



Lesson 7 ~ Adonai – Lord and Master

Psalm 86

♥ Heart Talk

When you meet with your small group, review the names of God that we have studied so far; *Elohim, El, El Roi, El Shaddai and El Elyon and El Olam*. Can you remember what each name means? You may also want to share something from doing the *Heart Therapy* exercise in **Lesson 5**, or **writing a prayer** to thank and praise God for his *permanence, changelessness* and *reliability* in **Lesson 6**, or your continuing attempts to be quiet before God. Continue to share how your *experience* of God has deepened through this study.

Introduction

There are two Hebrew names for God that are both translated *Lord* in English -- *Adonai* (a-do-NI) and *Yahweh* (YAH-weh). Translators distinguish between the two by writing *Adonai* as *Lord* and *Yahweh* as *LORD* (all caps). The Hebrew word *adon* means *lord*, referring to a human who is a *superior, master* or *owner*. *Adonai* is the **plural form** of *adon* and always refers to **God as Lord, Master and Owner**. As with the name *Elohim*, the plural form of *Adonai* points to the Trinity – Father, Son and Spirit – all of whom are **Lord**.

The name *Adonai* also implies a relationship: God is our **Lord** and Master and we are his **servants**. **Service** and **obedience** are not popular concepts in our culture. To **serve** or **obey** a person often means putting ourselves in a demeaning or humiliating position. **Service** and **obedience** to God, however, implies just the opposite. In serving, we are truly fulfilled; in obeying, we are truly blessed. In Scripture, Jesus is seen as both **Lord** and **Servant**. As a *Servant*, he teaches us about our relationship with *Adonai*, our *Master*.

♥ Heart Preparation

Be still and know that I am God (Psalm 46:10). Continue to try and practice the discipline of **sitting quietly before God, in silence, for 5 minutes** in order to prepare your heart to receive what God has for you. Don't be discouraged if you are not as successful as you would like to be. Just keep trying – and God will meet you where you are. If your mind wanders, gently bring it back to focus on God by saying a *breath prayer* – a prayer that can be repeated to God in one breath, like: *I belong to You – You are with me – I'm depending on You – I want to know You – I love You, Lord, etc.* **Listen** for what God will say to you as you focus on him.

Jesus' Encouraging Words to You . . .

You cannot serve two masters. If I am truly your Master, you will desire to please Me above all others. If pleasing people is your goal, you will be enslaved to them. People can be harsh taskmasters when you give them this power over you. If I am the Master of your life, I will also be your First Love. Your serving Me is rooted and grounded in My vast, unconditional Love for you. The lower you bow down before Me, the higher I lift you up into intimate relationship with Me. The Joy of living in My Presence outshines all other pleasures. I want you to reflect My joyous Light by living in increasing intimacy with Me.

Jesus Calling (May 3) by Sarah Young

A Prayer to Help Prepare Your Heart

I'm finding myself in the midst of You, beyond the music, beyond the noise
All that I need is to be with you and in the quiet, hear Your voice
Word of God speak, would You pour down like rain
Washing my eyes to see Your majesty
To be still and know that You're in this place
Please let me stay and rest in Your holiness
Word of God speak . . .

By MercyMe

www.isaiah61-3.com

Questions

Before we consider *service* and *obedience* to *Adonai*, our *Lord* and *Master*, we must first consider what kind of *Master* we are serving, for this will make all the difference in how we respond! **Psalm 86** is a **song of trust** written by King David, a man after God's own heart. Several times in this prayer, David address God as *Adonai (Lord)* -- *Lord* and *Master* as well as *Yahweh (LORD)* – the *Self-Existent, Ever-Present One* (which will be our next lesson). As we consider **Psalm 86**, we will take particular notice of *who* God is and *what* he offers those who know and honor him.

1. **Psalm 86** is a personal, intimate prayer that David wrote to his *Lord* and *Master*. As you read the Psalm, mark each occurrence of the word *Lord*. (You might want to read the Psalm in a couple of different translations.) From what you have read, what words would you use to describe David's relationship to God? His feelings toward God?

- ♥ What words would you use to describe *your* relationship to God? Your feelings *toward* God?
- ♥ What factors do you think were most influential in the development of your concept of God? In other words, where have you gotten your ideas about who God is and what kind of relationship you can have with him? Do you think these factors and ideas are trustworthy? Why or why not?
- ♥ What do you see in David's expressions of love and trust toward God that you don't share right now, but you wish that you did? What expressions of love and trust *do* reflect your experience with God?

2. In the chart below, note how David describes **himself** and how he describes **God**.

Verse	David	Verse	God
86:1		86:5	
86:2		86:8	
86:4		86:10	
86:12		86:13	
86:14		86:15	
86:16		86:17	

- ♥ How closely do you identify with David's description of himself? What phrases on your chart *don't* describe you right now? How closely do you identify with David's description of Lord God? What phrases on your chart *don't* describe your experience with God right now?
- ♥ Is David's description and experience of God supposed to be everyone's experience? Why or why not? If David's description of *Adonai – Lord* and *Master* does not match your own, what do you think it would take for you to experience *Adonai* in this way?
- ♥ How do you think David came to *know* and *experience* his *Lord* in this way? How *easy* or *hard* would it be for you to trust and obey the *Lord* portrayed by David in **Psalm 86**? How would you describe what kind of *Lord* and *Master* God is (86:5, 15) to someone who does not know him this way?

3. Consider David's "I" statements in this Psalm (from both translations). What has he chosen to do?

86:2	
86:3	
86:4 (NIV)	
86:7	
86:12	

- ♥ What connection, if any, do you see between David's choices and actions and his intimate relationship with God? Which do you think came first – David's choices and actions or his intimate relationship with God? How so?
 - ♥ If you made the same choices as David did and carried them out consistently, how do you think it would affect your relationship to God? Would it make a difference? Which of David's choices and actions are "easy" for you to do? Which of his choices and actions are "difficult" for you to do? Why?
 - ♥ If you made the same choices that David made in the chart above, what, specifically, would these actions look like in your life? In other words, how could you practically carry them out? Do you think these actions are possible for you to do? Why or why not? Are they optional? Why or why not?
4. David sees himself as *Adonai's* servant and acknowledges his *dependence* on God as his Lord. He expressed his dependence by asking for those things that he, himself, could not make happen and over which he had no control. What, specifically, did David ask of God?

86:1		86:2	
86:3		86:4	
86:6		86:11	
86:16			
86:17			

- ♥ Which of David's requests would be your heart-felt request today? How sure do you think David was that God would give what he asked for? How sure are you? On what do we base our "sureness"?
- ♥ As a servant of *Adonai*, David bows before God, admitting he was "poor and needy," and asks God for those things he could not do for himself. Did David's position before God and the requests he made of God demean or humiliate David in any way? Was David groveling? Why or why not? What do you see in **Psalm 86** that supports your answers?
- ♥ What did God need to do for David before David could serve and obey God (**86:11**)? What application does this have for your life? What do you think David meant by an "undivided" heart (**86:11 NIV**)? How would you describe your heart? Can you change your own heart? Why or why not?

OUR OBEDIENCE TO ADONAI, OUR LORD AND MASTER

Obedience – The Hebrew word for *obey* literally means "to hear." The implication is that if we truly hear and understand what God has said, we will respond with obedient action. In other words, obedient action is the proof that we have *really* heard what God has directed us to do. So, obedience is a response: one *hears* or *grasps* what has been communicated, and then *acts* upon it. Our actions are always the true indicator of our relationship with God. In both the Old and New Testaments, obedience is never presented apart from a love relationship with God. Obedience to God's commands apart from a love relationship results in drudgery and duty, but obedience that is motivated by a loving relationship results in freedom and joy. Someone has wisely said that "an **obedience** problem is a **love** problem." Difficulty in obeying is not solved by **trying harder**, but by **getting to know God better!**

5. What is the first and most important command God gives to those he has created (**Joshua 22:5; Matthew 22:34-38**)?

- ♥ What are some things you do to obey God's first and greatest commandment (**Matthew 22:37-38**)? How do you feel about this command? Is it possible? Optional? Desirable? Worthwhile? Beneficial?
- ♥ Why do you think God puts love before obedience? Why do you think we often make *obedience to God* more important than *love for God*? Which is easier or you – *love* or *obedience*?
- ♥ What would it take for you to absolutely trust and obey someone who is a "lord" or "master" over you? What would it take for you to absolutely trust and obey *Adonai* as your *Lord* and *Master*?

6. What connection do you see between *love* and *obedience* in the following Scriptures?

John 14:15, 21, 23-24	John 15:9-11	1 John 5:2-3

- ♥ Is it possible to *obey* God without *loving* him? Is it possible to *love* God without *obeying* him? On what do you base your answer?
- ♥ How do we know what God's commands are? Is it possible to keep all of God's commands all the time? Why or why not? Does God expect us to keep all his commands all the time? Why or why not?

OUR SERVICE TO ADONAI, OUR LORD AND MASTER

Service – *Adonai* is our *Lord* and *Master* and we are his *servants*. How do we serve God? In our culture, one does not aspire to be a servant. We spend most of our life working ourselves into a place where we can be served, rather than serve. We often see the ones who get waited on and served as the fortunate and privileged. When asked what the first and greatest commandment was in the Law, Jesus said it was to love God with all our heart. Then he added, "A second is equally important: Love you neighbor as yourself" (**Matthew 22:39**). The primary way we serve God is to serve others. When we are willing to love and serve, God reveals himself and blesses others *through* us – and the Bible says that when we serve others, it is as if we are serving God (**Matthew 25:37-40; Colossians 3:23-24**).

7. Why is the *Kingdom of God* sometimes called the "upside down" kingdom (**Matthew 20:25-28; John 13:14**)?

- ♥ In what specific way can you serve someone, using Jesus as your model? What will this do for you?

8. What do you find out about the importance of service to others in each of the following verses?

Ephesians 2:10	Philippians 2:3-4	1 Peter 4:10

- ♥ Why do you think God puts such an emphasis on serving others? What does it do for you? For God?
- ♥ If God has prepared, in advance, good works for us to do (**Ephesians 2:10**), how do you suppose we find out what they are?

♥ **Heart Therapy**

Just as Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one, so the followers of Jesus are one. If we are in the body of Christ, we belong to each other and we are to make every effort to serve, rather than be served. Service to others can take on many different forms and is best done "undercover," rather than for recognition.

Read the "one another" verses listed below and ask God to show you a *person* to serve (perhaps someone in your small group) and some *actions* to take. Continue to be mindful of this person, looking for ways to serve over the next month. Evaluate what your acts of service do for you, God and the one served.

John 13:34-35/1 Peter 1:22; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Romans 15:7; Ephesians 4:32; 1 Peter 4:9; Romans 12:10