

THE NAMES OF GOD

September 5th, 2012

EL

The word El comes from a root word meaning "might, strength, power". In Scripture, the primary meanings of this root are "god" (pagan or false gods), "God" (the true God of Israel), and sometimes "the mighty" (referring to men or angels). When used of the true God of Israel, El is almost always qualified by additional words that further define the meaning that distinguish Him from false gods.

ELOHIM

The plural form of EL, meaning “strong one.” It is used of false gods, but when used of the true God, it is a plural of majesty and intimates the trinity. It is especially used of God’s sovereignty, creative work, mighty work for Israel and in relation to His sovereignty (Isa. 54:5; Jer. 32:27; Gen. 1:1; Isa. 45:18; Deut. 5:23; 8:15; Ps. 68:7).

EL SHADDAI

“God Almighty.” The derivation is uncertain. Some think it stresses God’s loving supply and comfort; others His power as the Almighty one standing on a mountain and who corrects and chastens (Gen. 17:1; 28:3; 35:11; Ex. 6:1; Ps. 91:1, 2).

EL ELYON

“The Most High God.” Stresses God’s strength, sovereignty, and supremacy (Gen. 14:19; Ps. 9:2; Dan. 7:18, 22, 25).

EL OLAM

“The Everlasting God.” Emphasizes God’s unchangeableness and is connected with His inexhaustibleness (Gen. 16:13).

ADONAI

Like Elohim, this too is a plural of majesty. The singular form means “master, owner.” Stresses man’s relationship to God as his master, authority, and provider (Gen. 18:2; 40:1; 1 Sam. 1:15; Ex. 21:1-6; Josh. 5:14).

YAHWEH (YHWH)

Comes from a verb that means, “to exist, be.” Best known usage is when God says “I AM, that I AM”. This, plus its usage, shows that this name stresses God as the independent and self-existent God of revelation and redemption (Gen. 4:3; Ex. 6:3 (cf. 3:14); 3:12).

JEHOVAH

A Latin substitute for the Hebrew word Yahweh (YHWH) that appeared in the mid 1500's. Is often used interchangeably with Yahweh.

JEHOVAH JIREH

“The Lord will provide.” Stresses God’s provision for His people (Gen. 22:14).

JEHOVAH NISSI

“The Lord is my Banner.” Stresses that God is our rallying point and our means of victory; the one who fights for His people (Ex. 17:15).

JEHOVAH SHALOM

The Lord is Peace.” Points to the Lord as the means of our peace and rest (Jud. 6:24).

JEHOVAH SABBAOTH

“The Lord of Hosts.” A military figure portraying the Lord as the commander of the armies of heaven (1 Sam. 1:3; 17:45).

JEHOVAH M'KADDESH

“The Lord your Sanctifier.” Portrays the Lord as our means of sanctification or as the one who sets believers apart for His purposes (Ex. 31:13).

JEHOVAH ROI

“The Lord my Shepherd.” Portrays the Lord as the Shepherd who cares for His people as a shepherd cares for the sheep of his pasture (Ps. 23:1).

JEHOVAH TSIDKENU

“The Lord our Righteousness.” Portrays the Lord as the means of our righteousness (Jer. 23:6).

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