

The Old Testament Names of God

Christian Life Center, A Foursquare Church | www.clcriverside.org | Office 951.689.6785

Psalm 20:7 *Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.*

Psalm 113:2-3 *From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets, the name of the LORD is to be praised.*

Psalm 138:2 *...for You have exalted Your name and Your word above all things.*

Proverbs 18:10 *The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.*

Part 1 - ELOHIM

1. The knowledge of God is more essential for the follower of Christ than anything else.
 - Jeremiah 9:23-24 *...But let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me;*
 - Hosea 6:6 *For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.*
 - John 17:3 *And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.*
 - Paul's cry in Philippians 3:10 to know Christ.

If the Heavens cannot contain God, how can a name possibly define Him? (1 Kings 8:27)
Yet God has revealed portions of His Character through His Old Testament names,
and ALL His names are fulfilled in Christ!

2. The Old Testament Hebrew word for "God" is translated as "Elohim" and occurs 2,750 times. The opening statement of the Bible begins with the name, God (Elohim), and occurs 32 times in the first chapter of Genesis. After that, the name Jehovah also appears, and in many instances, as a combination of the two names, Jehovah Elohim.
 - Genesis 2:4 *This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, when the LORD God (Jehovah Elohim) made the earth and the heavens.*
 - Deuteronomy 10:17 *For the LORD (Jehovah) your God (Elohim, plural) is God (Elohim) of gods (elohim) and Lord (Adonai) of lords (adon), the great God (EL, singular), mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality.*
 - Isaiah 40:10 *Behold, the LORD God shall come with a strong hand,...* (Isaiah 45:6)
3. The basic meaning of Elohim is one of infinite strength, power, and majesty. (Genesis 1:3; Isaiah 40:28; Daniel 4:3, 34-35; Jude 1:25) Elohim is the Creator of the Cosmos and all that exists. His power is evident as Elohim speaks the world into existence (Genesis 1) and the One who Covenants with the creation. (Genesis 9:8-17)
 - It is Elohim who *forms* man out of the dust of the earth and into His image and then breathes the breath of life into him. (Genesis 2:7)

4. Elohim comes from the root word “El,” meaning mighty, strong, prominent, and the general idea of greatness and glory. (Numbers 23:22-23) At times Elohim is shortened to El and used as part of a longer name. El Shaddai means God Almighty (Genesis 49:24); El Elyon is God Most High (Deuteronomy 26:19); and El Roi, God Who Sees (Genesis 16:13). People’s names can also include the name of God: Daniel (El Is My Judge), Nathanael (Gift of El), Samuel (Heard by El), Elijah (El Is Yahweh).
5. It is Elohim who covenants and remembers His promises with man.
 - Noah and the Ark. (Genesis 6:18, 20-22)
 - Written many times to Israel in connection to the everlasting covenant and to all who walk with Him with all their heart. (Genesis 15:7-21; Jeremiah 31:33, 32:40; 1 Kings 8:22-24)
 - Scriptures on God’s covenant with man concerning the Messiah include Genesis 3:15, 12:3; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 31:31-34.
6. Although Elohim is a plural name (El is the singular form), it is used in many places to indicate a *singular Divine Being*. Elohim always acts as one because the Godhead (Trinity) is in perfect agreement, in Divine unity. A few scriptures where this plurality is seen are:
 - Creation of man — Genesis 1:26, 3:21-22 *Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness..”*
 - The tower of Babel — Genesis 11:7 *Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.*
 - The call of Isaiah — Isaiah 6:8 *Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?”*
 - The great New Testament example of the Trinity can be found in Matthew 3:16-17. This passage recounts Jesus’ baptism, during which the Holy Spirit descended on Him and the Father’s Voice was heard by others.
7. Jesus, our Elohim.
 - John 1:1-3 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.*
 - Colossians 1:15-17 *The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*
 - Hebrews 1:1-3 *...The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of His being, sustaining all things by His powerful word.*
8. Because He is the Infinitely Creative God (Elohim), *nothing* is impossible for Him... He is able to do immeasurably *more* than all we ask or imagine! (Luke 1:36-37; Ephesians 3:20)
 - In light of this truth, what are you believing God to create in you?

Heavenly Father, we thank You for the great and awesome name of Elohim. As Elohim created all that exists — the heavens and the earth — in the same way create in us a deep, unrelenting desire to walk with You all the days of our lives and to grow in our knowledge of who You are. (2 Peter 3:18)

Next week: JEHOVAH (YHWH)