



Provided by the Church of the Lutheran Confession - Board of Missions

## A Systematic Study of Bible Teachings (Dogmatics) Lesson 2.1 – The Doctrine of God

### The Existence of God

When history began in Genesis 1:1, God already existed. No one had to create God. God simply is. Jesus said: **“The Father has life in Himself”** (John 5:26). That is why He gave Himself the name **“I AM”**: **“And God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM.’ And He said, ‘Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you’”** (Exodus 3:14).

God said to the prophet Isaiah: **“I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, nor shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the LORD”** (Isaiah 43:10-11). God gave Himself the name **“I AM”**. This name is closely related to the Hebrew name **JHVH**, which is usually translated **“LORD”** in English translations or sometimes **JeHoVaH** or **JaHVeH**: **“The LORD is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King”** (Jeremiah 10:10).

God is not willing to share His glory with any other so-called god: **“Besides Me there is no God”** (Isaiah 44:6). The many other gods are invented by men in their imaginations. These so-called gods are only lifeless idols. **“But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases. Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men’s hands”** (Psalm 115:3-4).

No idol can do what God does. For example, only God can predict the future and make it happen just as He said: **“I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done”** (Isaiah 46:9-10). Over a hundred and fifty years before it actually happened, God said that a king named Cyrus would release the Israelites from their bondage in Babylon (Isaiah 44:28; 45:1).

At one point, Moses wanted to see God in His glory. But God said to him: **“You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live”** (Exodus 33:20). There are many things we do not know about God, for God has not chosen to reveal them to us. But He has chosen to reveal to us the way of salvation. **“No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him”** (John 1:18). If we want to know what God is really like, all we have to do is look at Jesus. He has revealed God to us by His words and by His deeds. Jesus said: **“No one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him”** (Matthew 11:27).

God reveals to us the way of salvation through His Son, Jesus. Jesus said: **“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me”** (John 14:6). Jesus prayed to His Father on the night before He died: **“This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent”** (John 17:3). The most blessed truth about God is that He wants us to have eternal life, and for that reason He has sent His Son Jesus to win for us that eternal life. Through Jesus, and only through Jesus, we shall one day enjoy eternal life in heaven: **“For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as also I am known”** (1 Corinthians 13:12).

## Questions

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1. What name did God give to Himself when He talked to Moses?
2. What does this name mean?
3. What word is used in English Bibles to convey this name?
4. List some ways in which the true God is different from idols.
5. Through whom has God revealed the way of salvation to us?
6. What would happen to us if we were to see the face of God in glory now?
7. When will we see the face of God?