

REFLECTION:

There was a moment when Moses had the nerve to ask God what his name is. God was gracious enough to answer, and the name he gave is recorded in the original Hebrew as YHWH.

Over time we've arbitrarily added an "a" and an "e" in there to get YaHWeH, presumably because we have a preference for vowels. But scholars and rabbis have noted that the letters YHWH represent breathing sounds, or aspirated consonants. When pronounced without intervening vowels, it actually sounds like breathing. YH (inhale): WH (exhale).

So a baby's first cry, his first breath, speaks the name of God. A deep sigh calls His name – or a groan or gasp that is too heavy for mere words. Even an atheist would speak His name unaware that their very breathe is giving constant acknowledgment to God. Likewise, a person leaves this earth with their last breath, when God's name is no longer filling their lungs.

So when I can't utter anything else, is my cry calling out His name?

Being alive means I speak His name constantly. Is it heard the loudest when I'm the quietest?

In sadness, we breathe heavy sighs. In joy, our lungs feel almost like they will burst. In fear we hold our breath and have to be told to breathe slowly to help us calm down. When we're about to do something hard, we take a deep breath to find our courage.

When I think about it, breathing is giving him praise. Even in the hardest moments!

This is so beautiful and fills me with emotion every time I grasp the thought. God chose to give himself a name that we can't help but speak every moment we're alive. All of us, always, everywhere. Waking, sleeping, breathing, with the name of God on our lips.

By Sandra Thurman Caporale

Romans 8:28

1 Thessalonians 5:17