seeking the praise of others.

### **What does that name mean for us today**

In Ephesians, Paul talks about the "*shield of faith*". In Matthew, Jesus talks about the *rewards* for prayer. Because God's promise to Abram is given to us through Jesus Christ, we can expect that when we pray, God will not only hear us but will also answer our prayer through protecting and rewarding us according to our faith. We do not fight flesh and blood; we stand (by holding the shield of faith) and see the victory of the Lord.

### **Prayer**

*Father, thank You so much for giving Abram that awesome promise – Your eternal Name – that is equally true for us. Thank You for being our Shield and our very great Reward. Please help me to live in realisation of that promise every day. Amen.*

### **Additional Readings**

- Psalm 28
- Proverbs 30:1-9
- Ephesians 6:10-18

### **Questions**

1. Why do you think God said He was Abram's shield rather than His sword?
2. Do you think God has ever rewarded you for your faith? If so, in what way? Or do you think God's rewards are only available to us when we get to Heaven?
3. How does Jesus fulfil that name?