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## Adonai

Harold Willmington

*Liberty University*, [hwillmington@liberty.edu](mailto:hwillmington@liberty.edu)

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## ARTICLE THIRTY-NINE: ADONAI, ONE OF THE BASIC NAMES FOR GOD, MEANING, “MASTER, LORD”

- The Hebrew Old Testament name *Adonai* and its Greek New Testament counterpart *Kurios* describe the relationship between master and slave. God owns all His children. Thus, *Adonai* carries with it a twofold implication:

A. The master has a right to expect obedience – Robert Lightner writes:

In Old Testament times the slave was the absolute possession of his master, having no rights of his own. His chief business was to carry out the wishes of his master. The slave had a relationship and responsibility different from that of the hired servant. The hired servant could quit if he did not like the orders of his master. But not so with the slave. He could do nothing but obey (cf. Gen. 24:1-12). (*The God of the Bible*, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI, p. 116)

B. The slave may expect provision – Again, to quote Lightner:

The slave had no worry of his own. It was the master’s business to provide food, shelter, and the necessities of life. Since the slave is the possession of the master, his needs become the master’s. Obedience is the only condition for this provision. This truth is marvelously displayed in Paul, who was himself a bond slave, when he assured the Philippians that God would supply all their needs (Phil. 4:19). Only the obedient slave can expect this from his master. (*Ibid.*, p. 117)

*“A son honoreth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honor? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?”* (Mal. 1:6).

- Many individuals both in the Old Testament and New Testament describe themselves as servants. These would include:

A. Samuel’s testimony

*“And the Lord came and stood, calling as at other times, Samuel! Samuel! And Samuel said, Speak, for your servant hears”* (1 Sam. 3:10).

B. Isaiah’s testimony

*“And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Here am I! Send me”* (Isa. 6:8).

C. Mary’s testimony

*“And Mary said, Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word. And the angel departed from her”* (Lk. 1:38).

Thus, these three could well have formed a trio and sung George Stubbins beautiful prayer hymn of devotion –

*Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!  
 Thou are the Potter, I am the clay:  
 Mold me and make me after Thy will,  
 While I am waiting, yielded and still.*

*Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!  
 Search me and try me, Master, today!  
 Whiter than snow, Lord, wash me just now,  
 As in Thy presence humbly I bow.*

*Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!  
 Wounded and weary, help me, I pray!  
 Power, all power, surely is Thine!  
 Touch me and heal me, Savior divine!*

*Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!  
 Hold o'er my being absolute sway!  
 Fill with Thy Spirit till all shall see  
 Christ only, always, living in me!*

- But many would later join them, forming a glorious choir of consecration which would include:

A. Paul

*“Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God” (Rom. 1:1).*

*“Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of faith of God’s elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness” (Titus 1:1).*

B. James

*“James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings” (James 1:1).*

C. Peter

*“Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:1).*

D. Jude

*“Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ” (Jude 1:1).*

Here it should be noted that two of these, James and Jude, were the half-brothers of Jesus Himself (Matt. 13:53-56). But neither one attempted to “pull rank.” So, in light of the above, all followers of Adonai should live their lives in such a manner so as to hear the sweetest words unworthy servants (Luke 17:10) can ever hear from the lips of the Savior one day:

*“His master said to him, ‘Well done good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master’” (Matt. 25:21).*