

EQTH105 Basic Bible Doctrine

Unit 2 Reading — The Names of God

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How to See Many Amazing Names of God

Back in the Bible days a person's name usually said something about that person's character or destiny. This is why the many names of God are vitally important for us to see and understand. Each name of God reveals something about His character. At the same time, God's names show us many different ways in which He is there to help us in our times of need.

We can see God's names revealed to us throughout the pages of scripture. Often the Bible reveals a new name of God when the people either face a great need, or when see God come through and bless them in a spectacular way.

As time passed, the people of God received more and more revelation about the nature of God. This process continues today as His people discover more of His character. Each of us individually has the ability to learn ever more about God and his nature as we walk through life.

This is why it is so important to have a personal relationship with God the Father directly. Without that direct personal connection we only learn about God without ever growing to actually know Him.

By spending time in prayer and meditation on each name of God we can come to know Him in a far more personal and intimate way.

Names of God

Below are the various names of God listed in the order of their first appearance in the Bible. Included is a link to the scripture verse where the first mention of that name of God occurs along with how many times that name is mentioned throughout the Bible.

Elohim (God)

First seen in [Genesis 1:1](#) – Used 2599 times in the Bible

This is the very first name given to God found in the very first verse of Genesis. This name shows that God is the majestic ruler over all. Elohim is actually a plural word and its use as the first name of God and sets him high above all other gods. It also foreshadows the later revelation of the triune Godhead – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Yahweh (Lord, Jehovah)

First seen in [Genesis 2:4](#) – Used 6519 times in the Bible

Yahweh is the promised proper name of God. It means *Lord and Master*. By Jewish tradition this name is too holy to pronounce or write. Therefore they just wrote four letters without any vowels: YHWH. Jews stopped saying the name all

together in the third century AD. They stopped saying this name because they were afraid of violating the fourth commandment that prohibits misusing, or taking the Lord's name in vain. Therefore scholars today don't know for sure if the original pronunciation was Yahweh or Jehovah. Tradition follows the convention used in the King James Version which translates YHWH by itself as LORD with a capital L and small capital letters for the rest of the word. This is done to set it apart from other uses of the word lord. Then whenever YHWH occurs as a compound name with other words the translators use the word Jehovah instead.

El Elyon (The Most High God)

First seen in [Genesis 14:18](#) – Used 52 times in the Bible (sometimes without El, simply as Elyon)

El is likely related to the word Elohim and is used in conjunction with other descriptive words to specifically reference a particular characteristic of God. Elyon means highest or most high. Used together El Elyon means *The Most High God*. It refers to the characteristic of God that is above everyone and everything. This name describes his position as sovereign majestic preeminent God.

Adonai (Lord, Master)

First seen in [Genesis 15:2](#) – Used 434 times in the Bible

Because the Jews have a tradition of not pronouncing nor spelling out the promised proper name of God they often would use Adonai instead of YHWH. Adonai means *Lord, Master, or Owner*. This name emphasizes that God is in charge of his creation and his people, Lord of lords.

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El Shaddai (Lord God Almighty)

First seen in [Genesis 17:1](#) – Used 48 times in the Bible (sometimes without El, simply as Shaddai)

El is likely related to the word Elohim and is used in conjunction with other descriptive words to specifically reference a particular characteristic of God. Shaddai derives from the word for a woman's breast (shad) and literally means "many breasted one." This denotes God as provider, supplying, nourishing, and satisfying his people with their needs as a mother would her child. God our sustainer.

Shaddai is also related to the Hebrew word *shedad* which means to overpower or destroy, referring to God's absolute power. This describes God as the one who triumphs over every obstacle and all opposition.

Used together El Shaddai is usually translated *Lord God Almighty*. God is our all-powerful and all-sufficient sustainer.

El Olam (The Everlasting God)

First seen in [Genesis 21:33](#) – Used 439 times in the Bible

El is likely related to the word Elohim and is used in conjunction with other descriptive words to specifically reference a particular characteristic of God. Olam means forever, always, continuous existence, perpetual, everlasting, evermore, perpetual, indefinite or unending future, eternity. Used together El Olam means *The Everlasting God*. He exists beyond time and space. We can take comfort in the fact that God always was, and always will be God. Nothing we can ever face will change that because God is unchangeable.

Jehovah Jireh (The LORD Will Provide)

Only occurs once in [Genesis 22:14](#)

Jehovah is actually YHWH (see Yahweh above) and means Lord and Master. It is the promised and proper name of God. Jireh means to see or provide. When Isaac asked Abraham where the lamb was for the sacrifice, Abraham replied that the Lord would provide. After God provided the ram for the sacrifice Abraham named that place on Mount Moriah Jehovah Jireh, meaning *The Lord Will Provide*. God is quietly arranging things behind the scenes so that they will be in just the right place exactly when we need them.

Jehovah Nissi (The LORD Is My Banner)

Occurs only once in [Exodus 17:15](#)

Jehovah is actually YHWH (see Yahweh above) and means Lord and Master. It is the promised and proper name of God. Nissi means flag or banner so together Jehovah Nissi means *The Lord Is My Banner*. God himself is our banner and victory. He gives us hope and a focus, and is the one who wins our battles.

El Qanna (Jealous God)

First seen in [Exodus 20:5](#) – Used 6 times in the Bible

El is likely related to the word Elohim and is used in conjunction with other descriptive words to specifically reference a particular characteristic of God. Qanna means jealous, zealous, or envy. Used together El Qanna means *Jealous God*. God's jealousy is a holy, loving jealousy without any of the insecure manipulation or control that comes packaged with worldly jealousy. It draws from the marriage relationship with a picture of a husband jealous for his wife. God longs for each of us to put him first in our lives in priority and importance, not out of ego, but because he knows that is truly what is best for us.

Jehovah Mekoddishkem (The LORD Who Sanctifies You)

First seen in [Exodus 31:13](#) (Only other occurrence is in [Leviticus 20:8](#))

Jehovah is actually YHWH (see Yahweh above) and means Lord and Master. It is the promised and proper name of God. Mekoddishkem means holy or set apart. It is the process of sanctification, which is the separation of something so that it is holy. Used together Jehovah Mekoddishkem (can have the variant spelling Jehovah M'Kaddesh) means *The Lord Who Sanctifies You*. God sets us apart as his children when we become believers. He sanctifies us and makes us holy because we are incapable of it on our own.

Jehovah Shalom (The LORD Is Peace)

Occurs only once in [Judges 6:24](#)

Jehovah is actually YHWH (see Yahweh above) and means Lord and Master. It is the promised and proper name of God. Shalom means peace, absence of strife, complete, or sound. Used together Jehovah Shalom means *The Lord Is Peace*. When it seems like the whole world is against you or that you are completely unable to deal with whatever problem is in front of you, turn to the God of peace to find comfort and strength.

Jehovah Sabaoth (The LORD of Hosts)

First seen in [1 Samuel 1:3](#) – Used in the Bible more than 285 times

Jehovah is actually YHWH (see Yahweh above) and means Lord and Master. It is the promised and proper name of God. Sabaoth means an army going out to war. Used together Jehovah Sabaoth means *The Lord of Armies* or *The Lord of Hosts*. The Lord reigns over a vast well ordered host in the heavenlies. God is always there to defend us, fight our battles, and win our wars. There is no enemy he cannot defeat.

Jehovah Raah (The LORD Is My Shepherd)

Occurs once in [Psalms 23:1](#). (Raah is also used in reference to God in [Genesis 48:15](#), [Genesis 49:24](#), and [Psalm 80:1](#))

Jehovah is actually YHWH (see Yahweh above) and means Lord and Master. It is the promised and proper name of God. Raah means to shepherd or feed, to supply with food, and to be a good friend. Jehovah Raah means *The Lord Is My Shepherd*. God is a friend who provides extravagant nourishment, protection, as well as rest for our weary bodies and souls.

Jehovah Tsidkenu (The LORD Our Righteousness)

First seen in [Jeremiah 23:6](#) – Only other occurrence is in [Jeremiah 33:16](#)

Jehovah is actually YHWH (see Yahweh above) and means Lord and Master. It is the promised and proper name of God. Tsikenu means justice, rightness, righteousness, deliverance, victory, and prosperity. Used together Jehovah Tsikenu means *The Lord Who Is Our Righteousness*. God himself stands for us and provides us with His righteousness and justice when we don't have any in ourselves. He is the one who provides victory and our prosperity.

Jehovah Shammah (The LORD Is There)

Occurs only once in [Ezekiel 48:35](#)

Jehovah is actually YHWH (see Yahweh above) and means Lord and Master. It is the promised and proper name of God. Shammah is an adverb that simply means *there*, although when it's used in relation to time it means *then*. Together Jehovah Shammah means *The Lord is There*. God revealed this name at a time when Israel was in rebellion and in captivity. God was letting the Jews know that he had not forsaken them and that he was still there, both in their present as well as in their future. Regardless of what you are going through, or what you are heading into, you can take comfort knowing that God is already there.

Personally for You

Now that you've seen these various names as they are revealed in the Bible, which name of God meets you where you are today? Or is there more than one?

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