

The Names of God in the Old Testament

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INTRODUCTION

"Let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is excellent; his glory [is] above the earth and heaven." [Psa 148:13](#)

In the Old Testament times, a name was not only identification, but an identity as well. Many times a special meaning was attached to the name. 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. When we study these names that He reveals to us in the Bible, we will better understand who God really is. The meanings behind God's names reveal the central personality and nature of the One who bears them.

Who is God to you?

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" to which we pray. He is our Jehovah Raah, the Lord our Shepherd. God knows us by our name, shouldn't we know Him by His?

Hallowed be Your name?

To hallow a thing is to make it holy or to set it apart to be exalted as being worthy of absolute devotion. To hallow the name of God is to regard Him with complete devotion and loving

admiration. God's name is of the utmost importance ([Neh 9:5](#)); therefore we ought reserve it a position of grave significance in our minds and hearts. We should never take His name lightly ([Exd 20:7](#); [Lev 22:32](#)), but always rejoice in it and think deeply upon its true meaning.

EL SHADDAI (LORD GOD ALMIGHTY)

(el shad-di')

All-Sufficient One, Lord God Almighty

Use in the Bible: In the Old Testament [El Shaddai](#) occurs 7 times. [El Shaddai](#) is first used in [Gen 17:1](#).

Variant spellings: None

TWOT Reference: 2333

Strong's Reference: [H7706](#)

El Shaddai in the Septuagint: *theou saddai* - God Shaddai; *pantokratôr* (for Shaddai) - the Almighty

Meaning and Derivation: [E](#) is another name that is translated as "God" and can be used in conjunction with other words to designate various aspects of God's character. Another word much like [Shaddai](#), and from which many believe it derived, is shad meaning "breast" in Hebrew (some other scholars believe that the name is derived from an Akkadian word [Šadu](#), meaning "mountain," suggesting strength and power). This refers to God completely nourishing, satisfying, and supplying His people with all their needs as a mother would her child. Connected with the word for God, [E](#), this denotes a God who freely gives nourishment and blessing, He is our sustainer.

Further references of the name El Shaddai in the Old Testament: [Gen 17:1](#); [Gen 28:3](#); [Gen 35:11](#); [Gen 43:14](#); [Gen 48:3](#)

EL ELYON (THE MOST HIGH GOD)

(el el-yone')

The Most High God

Use in the Bible: In the Old Testament [El Elyon](#) occurs 28 times. It occurs 19 times in Psalms. [El Elyon](#) is first used in [Gen 14:18](#).

Variant spellings: None

TWOT Reference: 1624g, 1624h

Strong's Reference: [H5945](#)

El Elyon in the Septuagint: *ho theos ho hupsistos* - the God most high

Meaning and Derivation: [E](#) is another name that is translated as "God" and can be used in conjunction with other words to designate various aspects of God's character. [Elyon](#) literally means "Most High" and is used both adjectivally and substantivally

throughout the Old Testament. It expresses the extreme sovereignty and majesty of God and His highest preeminence. When the two words are combined - **El Elyon** - it can be translated as "the most exalted God." ([Psa 57:2](#))

Further references of the name *El Elyon* in the Old Testament: [Gen 14:18](#); [Gen 14:19](#); [Gen 14:20](#); [Gen 14:22](#); [Psa 57:2](#); [Psa 78:35](#)

ADONAI (LORD, MASTER)

(ad-o-noy')

Lord, Master

Use in the Bible: In the Old Testament **Adonai** occurs 434 times. There are heavy uses of **Adonai** in Isaiah (e.g., *Adonai Jehovah*). It occurs 200 times in Ezekiel alone and appears 11 times in Daniel Chapter 9. **Adonai** is first used in [Gen 15:2](#).

Variant spellings: None

TWOT Reference: 27b

Strong's Reference: [h136](#)

Adonai in the Septuagint: *kurios* - Lord, Master

Meaning and Derivation: **Adonai** is the verbal parallel to **Yahweh** and **Jehovah**. **Adonai** is plural; the singular is adon. In reference to God the plural **Adonai** is used. When the singular **adon** is used, it usually refers to a human lord. **Adon** is used 215 times to refer to men. Occasionally in Scripture and predominantly in the Psalms, the singular **adon** is used to refer to God as well (cf. [Exd 34:23](#)). To avoid contravening the commandment "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain" ([Exd 20:7](#)), sometimes **Adonai** was used as a substitute for **Yahweh** (YHWH). **Adonai** can be translated literally as, "my lords' " (both plural and possessive).

Further references of the name *Adonai* in the Old Testament: Complete list available [here](#).

YAHWEH (LORD, JEHOVAH)

(yah-weh)

Lord, Jehovah

Use in the Bible: In the Old Testament **Yahweh** occurs 6,519 times. This name is used more than any other name of God. **Yahweh** is first used in [Gen 2:4](#).

Variant spellings: YHWH, Jehovah

TWOT Reference: 484a

Strong's Reference: [H3068](#)

Yahwehin the **Septuagint:** *kurios* - Lord, Master
despotés - Lord, Master, denoting the omnipotence of God (TDNT), despot, absolute ruler

Meaning and Derivation: *Yahweh* is the promised name of God. This name of God which (by Jewish tradition) is too holy to voice, is actually spelled "YHWH" without vowels. *YHWH* is referred to as the Tetragrammaton (which simply means "the four letters"). *YHWH* comes from the Hebrew letters: Yud, Hay, Vav, Hay. While *YHWH* is first used in [Genesis 2](#), God did not reveal Himself as *YHWH* until [Exodus 3](#). The modern spelling as "Yahweh" includes vowels to assist in pronunciation. Many pronounce *YHWH* as "Yahweh" or "Jehovah." We no longer know for certain the exact pronunciation. During the third century A.D., the Jewish people stopped saying this name in fear of contravening the commandment "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain" ([Exd 20:7](#)). As a result of this, *Adona* is occasionally a substitute for *YHWH*. The following compound names which start with "YHWH" have been shown using "Jehovah." This is due to the common usage of "Jehovah" in the English of these compound names in the early English translations of the Bible (e.g., the Geneva Bible, the King James Version, etc.).

Further references of the name *Yahweh* in the Old Testament: Complete list available [here](#).

JEHOVAH NISSI (THE LORD MY BANNER)

(yeh-ho-vaw' nis-see')

The Lord My Banner, The Lord My Miracle

Use in the Bible: In the Old Testament *Jehovah-Nissi* occurs only once in [Exd 17:15](#).

Variant spellings: Jehovah Nisi; Jehovahnissi

TWOT Reference: None

Strong's Reference: [H3071](#)

***Jehovah Nissi* in the Septuagint:** *kurios kataphugê mou* - the Lord is my refuge

Meaning and Derivation: *Jehovah* is translated as "The Existing One" or "Lord." The chief meaning of *Jehovah* is derived from the Hebrew word *Havah* meaning "to be" or "to exist." It also suggests "to become" or specifically "to become known" - this denotes a God who reveals Himself unceasingly. *Nes* (*nês*), from which *Niss* derived, means "banner" in Hebrew. In [Exd 17:15](#), Moses, recognizing that the Lord was Israel's banner under which they defeated the Amalekites, builds an altar named *Jehovah-Nissi* (the Lord our Banner). *Nes* is sometimes translated as a pole with an insignia attached. In battle opposing nations would fly their own flag on a pole at each of their respective front lines. This was to give their soldiers a feeling of hope and a focal point. This is what God is to us: a banner of encouragement to give us hope and a focal point.

Further references of the name *Jehovah Nissi* in the Old Testament: [Exd 17:15](#)

JEHOVAH-RAAH (THE LORD MY SHEPHERD)

(yeh-ho-vaw' raw-aw')

The Lord My Shepherd

Use in the Bible: In the Old Testament [Jehovah-Raah](#) (The Lord my Shepherd) is used in [Psalm 23](#).

Variant spellings: Jehovah Rohi; Jehovah Ro'eh

TWOT Reference: 2185, 2186

Strong's Reference: [H7462](#)

Jehovah-Raah in the Septuagint: [kurios poimainei me](#) - the Lord shepherds me

Meaning and Derivation: [Jehovah](#) is translated as "The Existing One" or "Lord." The chief meaning of [Jehovah](#) is derived from the Hebrew word [Havah](#) meaning "to be" or "to exist." It also suggests "to become" or specifically "to become known" - this denotes a God who reveals Himself unceasingly. [Rô'eh](#) from which [Raah](#) derived, means "shepherd" in Hebrew. A shepherd is one who feeds or leads his flock to pasture ([Eze 34:11-15](#)). An extend translation of this word, [rea](#), is "friend" or "companion." This indicates the intimacy God desires between Himself and His people. When the two words are combined - [Jehovah Raah](#) - it can be translated as "The Lord my Friend."

Further references of the name Jehovah-Raah in the Old Testament: [Gen 48:15](#); [Gen 49:24](#); [Psa 23:1](#); [Psa 80:1](#)

JEHOVAH RAPHA (THE LORD WHO HEALS)

(yeh-ho-vaw' raw-faw')

The Lord That Heals

Use in the Bible: In the Old Testament [Jehovah-Rapha](#) (The Lord that Heals) is used in [Exd 15:26](#).

Variant spellings: Jehovah-Rophe; Jehovah Rophecha; Jehovah Raphah

TWOT Reference: 2196

Strong's Reference: [H7495](#)

Jehovah Rapha in the Septuagint: [kurios ho iômenos se](#) - the Lord your healer

Meaning and Derivation: [Jehovah](#) is translated as "The Existing One" or "Lord." The chief meaning of [Jehovah](#) is derived from the Hebrew word [Havah](#) meaning "to be" or "to exist." It also suggests "to become" or specifically "to become known" - this denotes a God who reveals Himself unceasingly. [Rapha](#) (râpâ') means "to restore", "to heal" or "to make healthful" in Hebrew. When the two words are combined - [Jehovah Rapha](#) - it can be translated as "Jehovah Who Heals." (cf. [Jer 30:17](#); [Jer 3:22](#); [Isa 30:26](#); [Isa 61:1](#); [Psa 103:3](#)). [Jehovah](#) is the Great Physician who heals the physical and emotional needs of His people.

Further references of the name Jehovah Rapha in the Old Testament: [Exd 15:26](#)

JEHOVAH SHAMMAH (THE LORD IS THERE)

(yeh-ho-vaw' shawm'-maw)

The Lord Is There

Use in the Bible: In the Old Testament *Jehovah Shammah* occurs only once in [Ezekiel 48:35](#).

Variant spellings: Jehovah Samma

TWOT Reference: None

Strong's Reference: [H3074](#)

Jehovah Shammah in the Septuagint: *estai to onoma autês* - the name thereof

Meaning and Derivation: *Jehovah* is translated as "The Existing One" or "Lord." The chief meaning of *Jehovah* is derived from the Hebrew word *Havah* meaning "to be" or "to exist." It also suggests "to become" or specifically "to become known" - this denotes a God who reveals Himself unceasingly. *Shammah* is derived from the Hebrew word *sham*, which can be translated as "there." *Jehovah Shammah* is a symbolic name for the earthly Jerusalem. The name indicates that God has not abandoned Jerusalem, leaving it in ruins, but that there will be a restoration.

Further references of the name *Jehovah Shammah* in the Old Testament: [Eze 48:35](#)

JEHOVAH TSIDKENU (THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS)

(yeh-ho-vaw' tsid-kay'-noo)

The Lord Our Righteousness

Use in the Bible: In the Old Testament *Jehovah Tsidkenu* occurs 2 times. *Jehovah Tsidkenu* is first used in [Jer 23:6](#).

Variant spellings: Jehovah Tzidkaynu; Jehovah Tsidqenuw

TWOT Reference: None

Strong's Reference: [H3072](#)

Jehovah Tsidkenu in the Septuagint: *kuriou tou theou hêmôn elalêsen pros hêmas* - the Lord our God spoke to us

Meaning and Derivation: *Jehovah* is translated as "The Existing One" or "Lord." The chief meaning of *Jehovah* is derived from the Hebrew word *Havah* meaning "to be" or "to exist." It also suggests "to become" or specifically "to become known" - this denotes a God who reveals Himself unceasingly. *Tsedek* (tseh'-dek), from which *Tsidkenu* derived, means "to be stiff," "to be straight," or "righteous" in Hebrew. When the two words are combined - *Jehovah Tsidkenu* - it can be translated as "The Lord Who is our Righteousness."

Further references of the name *Jehovah Tsidkenu* in the Old Testament: [Jer 23:6](#); [Jer 33:16](#)

JEHOVAH MEKODDISHKEM (THE LORD WHO SANCTIFIES YOU)

(yeh-ho-vaw' M-qadash)

The Lord Who Sanctifies You, The Lord Who Makes Holy

Use in the Bible: In the Old Testament *Jehovah Mekoddishkem* occurs 2 times. *Jehovah Mekoddishkem* is first used in [Exd 31:13](#).

Variant spellings: Jehovah M'kaddesh

TWOT Reference: 1990

Strong's Reference: [H6942](#)

Jehovah Mekoddishkem in the Septuagint: *kurios ho hagiázôn humas* - the Lord that sanctifies you

Meaning and Derivation: *Jehovah* is translated as "The Existing One" or "Lord." The chief meaning of *Jehovah* is derived from the Hebrew word *Havah* meaning "to be" or "to exist." It also suggests "to become" or specifically "to become known" - this denotes a God who reveals Himself unceasingly. *Mekoddishkem* derives from the Hebrew word *qâdash* meaning "sanctify," "holy," or "dedicate." Sanctification is the separation of an object or person to the dedication of the Holy. When the two words are combined - *Jehovah Mekoddishkem* - it can be translated as "The Lord who sets you apart."

Further references of the name Jehovah Mekoddishkem in the Old Testament: [Exd 31:13](#); [Lev 20:8](#)

EL OLAM (THE EVERLASTING GOD)

(el o-lawm')

The Everlasting God, The God of Eternity, The God of the Universe, The God of Ancient Days

Use in the Bible: *El Olam* is first used in [Gen 21:33](#).

Variant spellings: None

TWOT Reference: 1631a

Strong's Reference: [H5769](#)

El Olatin the Septuagint: *[ho] theos [ho] aiônios* - the everlasting God

Meaning and Derivation: *El* is another name that is translated as "God" and can be used in conjunction with other words to designate various aspects of God's character. *Olam* derives from the root word *'lm* (which means "eternity"). *Olam* literally means "forever," "eternity," or "everlasting". When the two words are combined - *El Olam* - it can be translated as "The Eternal God."

Further references of the name El Olam in the Old Testament: [Gen 21:33](#); [Jer 10:10](#); [Isa 26:4](#)

ELOHIM (GOD)

(el-o-heem')

God, Judge, Creator

Use in the Bible: In the Old Testament [Elohim](#) occurs over 2000 times. [Elohim](#) is first used in [Gen 1:1](#).

Variant spellings: None

TWOT Reference: 93c

Strong's Reference: [H430](#)

Elohim in the Septuagint: [theos](#) - the standard Greek word for god, "a transcendent being who exercises extraordinary control in human affairs or is responsible for bestowal of unusual benefits" (BDAG). It specifically refers to the monotheistic God of Israel.

Meaning and Derivation: [Elohim](#) is translated as "God." The derivation of the name [Elohim](#) is debatable to most scholars. Some believe it derived from ['êl](#) which, in turn, originates from the root word, [w](#) (which means "strong"). Others think that [Elohim](#) is derived from another two roots: ['lh](#) (which means "god") in conjunction with ['elôah](#) (which means "fear"). And still others presume that both ['êl](#) and [Elohim](#) come from ['eloah](#).

Further references of the name Elohim in the Old Testament: Complete list available [here](#).

QANNA (JEALOUS)

(kan-naw')

Jealous, Zealous

Use in the Bible: In the Old Testament [Qanna](#) occurs 6 times. [Qanna](#) is first used in [Exd 20:5](#).

Variant spellings: Kanna

TWOT Reference: 2038b

Strong's Reference: [H7067](#)

Qanna in the Septuagint: [zêlôtês](#) - jealous

Meaning and Derivation: [Qanna](#) is translated as "jealous," "zealous," or "envy." The fundamental meaning relates to a marriage relationship. God is depicted as Israel's husband; He is a jealous God, wanting all our praise for Himself and no one else. (*cf.* [Exd 34:14](#))

Further references of the name Qanna in the Old Testament: [Exd 20:5](#); [Exd 34:14](#); [Deu 4:24](#); [Deu 5:9](#); [Deu 6:15](#)

JEHOVAH JIREH (THE LORD WILL PROVIDE)

(yeh-ho-vaw' yir-eh')

The Lord Will Provide

Use in the Bible: In the Old Testament *Jehovah-Jireh* occurs only once in [Gen 22:14](#).

Variant spellings: None

TWOT Reference: None

Strong's Reference: [H3070](#)

Jehovah Jireh in the Septuagint: *kurios eiden* - the Lord has seen

Meaning and Derivation: *Jehovah* is translated as "The Existing One" or "Lord." The chief meaning of *Jehovah* is derived from the Hebrew word *Havah* meaning "to be" or "to exist." It also suggests "to become" or specifically "to become known" - this denotes a God who reveals Himself unceasingly. *Jehovah-Jireh* is a symbolic name given to Mount Moriah by Abraham to memorialize the intercession of God in the sacrifice of Isaac by providing a substitute for the imminent sacrifice of his son.

Further references of the name *Jehovah Jireh* in the Old Testament: [Gen 22:14](#)

JEHOVAH SHALOM (THE LORD IS PEACE)

(yeh-ho-vaw' shaw-lome')

The Lord Is Peace

Use in the Bible: In the Old Testament *Jehovah-Shalom* occurs only once in [Jdg 6:24](#).

Variant spellings: None

TWOT Reference: None

Strong's Reference: [H3073](#)

Jehovah-Shalom in the Septuagint: *eirênê kuriou* - peace of the Lord

Meaning and Derivation: Meaning and Derivation: *Jehovah* is translated as "The Existing One" or "Lord." The chief meaning of *Jehovah* is derived from the Hebrew word *Havah* meaning "to be" or "to exist." It also suggests "to become" or specifically "to become known" - this denotes a God who reveals Himself unceasingly. Shalom is a derivative of *shâlêm* (which means "be complete" or "sound") *Shalom* is translated as "peace" or "absence from strife." *Jehovah-Shalom* is the name of an altar built by Gideon in Ophrah.

Further references of the name *Jehovah-Shalom* in the Old Testament: [Jdg 6:24](#)

JEHOVAH SABAOTH (THE LORD OF HOSTS)

(yeh-ho-vaw' se ba'ô't)

The Lord of Hosts, The Lord of Powers

Use in the Bible: *Jehovah* and *Elohim* occur with *Sabaoth* over 285 times. It is most frequently used in Jeremiah and Isaiah. *Jehovah Sabaoth* is first used in [1Sa 1:3](#).

Variant spellings: None

TWOT Reference: 1865a, 1865b

Strong's Reference: [H6635](#)

Jehovah Sabaoth in the Septuagint: *kurios sabaôth* - the Lord of hosts (*sabaôth*: Gr. transliteration of Heb. "hosts")

Meaning and Derivation: *Jehovah* is translated as "The Existing One" or "Lord." The chief meaning of *Jehovah* is derived from the Hebrew word *Havah* meaning "to be" or "to exist." It also suggests "to become" or specifically "to become known" - this denotes a God who reveals Himself unceasingly. *Sabaoth* (sâ bâ'ôt) means "armies" or "hosts." *Jehovah Sabaoth* can be translated as "The Lord of Armies" ([1Sa 1:3](#)). This name denotes His universal sovereignty over every army, both spiritual and earthly. The Lord of Hosts is the king of all heaven and earth. ([Psa 24:9-10](#); [Psa 84:3](#); [Isa 6:5](#)).

Further references of the name *Jehovah Sabaoth* in the Old Testament: [1Sa 1:11](#); [1Sa 17:45](#); [2Sa 6:18](#); [2Sa 7:27](#); [1Ki 19:14](#); [2Ki 3:14](#); [1Ch 11:9](#); [Psa 24:10](#); [Psa 48:8](#); [Psa 80:4](#); [Psa 80:19](#); [Psa 84:3](#); [Isa 1:24](#); [Isa 3:15](#); [Isa 5:16](#); [Isa 6:5](#); [Isa 9:19](#); [Isa 10:26](#); [Isa 14:22](#); [Jer 9:15](#); [Jer 48:1](#); [Hsa 12:5](#); [Amo 3:13](#); [Mic 4:4](#); [Nah 3:5](#); [Hag 2:6](#); [Zec 1:3](#); [Mal 1:6](#); [Hab 2:13](#); [Zep 2:9](#)

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