

Who Is God To You?

In the Old Testament times, a name was not only identification, but a description of His nature and character as well. Names had, among other purposes, an explanatory purpose (e.g., Nabal, whose name means "fool," is the target of Abigail's explanation to David: "For as his name is, so is he; Nabal is his name, and folly is with him:" - 1Sa 25:25). Throughout Scripture God reveals Himself to us through His names. If we study these names, we will better understand who God really is as well as His personality and nature.

"ELOHIM" (or *Elohay*) is the first name for God found in the Bible, and it's used throughout the Old Testament over 2,300 times. *Elohim* comes from the Hebrew root meaning "strength" or "power", and has the unusual characteristic of being plural in form. In Genesis 1:1, we read, "In the beginning *Elohim* created the heaven and the earth." Right from the start, this plural form for the name of God is used to describe the One God, a mystery that is uncovered in The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit.

Throughout scripture, *Elohim* is combined with other words to describe certain characteristics of God. Some examples: *Elohay Kedem* - God of the Beginning: (Deuteronomy 33:27). *Elohay Mishpat* - God Of Justice: (Isaiah 30:18). *Elohay Selichot* - God Of Forgiveness: (Nehemiah 9:17). *Elohay Marom* - God Of Heights: (Micah 6:6). *Elohay Mikarov* - God Who Is Near: (Jeremiah 23:23). *Elohay Of My Strength*: (Psalm 43:2). *Elohay Tehilati* - God Of My Praise: (Psalm 109:1). *Elohay Mauzi* - God *Yishi* - God Of My Salvation: (Psalm 18:46). *Elohim Kedoshim* - Holy God: (Leviticus 19:2, Joshua 24:19). *Elohim Chaiyim* - Living God: (Jeremiah 10:10). *Elohay Elohim* - God Of Gods: (Deuteronomy 10:17).

"EL" is a word meaning strength or power, and is used for both God and idols in the Bible. It occurs 242 times and is translated God or god 230 times. Some examples of usage for the living God are - Some examples: *El HaNe'eman* - The Faithful God: (Deuteronomy 7:9). *El HaGadol* - The Great God: (Deuteronomy 10:17). *El HaKadosh* - The Holy God: (Isaiah 5:16). *El Yisrael* - The God Of Israel: (Psalm 68:35). *El HaShamayim* - The God Of The Heavens: (Psalm 136:26). *El De'ot* - The God Of Knowledge: (1 Samuel 2:3). *El Emet* - The God Of Truth: (Psalm 31:6). *El Yeshuati* - The God Of My Salvation: (Isaiah 12:2). *El Elyon* - The Most High God: (Genesis 14:18). *Immanu El* - God Is With Us: (Isaiah 7:14). *El Olam* - The God Of Eternity (Genesis 21:33). *El Echad* - The One God: (Malachi 2:10).

"ELAH" a name for God, used about 90 times in the Old Testament. Again, when combined with other words, we often see the places of ownership or habitation of God. Some examples: *Elah Yerush'lem* - God of Jerusalem: (Ezra 7:19). *Elah Yisrael* - God of Israel: (Ezra 5:1). *Elah Sh'maya* - God of Heaven: (Ezra 7:23). *Elah Sh'maya V'Arah* - God of Heaven and Earth: (Ezra 5:11).

"YHVH" is the Hebrew word that translates as "LORD". Found more often in the Old Testament than any other name for God (approximately 7,000 times), the title is also referred to as the "Tetragrammaton," meaning the "The Four Letters".

YHVH comes from the Hebrew verb **hayah** "to be" and is the name that God revealed to Moses at the burning bush. Exodus 3:14-15 And God said to Moses, "I AM THAT I AM (**hayah 'asher hayah**)."
... This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.' Therefore, YHVH declares God's absolute being - the source of everything, without beginning and without end. Some pronounce YHVH as "Jehovah" or "Yaweh," but scholars really don't know the proper pronunciation.

This is also combined to form descriptive names. YHVH *Elohim* - LORD God: (Genesis 2:4). YHVH *M'kadesh* - The LORD Who Makes Holy: (Ezekiel 37:28). YHVH *Yireh* - The LORD Who Sees/provides:

(Genesis 22:14). YHVH *Nissi* - The LORD My Banner: (Exodus 17:15). YHVH *Shalom* - The LORD Of Peace: (Judges 6:24). YHVH *Tzidkaynu* - The LORD Our Righteousness: (Jeremiah 33:16). YHVH *O'saynu* - The LORD our Maker: (Psalm 95:6).

Is He your Most High God, All sufficient One, Master, Lord of Peace, the Lord Who Will Provide? Is He your Father? We must be careful not to make God into an "it" or a "thing" or even a "she" as some do today. He is our Jehovah Raah, the Lord our Shepherd. He is your 'Ab, Father, of Deuteronomy 32:6-7. He is the father of Jesus our savior who said "In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name." (Matthew 6:9)

"Let them praise the name of the LORD, For His name alone is exalted; His glory is above the earth and heaven." (Psalms 148:13) God knows us by our name, shouldn't we know Him by His?