

Jesus Has a Name

Episode 10

Call Upon His Name

Yahweh Raah

We are in our 10th episode on Jesus has a Name. Once again, our theme is that ***if we call on His name we will be saved, for there is much power in the name when it is accompanied by faith.*** With that said, let us dive into our next name.

Yahweh Raah means **Yahweh** our Shepherd – the one who leads our every step.¹ In the New Testament we are told that not only is **Yahweh** our Shepherd, but He is our Great Shepherd and the Chief Shepherd.² Personally, it is easy for me to believe this to be true when my feet land on good and pleasant places, but when they land on terrible, difficult, and painful pastures, it is quite difficult to believe? Is He a Great Shepherd?

The use of the imagery of a shepherd is very fascinating, for it presupposes that we are mere sheep, a bit stupid, a lot stupid actually, smelly, unruly, and unable to genuinely care for ourselves, always running off into danger looking for that next patch of green grass. Thus, a shepherd's role is by necessity very hands-on, highly active, always present, and it is exceptionally intimate, in that a shepherd knows what the sheep need. He even knows his sheep by name, each-and-every-one.³

The shepherd knows the sheep need good pasture with food that will satisfy their hunger and water that will cool their parched tongues. He even knows the best pathways on which to lead the sheep, even when the path must necessarily go through dry, rocky, and dangerous places to get to the desired pasture.

He is also vigilant, he has a watchful eye, and he knows the movements and tactics of those who would want to hurt the flock. The shepherd is committed and dedicated to his flock and is therefore willing to risk his life to fight against anyone or anything that intends to steal, attack, or infect the sheep. Hence, the shepherd does not leave the sheep, but is always with them.

¹ *Psalm 23; 78:52; 80:1; Isaiah 40:11; Jeremiah 31:10; Ezekiel 34:11-13; Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 2:25; 5:4*

² *Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 5:4*

³ *See John 10:3*

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The shepherd tends to the sheep who are sick, applies balm to their injuries, and removes the parasites that seek to enter through any wounds they have incurred. The shepherd looks after the flock day and night, seeks them out when they wander, disciplines them as necessary to teach them to stay with the rest of the flock, and he rescues them when they are in trouble.

That is what a good shepherd does, but Jesus is beyond good, He is the **Great Shepherd**, which means there is no one who does the job better than Him. All the time, through all circumstances, He is great at doing what is required of a shepherd.

Ironically, sheep have something over us—a trait that we all need to learn, adopt, and practice. Rarely do sheep understand the journey or the paths which the shepherd chooses, but they follow him and trust his voice to safely lead them to provision. Sheep are very fearful by nature, but they **find comfort in following the voice of their shepherd and only their shepherd**.

This is an attribute He desires to develop within each of us—a pure trust to follow only His voice, all the while convinced that He is great at His job. And even if we do not understand the paths He has chosen, we can rest and be comforted knowing they are the best pathways for our lives, as His will for our lives is always good, pleasing, and perfect.⁴

Psalms 32:8-9

The Lord says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you. Do not be like a senseless horse or mule that needs a bit and bridle to keep it under control."

The Hebrew says it a bit differently but with the same intent. "I will instruct you and point the way (or literally teach you) the road, or course of life, in which you shall go, I will guide you with my eye." The key verbs are causative, which means that He will cause us to participate in His instruction and teaching and in the way He has marked out for our lives. Remember, it is always

⁴ ***Romans 12:2***

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about what He does for us not what we do for Him.

Moreover, He will guide us with His eye, He will watch over us, and He will ensure that we do as He has determined. As He says, a person can make their own plans, but He will direct their steps.⁵ Yes, He will ensure that our feet land exactly where He, as our Great Shepherd, has determined. Hence, the instruction for us to not be like a senseless horse or mule that needs a bit and bridle to keep it under control.

In other words, one way or the other, He is going to ensure our feet land where He desires, so we might as well cooperate with Him. It will make life significantly easier for us. “Accept the way God does things, for who can straighten what He has made crooked?”⁶ We do not know the way to go, we just think we do. The Spirit is clear on this point. “Man’s steps are by **Yahweh**, how then can man understand his way?”⁷ The implication is that man cannot, but **Yahweh** does. **Yahweh** understands the way because He is the **Great Shepherd**.

**BEING EL SHADDAI, GOD ALMIGHTY, IS THERE ANYONE OR ANYTHING THAT
CAN THWART HIS DESIRES FOR OUR LIVES?
THERE IS NO ONE; NOT EVEN YOUR OR ME!⁸**

This is all mind-blowing. For most of our lives, we have lived in the delusion that we have some level of mastery and control over the outcomes of our lives. We have lived believing the good we have done was because we are good, and the evil we have done is because we simply made bad choices, did not know all the facts, were unfairly tempted, or because someone or something else pushed us or triggered us to do it.

But how can that be true if **Yahweh Adonai** is the absolute sovereign and if **Yahweh Raah** has guided our every step—sometimes for peace (in the Hebrew “shalom”), and sometimes for evil (in the Hebrew “Ra”)? Regardless of the outcome, it has been Him all along. Sometimes we have followed His lead and other times He has dragged us forward like a senseless horse or mule.

⁵ *Proverbs 16:9*

⁶ *Ecclesiastes 7:13*

⁷ *Proverbs 20:24*

⁸ *Isaiah 14:27; Job 42:2*

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As our **Great Shepherd**,⁹ He is the guardian of our soul; therefore, every place He takes us is safe and good regardless of how it feels or seems to us. In fact, we may loath where He leads us, it may scare us, and we may even hate our lives, but it is good nonetheless, for our Shepherd has full responsibility and control over where we go and over every field in which He takes us to play, work, eat, sleep, fight, love, learn, grow, fail, fall, become sick, jump for joy in health and provision, and so on.

YAHWEH IS OUR CHIEF SHEPHERD, OUR GREAT SHEPHERD AND OUR GOOD SHEPHERD!

What does it mean to live by faith and to bet our lives upon this name?

To call on the name **Yahweh Raah**, begins by our looking back on our lives and thanking Him for the paths that He has taken us down, no matter how difficult they may have been, for our **Great Shepherd** knew which roads we needed to venture down to come to a place where we could eventually learn **WHY** we could trust in His name and **HOW** to trust in His name.

And since nothing is more important than truly knowing Him by name, we can begin to understand that even our great failures and sins, and all the terrible trauma, have been necessary to our instruction. They have been a necessary part of our learning how to call upon His name.

This is where we differ from sheep. None of us innately know how to listen to His voice and follow only His voice. We are so used to listening to the loud and tumultuous voices of the world, the whispers of the enemy, the arrogance of our *flesh*, and all the boastings of our own wisdom. All of this competes with His still small voice which comes to us like the sound of a gentle breeze.¹⁰

Therefore, to separate all the noise from the competing voices, to learn what His still small voice sounds like and then to choose to follow it, is something we must learn through instruction, through experience, through trials and difficulties and through many joys and delight.

THE POINT IS THAT EVERY PASTURE IN WHICH WE ATE AND EVERY WATERING HOLE FROM WHICH WE DRANK WAS NECESSARY.

⁹ **John 10:11,14**

¹⁰ **1 Kings 19:11-14**

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WE WERE THERE BY APPOINTMENT!

I know that this truth is awfully hard to stomach when we have been told for so long that the terrible, difficult, and painful times we have endured was a direct result of our sin, or the sin of others. For far too long we have heard that it was our sin that led us down to those dark and destructive places in which we experienced so much pain, terror, distress, despair, and division. We have been told that it was our fault, and that if we had dealt with our sin issue we would not have been found lurking in such dark and terrible places. The entire burden has been placed upon our back to do it right and to not fail.

Let me be clear, that sort of teaching, no matter how abundant, is nothing short of blasphemy and a denial of the name **Yahweh Adonai** and **Yahweh Raah**. It declares that He is not really in control of the details of our lives and that He is not really a Great Shepherd, not even a good shepherd. Rather, he must be just an ok shepherd that was either powerless to stop us from messing up our lives, or that He was a shepherd that really did not care all that much.

The truth is that **Yahweh Raah** is the one who led us to each-and-every place we have ever been. And **Yahweh Adonai** determined that everything associated with that path—all that we encountered on that path—was necessary. As our Great Shepherd, **Yahweh Raah** is the one who knows us so well that He alone understands the depths and layers of our heart, and He knows what it will take to cause to begin to listen only to His voice.

OUR SIN (AND THE SIN OF OTHERS) WAS JUST THE TOOL THAT HE USED TO GET US TO WHERE HE NEEDED US TO BE SO THAT WE MIGHT LEARN TO LISTEN.

How mind-blowing is that? He has searched the innermost parts of our being and He has tested our minds, after all, He formed our very substance, therefore, He is the only one who truly knows us.¹¹ Accordingly, He knows precisely what each path, each pasture, and each watering hole will bring forth in our lives as He chips away from our being all that stands in opposition to our hearing only His voice and following only Him. For sheep this is natural, but for us it is not. It is something in which we must be trained.

¹¹ See *Proverbs 20:27; Psalm 139:1-6; Jeremiah 17:9-10*

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Since He is a **Great Shepherd**, He must teach us, over-time, to discern the difference between His voice, and the voice of the enemy (who loves to pose as the one bringing the voice of God to our lives), the voice of our *flesh* (who loves religion and also loves to pose as the one bringing the voice of God to our lives), and the voice of our mind which is convinced it knows the difference and really, really loves to trust its own discernment. We would be shocked to learn how many times people say, “God told me” when it was just whisperings of the enemy, their *flesh*, or their own desires.

Therefore, to bet our lives on this name, we can start by learning to rest in the fact that it is **Yahweh Raah’s** job to guide us, it His job to lead us, and it is His job to take care of us, protect us, defend us, fight for us, feed us, water us, care for all our needs, and so on.

YAHWEH RAAH TAKES SO MANY RESPONSIBILITIES OFF OUR BACKS AND HE CARRIES THEM—HE TAKES UP THE FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEM.

As a result, if we bet our lives on His name, we can begin to live free from the guilt and shame to which we have held so tightly (and to which we hold others captive), stemming for the paths we have walked and all the failures of our lives. After all, since **Yahweh Adonai** and **Yahweh Raah** determined that it was all **NECESSARY**, then the truth is that it has all been good regardless of whether our minds and our hearts are ready to accept it. Remember, He causes all things to cooperate for the good to accomplish His one maniacal goal, that we be transformed into the image of the Son.¹² We can also begin to let go of the responsibility, the weight of it all.

THE NAME YAHWEH RAAH SPEAKS OF OUR CARRYING AN EXCEPTIONALLY LIGHT LOAD.

I want you to consider that sheep do not bemoan being sheep. They just live doing exactly what sheep are expected to do: eat, drink, hangout, do life. Sheep look to their shepherd to help them make it through life, even though they naturally act like sheep.

Accordingly, we should not lament how God made us. Instead, we should embrace the truth that **Only God is Good**, we are just people who like sheep do what people do. And it is our **Great**

¹² **Romans 8:28-29**

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Shepherds responsibility to guide us out of trouble, to guide us into trouble, to save us from ourselves and from our stupidity, and to lead us to where we can ultimately be healthy and grow up safely trusting only His voice to lead our lives. It is His job to transform us into the image of His Son where we can live safe and secure, resting in His arms, confident in His love.

**THE GOAL OF YAHWEH RAAH IS TO TEACH US HOW WE CAN LISTEN ONLY TO
HIS VOICE AND TO THE VOICE OF NO OTHER!**

Our Choices

As we learned when we studied **Yahweh Adonai**, the fact that **Yahweh Raah** leads us into every situation, does not mean that we are not responsible for our choices, we are, they are our choices. We were not forced to make them (we were not victims); we chose on our own volition given the circumstances He set before us.

With that said, God new exactly what we would choose when He choose to place our feet on a specific path. He could have led us down a different path if He wanted to, but He **NEEDED** us to make the choices we made. It was all a part of our instruction, teaching us how to listen to His voice and not to all those other competing voices.

Therefore, we can rest in knowing that this weird blend of co-responsibility is not about our doing it wrong or about our doing it right, but it is about our learning what our **Great Shepherd** wants to teach us and instruct us though each and very circumstance. Everything in our lives is always about our leaning even more **WHY** we can bet our lives upon His name and **HOW** to bet our lives upon His name. And with **Yahweh Raah**, it is so we can learn to listen and follow only His voice. As Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me."¹³

Betting our lives upon this name also means that we can stop trying to control so much of what is happening in our lives. If our **Great Shepherd** lets someone or something into the flock that will do us harm, it is for an extremely specific purposes He wants to accomplish in our lives. The truth is, we are always safe, regardless of the impact to our world, our body, and our mind. For it is all under His close management. This is another reason why it is good to remember that

¹³ *John 10:27*

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we are aliens and strangers in this world, we do not belong here. We belong with **Yahweh**.

Hence, no matter how difficult the circumstances, it is all measured as He watches over every nano-second. In the same way, if He lets us have blessing, it is for His purposes and not for us to control and possess. He knows what He is doing.

Moreover, betting our lives on this name can bring a delightful cure to our fear, anxiety, worry, and paranoia. Remember, He is not just a shepherd, but a **Great Shepherd**. He is the best at what He does. He is the best at leading our lives.

Matthew 6:25-34

For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life? And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith! Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

What a beautiful passage. Simply said, our job is to seek first His kingdom and His righteousness. This means that the focus of our lives needs to be learning **HOW** we can choose to let Him be the king over every thought and decision. In other words, to not act like a senseless

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horse or mule that needs a bit and bridle to keep it under control.¹⁴ If we rest in His rulership over our lives, we will not be consumed with worry, paranoia, and fear running around trying to take care of ourselves. We will know peace. Hence, Jesus' words are instructions for living in emotional health and enjoying rest.

In addition, we are to seek **first** His righteousness, the righteousness that **Yahweh** gives to us. Not all, but most of us need to shake off everything we have ever thought when we have previously read this passage. What Jesus is saying is that we are to first and foremost, without exception, identify ourselves 100% by what He has done, and no longer strive to find value, worth, or identity in what we have done or what we think we can do or should do.

REMEMBER, THE SOURCE MATTERS, THE SOURCE IS EVERYTHING!

The mind-bending truth is that if it is not His righteousness that is being expressed in and through our lives, what we do and think is sin anyways, regardless of what religion tells us, or what we tell ourselves. Yes, even all our service and worship of God **IS SIN** if it is not birthed from His Spirit expressing **Yahweh's** righteousness through our lives.

And even then, we can rejoice for He died for our sin and nailed it all on the cross. As a result, He does not deal with us according to our sin. In fact, as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our sin from us.¹⁵

If only we could believe this with our heart, mind, soul, and strength, we would be able to relax and focus our energies on knowing **WHY** we can bet our lives on His name and **HOW** to bet our lives on His name instead of trying to prove ourselves to Him and to others.

Jesus being our **Yahweh Raah**, our Great Shepherd, is a pretty big "**WHY**"—an amazing reason for us to let go of the emotional demands we have placed upon ourselves and simply rest in His leading, guiding, instruction, teaching, training, and so on, regardless of what His paths produce in our lives. He has got it all under control.

The grass He has us eating and the water He has us drinking is the best for us at this particular

¹⁴ See *Psalms 32:8-9*

¹⁵ *Psalms 103:8-12*

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time in our lives. This place we find yourself, whether it is a time of “Shalom” (peace) or a time of “Ra” (evil) is intentional and supervised. We are not out there trying to figure it out on our own. He guides us with His watchful eye. And when we need something more, He will lead us to it. He always does.

Yahweh Raah, our prescription for worry, anxiety, fear, and for our obsession with trying to control all the aspects of our lives. What a joy it is to accept that our lives belong to Him and, by definition of His role as our **Great Shepherd**, every bit of it is His job and His responsibility. Our job is to learn how to listen to only His still small voice and follow only His voice.

What a beautiful name!

Let us stop here and in our next episode pick up with the name **Yahweh Rapha**.