

# “This is My Name forever”

“And thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations” (Ex. 3:15)

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## A. Etymology of the Name

1. The four letters (Greek – *tetragrammaton*) above spell the Name in Paleo-Hebrew script: most likely used by Moses and the Israelites in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century BC.
2. This is possibly how God Himself wrote His Name on the tablets of stone (Deut 9:10)
3. Writing contained no vowels: the four consonants, right to left, would be “YHWH”, likely pronounced “Yahweh”.
4. The Name is used 6,823 times in the OT
5. Post-exilic Jews (> 538 BC) adopted the Aramaic square script still used today, the Name now looked like יהוה
6. Post exilic Jews took Lev. 24:16 to the extreme and stopped saying the Name altogether, substituting “Adonai” (Lord) as a *qere perpetuum* (i.e. YHWH is written but “Adonai” is read instead)
7. Jewish translators of the LXX (Greek Old Testament) in 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC likewise used *kurios* (Lord) for the Name
8. Jesus and the apostles quoted from the LXX and therefore used *kurios* where the Hebrew text used YHWH (see Ps. 110:1 – Heb: “YHWH said to Adonai”; LXX: “kurios said to my kurios”; Eng: “LORD said to my Lord”)
9. Vowels were added as points to the Hebrew alphabet by the Masoretes in the 7<sup>th</sup> Century AD, but they inserted the vowel points for *Adonai* (אֲדֹנָי) to YHWH (יהוה) so the reader would know to read “Adonai”. It looked like this (יְהוָה)
10. About 1520 AD, the Italian Friar Petrus Galatinus conceived the idea of combining the two into one word for the name = YeHoWaH (or *Jehovah*)
11. Calvin regularly used ‘*Jehovah*’ and the KJV translates it as such in 4 places (Ex. 6:2; Ps. 83:18; Is. 12:2; 26:4). The ASV translated YHWH as *Jehovah* throughout...and was unpopular in doing so.
12. Most modern English versions translate the Name as “LORD” in all caps & unfortunately prefix with “the”
13. Modern day Jews still do not pronounce the Name (and some not even *Adonai*) but rather say *hashem* – (The Name) and even in English many will not even write out God, but rather they write “G\_d”.

## B. Meaning of the Name

1. Ex 3:13-15 “I AM WHO I AM...the LORD”; so the wordplay exists between I AM (אֲנִי) and the Name (יהוה). The LXX reads Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὢν (I AM the one who exists). It seems the verb “to be” is a part of the Divine Name. *Yahweh*, as the Name then suggests, is the ever-present One; the very essence of existence.
2. “Yahweh is one” (e.g. Deut. 6:4) means that in *Yahweh* everything that He is is absolutely exhaustively and exclusively present (Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament [TWOT]).
3. “Yahweh is his name” or “Yahweh of hosts is his name” are expressions often used in hymns. They demonstrate primarily and fundamentally that the personal name of God is used with a strong sense of its significance as the confession of a specific experience of the divine...the God named by this name is a sharply defined figure, the *numen praesens* in person. “To call by the name of *Yahweh*”, e.g., Is. 65:1 etc.) is to confess and to be ready for encounter with this person (TWOT). (see Matt. 18:20)
4. The Name of *Yahweh* is thus synonymous with the person and character of *Yahweh* (cf. Is. 24:15; Acts 4:10)

## C. Old Testament Usage of the Name (Significance of *Yahweh* vs. the title *Elohim* (God))...examples from Genesis

1. Gen. 1-2:3 = God (*Elohim*) – (Gen. 1:26-28): the Creator God creates man in His image
2. Gen. 2:4-24 = LORD God (*Yahweh Elohim*): *Yahweh* breathes life into the man and joins Adam & Eve in marriage
3. Gen. 3:1-7 = God (*Elohim*): Satan formalizes and distances God from Eve in tempting her to sin
4. Gen. 3:8-24 = LORD God (*Yahweh Elohim*): *Yahweh* comes in to judge and mend the broken relationship
5. Gen. 6:1-8 = LORD (*Yahweh*): *Yahweh* sees the wickedness of man and only finds favor in Noah
6. Gen. 6:9-22 = God (*Elohim*): God sees the corruption on earth and tells Noah to build the ark
7. Gen. 7:1-5 = LORD (*Yahweh*): *Yahweh* speaks of the immanence of the Flood
8. Gen. 7:6-15 = God (*Elohim*): Noah does as God commanded
9. Gen. 7:16 = LORD (*Yahweh*): *Yahweh* seals the door of the ark. Salvation belongs to *Yahweh* (Ps. 3:8)
10. Gen. 8:1-19 = God (*Elohim*): God remembers Noah in midst of Flood and brings them through
11. Gen. 8:20-22 = LORD (*Yahweh*): Noah sacrifices to *Yahweh* and He covenants with him

#### D. Is Jesus Yahweh?

1. In Isaiah 45:21-23 *Yahweh* says that to Him every knee will bow and every tongue will confess to God (LXX). Paul, as a Pharisee familiar with this passage, says that this will happen at the Name of Jesus (Phil. 2:10-11)
2. In Malachi 3:1 *Yahweh* says He will send His messenger to prepare the way before Him (*Yahweh*). Jesus quotes this as referring to John the Baptist (Matt. 11:7-10), who prepared the way for Jesus' ministry. Malachi 3:1 also states then the Lord (Heb. *ha adon* – used 6 times in the OT, always placing *Adonai* equal to *Yahweh*) will suddenly come to His temple. The temple belongs to *Yahweh* (Ezek. 44:4-7), so the one John prepares the way for must be *Yahweh* Himself, in the person of Jesus Christ.
3. Joel says that all who call on the name of the LORD (*Yahweh*) will be saved (Joel 2:32). Paul says in Romans 10:9-13 that you must confess Jesus as Lord, and then quotes Joel equating the Lord Jesus with the LORD in Joel.
4. Salvation belongs to *Yahweh* (Ps. 3:8; Jon. 2:9), and besides Him there is no Savior (Hos. 13:4). Revelation 7:10 that salvation belongs to God *and to the Lamb*. The Lamb who was slain was Jesus, and He is the Savior of people's sins (Matt. 1:21). There is no other name under heaven by which we can be saved (Acts 4:12). Jesus can save because He is *Yahweh*.
5. Jesus Himself claimed to be the I AM (Ἐγώ εἰμι) - (John 4:26; 6:20; 8:18,24,28; 8:58-59; 18:5-8). See also His seven "I AM" statements and their promises. "I AM the...**Bread of Life** (John 6:35,48,51); **Light of the World** (John 8:12); **Door of the Sheep** (John 10:7,9); **Good Shepherd** (John 10:14-18); **Resurrection and Life** (John 11:25); **Way, Truth & Life** (John 14:6); **True Vine** (John 15:1,5)
6. So then, Jesus is *Yahweh* and "the Name of Jesus" is synonymous with "the Name of *Yahweh*". Jesus is the manifestation of the Name (John 17:6), and makes it known (John 17:26)

#### E. Biblical and Life Application of the Name

1. The Name of *Yahweh* is thus synonymous with the person and character of *Yahweh* (cf. Is. 24:15; 30:27; Acts 4:10) and He acts for His Name's sake (Jer. 14:7,21; Ezek. 20:9,14,22,44; 36:22-23; 1John 2:12).
2. In the days of Seth & Enosh, people began to call upon the name of *Yahweh* (Gen. 4:26)
  - a. Whoever calls upon the name of *Yahweh* will be saved (Ps. 54:1; 116:4,13; Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21; Rom. 10:13; 1Cor. 6:11; cf. 1Chr. 16:35), there is no other name by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12)
  - b. The Name of *Yahweh* is a strong tower; the righteous run to *it* and are saved (Prov. 18:10; Zeph. 3:12)
  - c. Naming the Name of the Lord is a call to remember His commands and depart from sin (1Kings 8:33-35; Ps. 25:11; 119:55; Acts 22:16; 2Tim. 2:19)
  - d. In the depths of the pit we can call on His Name (Lam. 3:55); His Name is always near (Ps. 75:1)
3. Do not take the Name of *Yahweh* in vain (Ex. 20:7; Deut. 5:11; Acts 19:13). Whoever blasphemed the Name was put to death (Lev. 24:16). To oppose or even forget the Name is to oppose Him and His character & will (cf. Ps. 139:20; Jer. 23:25-27; Acts 26:9-18). To take His Name in vain is to treat Him as though He is not who He is. It is to present yourself before Him as defiled and unprepared for that encounter.
4. Being "in the Name of *Yahweh*"...
  - a. Jesus came and worked in His Father's Name (John 5:43; 10:25) (i.e. in/by the authority of *Yahweh*)
  - b. In the Name we see His promises and His election (1Sam. 12:22; Mal. 1:2-6; Acts 15:14)
  - c. We believe in His Name for salvation (John 1:12; 2:23; 1John 3:23; cf. Acts 10:43), we trust in His Name (Ps. 9:10; 20:7; 33:21; Is. 50:10)
  - d. Victory over the enemy is in His Name (1Sam. 17:45; 2Chr. 14:11; Ps. 44:5; 118:10-12; Acts 16:18)
  - e. Ministering/serving/speaking in the Name (Deut. 18:5,7,22; Jer. 44:16; Zeph. 3:9; Mark 9:38-39; Acts 4:18; 5:28; 9:27-28; 2Thess. 3:6) shows our love for His Name (Heb. 6:10)
  - f. We wait for His Name (Ps. 52:9; Is. 26:8), we are healed in His Name (Acts 3:6,16; 4:10,30; Jas. 5:14), we assemble in His Name (Matt. 18:20; 1Cor. 5:4), we walk in His Name (Mic. 4:5; Zech. 10:12) (Col. 3:17)
  - g. Whatever we ask in Jesus' Name, He will do (John 14:14; 15:16; 16:23-24)
5. Praising the Name of *Yahweh*...
  - a. We ascribe greatness to His Name (Deut. 32:3; 1Chr. 16:8-35; Ps. 29:2; 34:3; Jer. 10:6; 2Thess. 1:12)
  - b. We bless & sing praises to His Name (Ps. 7:17; 68:4; 69:30; 103:1; 113:1-3; 148:5,13; Joel 2:26)
  - c. His Name is blessed in good times and in bad (Job 1:21; Ps. 74:21)
6. How great is His Name
  - a. Above all other names (Neh. 9:5; Is. 42:8; Phil. 2:9; Heb. 1:4). His Name endures forever (Ps. 135:13)
  - b. Famous among the nations (Ex. 9:16; Josh. 9:9; Ruth 4:14; 1Kings 8:41-43; Ps. 8:1; 72:17; Mal. 1:11), they will fear (Ps. 102:15; Is. 30:27; 59:19; Mal. 1:14; Acts 19:17) and hope in His Name (Is. 60:9; Matt. 12:21)
  - c. We are to fear His Name (Deut. 28:58; Ps. 86:11; Mic. 6:9), it is our delight (Neh. 1:11; Mal. 4:2)
  - d. At the Name of Jesus every knee will bow (Is. 45:21-23; Phil. 2:10-11)