

The Name of

GOOD

יהוה

hey vav hey yod

The Name of God



God reveals his name to Moses

¹Exodus 3:13-15 (NASB), ¹³ Then Moses said to God, “Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you.’ Now they may say to me, ‘What is His name?’ What shall I say to them?” ¹⁴ God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM”; and He said, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” ¹⁵ God, furthermore, said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations.



The most important name you can ever know is the name of God. We honor Him when we use it.

הוהי
hey vav hey yod



ahweh, the God of the Israelites, whose name was revealed to Moses as four Hebrew consonants (**YHWH** / **WHVH**) and is referred to as the:

* TETRAGRAMMATION *

[tetraˈgraməˌtän] is a noun. The Hebrew name of God transliterated in four letters as **YHWH** and articulated as **Yahweh** (*Yah- weh*).

¹ Isa. 42:8; Isaiah 12:1-5; Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21; Ro. 10:13

However, the letters above are just that, they are the letters of His name. If you want to truly honor God, then you need to speak His name. *“Call on the name of the Lord and you shall be saved.”* Sound familiar?

“I am, who I am.” “I am the Lord YHVH, I am Yahweh your God.”



Yahweh is the name of the Almighty Father in Heaven that people commonly call “The LORD” or “God.” The reason we see “LORD” and “God” in our bibles is because of a Jewish tradition that the name **Yahweh** was not to be spoken for fear that His name might be blasphemed. However, latter translations are now using Yahweh as the correct way to pronounce the name of God.

Psalm 68:4 (NASB), “Sing to God, sing praises to His name; Lift up *a song* for Him who rides through the deserts, whose name is the LORD, and exult before Him.”



Numbers 6:27 “So they shall invoke My name on the sons of Israel, and I *then* will bless them.”

In the above scripture and in many additional scriptures we are told to praise, exalt, bless, love, teach, preach, anoint, assemble, believe, give thanks, honor and call on His name.

In His name **Yod Hey Vav Hey** (*Yahweh*) declares that something is coming, and that it is amazing. That something can be found in His name also.

 **yod**  **Hand**



Yod / Yood - is a picture of an arm, or hand that is accomplishing a Mighty Deed

 **hey**  **Behold**

Hey – Man lifting up his hands to the heavens. Meaning to reveal, to Behold, to look.

 **vav**  **Nail**

Vav – picturing an iron nail.

 **hey**  **Behold**

Hey – As already revealed means to **Reveal**, to Behold, to Look.

The clearest pictographic meaning of the sacred name of God is:

Behold the Hand! Behold the Nail! The prophetic message concealed in His name, telling us that Yeshua Ha-Mashiach will be lifted up upon a cross and secured there by an iron nail.



If you searched the scriptures you will find places where the name of the Lord has been shortened from Yahweh to “**YAH**.” In the English we often sing the Hallelujah chorus and would you believe me if I told you, that you are (without knowing it) actually singing His name. In the Hebrew there are no “J’s.” So the Hebrew version of the word would look like this, “**HA-LELU-YAH**” which means “**Praise Yah**.” We praise His name every time we sing the Ha-lelu-yah Chorus.

The King James translators actually took out the four letter Tetragram and replaced it with the word “**LORD**,” all capitals. This was done approximately 7000 times in scripture, and is one of the many reasons the church has become “Lost in Translation” of the names of God and are to this day still fairly unknown as to the Bride of Jesus Christ. We struggle to know the depth of His love which is conveyed to us through the correct use of His name / names. When we say the word “Lord,” we are not actually calling on God or His Son Jesus. Remember that the word “Lord” is a **TITLE** and not His name.

Bring back the honor that is due God, in that every time you see the Old Testament word LORD say it as it was originally written ... **Yod-Hey-Vav-Hey** (Yahweh).

“I AM WHO I AM”²
Exodus 3:13-15

The statement “I AM” comes from the Hebrew verb “to be or to exist.” With this statement, God declared that He is self-existent, eternal, self-sufficient, self-directed, and unchanging. But this statement also declared that He is present. Despite His nature being so different from humans and their man-made gods, God is

² <https://www.compellingtruth.org/I-AM-WHO-I-AM-Exodus-3-14.html>

present with His people. He was aware of their suffering, He desired to deliver them, and He intended to be known throughout all generations (Exodus 3:7–15). Revealing His holy name to Moses implied an intimate relationship as first names were often only shared with those in a covenant relationship. God had been present and would always be present with His people, ready to intervene on their behalf.

From the statement "I AM WHO I AM" (spelled *hey, yod, hey* in Hebrew) in verse 14, God formed a holy proper name, **Yahweh** (spelled *yod, hey, vav, hey* in Hebrew), in verse 15. This name was considered so holy that it could not be spoken aloud or even written in its entirety. In fact, when a Jewish scribe copied the Scriptures and came to the holy name, he would set aside his quill and get a brand new one that would write only that name and then break the quill afterward so that no other word would ever flow from it. God's name **Yahweh**, from "**I AM WHO I AM**," always evokes the memory of the events recorded in Exodus of this faithful, wonder-working God being present with His people and showing His power on their behalf.

Jesus self-identified as part of this holy, present God in John 8:58 when He said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am." The Jews recognized this reference to God and were ready to stone Jesus to death for such blasphemy (John 8:59). Of course, because Jesus is fully God, it was no blasphemy for Him to claim the name I AM. As God, He was not created but is self-existent (Colossians 1:17). He is eternal, existing before Abraham and now seated at the right hand of God the Father for eternity (Colossians 1:16, Hebrews 8:1). He is self-sufficient, needing nothing, and self-directed, accomplishing His will as He sees fit (Job 41:11; Psalm 135:6). And He is unchanging. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).

10 Powerful Names of God

(and What They Mean for Us Today)³



he Bible uses different names of God to convey specific, personal meaning and identity. There's great power in a name. It says who we are, it's what we are known by to all those around us. And there's nothing so powerful as the name of our Lord God. The Bible says the name of the Lord is like a strong tower; the righteous can run to it and be saved. In a world that often feels chaotic and fear-filled, His name is the one to hold close.

God's character, God's name remains the same through all generations. He is fully trustworthy, always powerful, forever loving, and constantly present with us. Studying what God's Word says about all that He is can help us to understand his very nature and character even more.

If you need some extra reassurance today, find hope in His powerful name. He is the God of miracles and nothing is impossible for Him. He split the seas, and delivered His people straight through, away from all their enemies. He offered His protection through desert days, and lovingly led them in the wilderness to the promised land. He provided a way for us to be saved through His Son Jesus Christ, and He gave us His Spirit to help us today. Don't believe the lie that God is distant, too busy, that He doesn't care about you, or that He is just waiting for you to mess up so he can tell you all you've done wrong. That's not who his name says He is.

We hold the promise that His love is everlasting, His mercies are new every morning, and His faithfulness is great. Jesus told us to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, and strength..." A good way to walk that out daily is to know God's very character through the power of His name.

Pray these truths back to Him, focus on one each day, or write them down in a place where you can be constantly reminded of His awesome presence in your life.

³ <https://www.ibelieve.com/faith/10-powerful-names-of-god-and-what-they-mean-for-us-today.html>

10 Names of God – and What They Mean for Life Today:

1. Name of God: **Elohim** (God)

Elohim means “**God**” – This name refers to God’s incredible power and might. He is the One and only God. He is Supreme, the true God in a world that promotes many false gods and religions. He is the one on whom we can fully rely, He is Sovereign, He is the one we can completely trust. He is the Mighty One over all of nature, this world, and the heavens above, our creative God who has worked wonders by His hands. God reminds that He is Elohim every single day. His amazing power is at work in every sunrise, every sunset, in the way He holds the stars in the sky, and carries His people through difficult times. You can be assured, you are held by an Almighty God, you never have to fear, God’s hands are strong and secure.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Genesis 1:1

“The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.” Psalm 19:1

Elohim occurs more than 2,250 times in the Bible. Elohim [yihl\ə] (God), a plural of Eloah [;H/\ə], occurs more than 2, 250 times, sometimes with an addition such as "God of Abraham/Israel" but mostly it is free standing. Next to Lord (Yahweh), Elohim is the major designation for God. Elohim refers to "deity" but comes virtually to be a name for the true God. Elohim sums up what is intended by "god" or the divine.

From the Bible's first sentence the superlative nature of God's power is evident as God (Elohim) speaks a world into existence (Genesis 1:3 Genesis 1:6 Genesis 1:9). His actions also bespeak his power, enabling barren women such as Sarah and Rebecca to conceive (Genesis 18:10 Genesis 18:14 ; 25:21), bringing an oppressed people out of Egypt (Exodus 20:2), and with power raising Jesus Christ from the dead (Rom 1:1-4). Believers, Peter writes, are "shielded by God's power" (1 Peter 1:5). In the name Elohim is fullness of divine power. [Bakers Evangelical Dictionary]

2. Name of God: **Yahweh**

Yahweh means **“The Lord”** – Yahweh is derived from the Hebrew word for “I AM,” it is the proper name of the divine person, coming from the verb which means to “exist,” “be.” When God told Moses to go to Pharaoh and to lead the Israelites out of Egypt, Moses was scared. He needed reassurance, he needed to know God was bigger than this problem, that He would carry them through, that even if people wouldn’t listen to him, they would listen to the One who sent him. Because His name carried that much awe and honor. He said to God, “Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, The God of you fathers has sent me to you, and they ask me, “What is his name?” Then what shall I tell them?” God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites, “I AM has sent me to you.” Exodus 3:13-14

God’s name, Yahweh, is one of authority. It is one that holds great power, and says to all who hear, “I AM the One, true God, follow me.” God is still the “Great I AM,” for He never changes. We can trust His loving leadership in our lives, just as Moses did. He calls us for his specific purposes, reminding us that He knows our way and He has a plan.

Yhwh, the tetragrammaton because of its four letters, is, strictly speaking, the only proper name for God. It is also the most frequent name, occurring in the Old Testament 6, 828 times (almost 700 times in the Psalms alone). Yah is a shortened form that appears fifty times in the Old Testament, including forty-three occurrences in the Psalms, often in the admonition "hallelu-jah" (lit. praise Jah). English Bibles represent the name yhwh by the title "Lord" (written in capitals to distinguish it from "lord").

In the postexilic period the Jews, for reverence reasons, did not pronounce the name but substituted for it the word adonai (lord), and in written form attached these vowels to the tetragrammaton. The resulting misguided pronunciation of the name yhwh as a three-syllable word, Y [J]ehovah, continued in English Bible translations until early in the twentieth century. Evidence from Greek usage in the Christian era points to the two-syllable pronunciation, "Yahweh."

The theological significance that attaches to the name yhwh is multiple. Judging from the etymology, but more particularly from the context in which the name is disclosed (Exod 3:12, 14; 6:2-8), the name signifies "presence." God is "with, " he is near and among his people. This overtone of presence is reiterated in the naming of the wilderness structure as "tabernacle", and in the promised name Immanuel ("God with us, " Isa 7:14; Matt 1:23). Yahweh is present, accessible, near to those who call on him (Psalm 145:18) for deliverance (107:13), forgiveness (25:11), and guidance (31:3). Yahweh is dynamically near, but as God (Elohim) he is also paradoxically transcendent.

The name yhwh defines him as involved in human struggle. Yahweh's name is forever tied, through the exodus event, with salvation and liberation (Exod 15:1-13; 20:2-3). The

salvation promise given in **Exodus 6:6-8** is an expansive one, including intimacy with God and blessings of abundance, but is decidedly bracketed first and last with "I am Yahweh." The name yhwh is prominent in salvation oracles (Zep 3:14-17) and in petitions (**Psalms 79:5**, 9; 86:1). The salvation dimension of the name recurs in the announcement of the incarnation: the one born is to be called "Jesus" for (as an echo of the name yhwh) "he will save his people from their sins" (**Matt 1:21**). In the name yhwh God's character as the savior of a people is revealed.

Theologically the name of Yahweh resonates with covenant, partly because in the explication of the name in **Exodus 6:6-8** the covenant formula is invoked ("I will be your God and you will be my people"). The name yhwh is a name to which Israel can lay particular claim. In covenant, matters such as justice (**Isa 61:8**) and holiness (**Lev 19:2**) have an extremely high profile.

The name yhwh is anything but empty. The name carries overtones of presence, salvation defined as deliverance and blessing, covenantal bondedness, and integrity. [**Bakers Evangelical Dictionary**]

3. Name of God: **ABBA**

Abba means **"Daddy, Father"** – Abba is the most intimate form of God's name, showing us His character as our loving daddy. He is the One who can be fully trusted, the One we can lean on, the One who cares about all that concerns us. Just as a godly father's presence in our daily lives is one of protection, security, and unconditional love, the constant presence of our heavenly Father is what gives us the strength and covering we need for this life's journey. This is one of my favorite **names of God** because in it He conveys His heart for each of us, as His children. He gives us the privilege of being called his own sons and daughters. He provides the way for us to call out to Him and the assurance, beyond a doubt, that He hears and will answer. In our most difficult to painful times in life, we can crawl up into the lap of our heavenly Father, and know that He is for us, and His arms will hold us secure.

"Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." **Galatians 4:6**

Abba Father is the word for God in the Lord's Prayer (**Luke 11:2**) The epithet is strikingly frequent in John (108 times) and also in Matthew (forty times). The range of meanings include those of authority and discipline, but also those of compassion, care, protection, and provision.

4. Name of God: **el elyon**

Means “**God Most High**” – El Elyon is a name used through the Old Testament revealing God is above all gods, that nothing in life is more sacred. He is indeed the Lord Most High, the One who reigns supreme. He is greater than any force of darkness in this world, He is bigger than any problem we might come up against in this life. In daily life struggles and battles, we sometimes just need to be reminded that God is still in control. He never will lose His power and might, though the world feels dark many days, He has conquered death and sin. He is Mighty. He is Lord. He is exalted over all.

“I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high.” **Psalm 7:17**

El Elyon derives from the root "go up", "ascent", so that El Elyon may be thought of spatially as the highest. Closely linked to temple services, twenty of its forty-five occurrences are in the Psalter. Sometimes the compound is construed as a name: "It is good to make music to your name, O Most High" (**Psalm 9:1**). El 'Elyon denotes exaltation and prerogative and belongs to "monarchical theology" for it speaks of absolute right to lordship. In the same vein may be found the question, "Who is like you?" (**Psalm 35:10**). [**Bakers Evangelical Dictionary**]

5. Name of God: **el Roi**

El Roi means “**The God Who Sees**” – I love the kindness and care that this name holds as it points to God’s character. He is one who chases after us, who follows us with goodness. He is the one who sees us when we feel lonely, all on our own, or when we just need the reminder that God is close. The name El Roi says to us that God is watching over all that He sees in the affairs of people, and knows when we feel lost and unloved.

When Hagar had run away to a desert place far from those she felt hurt and betrayed by, we see God surround her in so much grace and care. He didn’t leave her alone in her troubles. Nor will He leave us to fend for ourselves through difficult times. This story of God’s name reminds us that He is always close, that He sees us when we feel that no one else does, and that He cares.

“She gave this name to the LORD who spoke to her: "You are the God who sees me," for she said, "I have now seen the One who sees me." Genesis 16:13

6. Name of God: **el Shaddai** (God Almighty)

El Shaddai means **“God Almighty”** – God’s name, El Shaddai, reminds us that He is all-powerful, He is the Mighty One, He is the 9-1-1 (**Psalm 91:1**) to run to. And we can find refuge and rest in His shadow. This is comforting in a world where we face many battles day by day. Sometimes it’s hard to know who we can trust, we may feel unsafe or uncertain in circumstances surrounding us. We want to know that our loved ones are protected and covered in His care, especially when they’re away from us. This verse and God’s reminder that He is the Almighty gives us the security and assurance that nothing else around us can offer. He is the God who sees all, knows all, and has the power to go before us, walk with us daily, and cover us from behind. Dwelling in God’s presence gives us shelter and rest.

“Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.” Psalm 91:1

To Abraham God appears as God Almighty, El Shaddai (**Gen 17:1**). The designation "Shaddai," which some think is the oldest of the divine names in the Bible, occurs forty-eight times, thirty-one of which are in Job. The traditional rendering "God Almighty" is debated. A consensus of sorts holds that "Shaddai" is to be traced, not to the Hebrew, but to an Accadian word that means "mountain" so that the expression produces a meaning like, "El, the One of the mountains." If so, El Shaddai highlights God's invincible power. Or, the name may point to his symbolic dwelling. The juxtaposition of El Shaddai and El 'Elyon (**Num. 24:16; Psalm 91:1**) may suggest that El Shaddai is a God who is chief in the heavenly council, whose residence was sometimes broadly associated with mountains (**Hab. 3:3**). [Bakers Evangelical Dictionary]

7. Name of God: **Yahweh Yireh**

Yahweh Yireh means **“The Lord Will Provide”** – God will provide for our needs. Every one of them, He is faithful, He is able, nothing is too difficult for Him. Sometimes His timing is different than ours, maybe we feel that He’s forgotten and hasn’t heard our prayers. Sometimes we get our “needs” and “wants” mixed up, and other times He knows what is better for us than we even know ourselves. We can trust Him, that His timing is perfect, and that all things are possible for Him even when we can’t see a way out. Abraham found this to be true. Alone with his son Isaac in the wilderness, He knew and trusted that God would provide for a sacrifice in place of his only child. He believed in God’s character, and knew Him to be faithful, loving, and the God who will provide. Often it seems, that God tests our hearts like He did Abraham’s that day. He wants to know what we’re willing to lay down before Him, before He opens the doors of provision and blessing. May we be found faithful. “So Abraham called that place The Lord Will Provide. And to this day it is said, “On the mountain of the Lord it will be provided.” Genesis 22:14

8. Name of God: **Yahweh Nissi**

Yahweh Nissi means **"The Lord Is My Banner"** – This is the name of God that proclaims His protection, leadership, and deliverance for His people. Just as God brought divine protection for the Israelites against their enemy, the Amalekites, He offers us protection and deliverance today from the enemies we may face in this life. While Joshua and the people fought against their enemy, Moses stood on top of a hill with God's staff in his hands. The Bible tells the story that even though Moses grew weary, when his hands were lifted by those who supported him, the Israelites were winning, and when his hands lowered the Amalekites were winning. It was clear to all who gave them victory that day. Sometimes we spin our wheels trying to battle through our hard days in our own strength. We get weary, we get upset, we get angry, and we end up losing it. God's reminder is to all Him to be our banner, our protector, that One that is able to lead us and give us supernatural victory against forces and obstacles that come against us. If we allow Him to be in control, He will do more on our behalf, than would ever be possible on our own.

"Moses built an altar and called it The LORD is my Banner." **Exodus 17:15**

9. Name of God: **Jehovah Rapha**

Jehovah Rapha means **"Healer, the Lord who heals you"** – This name brings so much comfort and hope to many of us who have prayed for healing and deliverance from disease, illness, brokenness, or painful circumstances. It reminds us that God knows we're in need of help, He understands we're in need of healing, and He promises to redeem every broken place in our lives. He never leaves us on our own to fend for ourselves. Without Him we couldn't have hope for true freedom and healing, but just as God brought miraculous deliverance from all types diseases and difficulties throughout His word, He promises to act on behalf of His people still today. Sometimes the healing doesn't come in the timetable or way that we would choose, and that can be hard. But as believers we still have this hope and assurance: we will live forever free in heaven, far away from the burdens we've carried here in this life. Jesus promises to make all things new, and God will wipe away every tear.

He said, "If you listen carefully to the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you." - Exodus 15:26

10. Name of God: **Yahweh Shalom**

Yahweh Shalom means **“The Lord Is Peace”** – God is the only One able to give us the peace that passes all of our own understanding. Gideon knew this well from a time that he and his people were surrounded by a fierce enemy. There was nothing about that time that seemed “peaceful.” And yet, God showed up strong on their behalf, He was faithful and brought deliverance straight through fear-filled days. Maybe that’s why Gideon felt so led to build an altar to the Lord and call it, “The Lord is Peace.” In times of greatest darkness, he had seen how true this was. The peace of God often doesn’t make sense to a world that would tell us to hurry and worry. A world that seems hard some days, and often so full of struggles. In the midst of it all, He reminds us that He is our true peace, so we never need to fear. No matter what we face. “Then Gideon built an altar there to the LORD and named it The LORD is Peace.” Judges 6:24



⁴Are You Obeying the Third Commandment?



Even if you've forgotten which number of the Ten Commandments it is, I'm sure you know that one of them says, **"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain."** (It's the third, by the way, found in Exod. 20:7.) When is the last time you've meditated on the meaning of this command? When is the last time you've given some thought to your obedience/disobedience to this command?

What does it mean to take God's name in vain? *Vain* has to do with what is "empty, frivolous, or insincere." As we all know, this definition applies to using God's name (or any of his names) as profanity, as an expletive for disgust or surprise, such as "God d**n." It's difficult to write that phrase; I hope that it's difficult to read it. It's a blasphemous phrase since it makes light of God's name - maybe even twice as blasphemous when such holy words and realities are stolen to express personal disgust or unrighteous anger.

We shouldn't be surprised when unbelievers speak like it. But as for us, God's covenant people, may it never be that we use God's names in such overtly blasphemous ways.

More Than Just Profanity:

If taking God's name in vain means using it frivolously or insincerely, then the third commandment speaks to more than just overt profanity. It also applies to the more common, more culturally acceptable phrases like "Oh God!" or "Oh my God!" I sense that some of us have let down our guard. I suspect that some of us have let the world's saturated use of these phrases shape us.

Granted, it is possible to speak the words "Oh God" or "Oh my God" and not sin. These words may begin a prayer at a moment of shocking tragedy. Imagine a mother finding her son with a near-fatal injury. She may look upward and cry "Oh my God!" as a pregnant prayer that implies a need for divine help. But surely that tragic scenario is a world away from today's thoughtless, needless uses. These phrases litter the speech we hear. Surely "OMG!" are three of the most frequently typed letters on social media and in texts. These are useless, thoughtless fillers used for anything and everything that is barely amusing or surprising.

Let's be clear, Christian: these common phrases are using God's name emptily, frivolously, insincerely. It's no surprise when the world steals from God's honor, but as for us, these things ought not to be. We must not rationalize and say, "It's just one word; God knows my heart; he knows I don't mean anything blasphemous." The third commandment is in fact about a word, a name. More than that, it is about God's honor. God's *name* isn't empty, frivolous, or insincere;

⁴ Article by: Ryan Kelly – April 2, 2014

indeed, God isn't empty, frivolous, or insincere. We must not treat him as such, whether in our hearts or in our speech.

This is not a point that good Christians can and do disagree on, like the use of alcohol, or celebrating Halloween, or using off-color words like *crap*. This one is more black and white than whether you should designate that receipt as a tax deduction or not. God reveals his holy names in the Bible, and we cannot borrow them for frivolous, useless speech.

Applied positively, the third commandment calls us to speak of and sing to God accurately, thoughtfully, descriptively, reverently, and worshipfully. Space won't permit exploring those applications of the third commandment, but the mere mention of them should add weight to this whole discussion. They hopefully add depth and dimension to God's own resolve: "I will be jealous for my holy name" (Ezek. 39:25). And praise God that the preceding words in that verse contain another divine resolve: "**I will ... have mercy.**" What hope for broken sinners: God rests his promise of mercy to us on his very name—his jealous, holy name.

7 Meanings of Yahweh⁵



God has no shortage of names--He is called by almost 1000 different ones in the Bible. But one of these names stands alone, and that name is **Yahweh**. The English language doesn't have an exact translation of the word "Yahweh," so in the Old Testament we see it written as "LORD" in all capital letters.

In Jewish tradition, "Yahweh" is too sacred a name to utter out loud. Over time Jews started to substitute in "Adonai," or "My Lord," especially when speaking. Another common replacement is the name "Elohim," which simply means "God." What's interesting is that these two replacement names are both used for other things as well, not just God, whereas Yahweh is reserved exclusively as a name for God.

We see in Exodus 3:14 that God uses "I AM" and "Yahweh" interchangeably, which tells us that "I am" is one way for us to translate the name "Yahweh." But why is it so significant that God's name is "I AM"?

Why it Matters that God Is "I AM."

In the Old Testament, a person's name often reflected his character. Abraham means "Father of a great multitude." Eve means "Living," which is fitting because she was the mother of all living people. Jesus means "Savior."

Names were very, very important at that time. It could point to a person's disposition, mission in life, and more. And Moses knew that.

When he asks God in Exodus 3:13 what he should tell the Israelites when they ask who sent him, he's essentially asking God to provide some credibility to the fantastic story he's about to tell his people. He's asking God about his character and nature.

If we ask God, "Who are you?" and he replies, "**I AM WHO I AM**," that is significant and we need to take time to dwell on his chosen name if we want to know him.

7 Meanings of Yahweh and Why It's Such an Important Name for God

⁵ <https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/why-it-matters-that-god-is-yahweh.html>

1. Yahweh Is the Self-Existent, Eternal God

God has no need of us.

That simple fact can be a little offensive to our human nature – that part of us that wants to be significant; to be needed.

But it's true – God does not need us. He doesn't need anyone. He is completely whole within himself, and he *is* eternal – he has always existed, and He always will. He is the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega.

And He is the only one in existence who can be described this way. The rest of us need quite a lot to go right in order to keep existing! The most powerful human on earth is still at the mercy of his health and fortune.

God stands alone in needing nothing, in being wholly self-sufficient.

2. Yahweh Is a Relational God

Yahweh is only used in the Bible when the author is talking about God's personal relationship with his people. A great example of this is Psalm 19. The author talks in the first 6 verses about *Elohim* (another name for God) and his relationship with the material world. Then, in verse 7, he shifts and starts to write about *Yahweh* and his relationship with those who know him and who are in covenant with him.

The fact that God introduces himself to us as “Yahweh” tells us that his first priority in relating to us is making sure we know that he is the intensely personal God, seeking to have a relationship with his people.

We talked earlier about how God doesn't need us...but that makes it all the more wondrous that he *wants* us. This is a God who was so love-motivated to know us and to be in relationship with us that he came to earth as a human and took the punishment we deserved.

This is our relational God.

3. Yahweh Is with Us

God is there, existing, right now.

If you are reading this article, there's a pretty good chance that you don't have a problem with this. It is probably a core part of your belief system.

But those of us who have the least qualms with a God who *exists* can start to forget the beauty and significance of the fact that God is *here*.

Yahweh is here, interacting with our world, among us. And he does that out of love. God is under no obligation to remain close to us, working in our lives and writing a love story between

himself and the world. And yet, he chooses to do so. In fact, he chooses to build his very kingdom among believers:

"One day the Pharisees asked Jesus, 'When will the Kingdom of God come?' Jesus replied, 'The Kingdom of God can't be detected by visible signs. You won't be able to say, 'Here it is!' or 'It's over there!' For the Kingdom of God is already among you'" (Luke 17:20-21).

4. Yahweh Is the Unchanging God

Heraclitus said it best: "There is nothing permanent except change." Our world is constantly shifting; everything is subjective, and lots of things seem to change day to day.

But our God does not conform to any of this. He remains constant through it all. He doesn't change his nature based on what is new and popular at the moment. Yahweh has always been who he is, from the beginning of time; he has always been the standard for absolute perfection and holiness.

We have the binary choice to either choose Him and conform to him – or not. There is no third option where we can have a slightly different version of him.

God isn't changed by new and popular philosophies and theologies, but we can sometimes be. We need to keep a white-knuckled grip on the truth of the unchanging God.

5. Yahweh Is Wholly Other than Us

When was the last time we took a step back and acknowledged the holiness of God?

The most common theologies are ones that make God into our own personal servant – the ones that will get us our best life now; perfect peace and no problems.

God is not a servant. He is infinitely and entirely *other* than you and me.

"These things you have done, and I have been silent; you thought that I was one like yourself. But now I rebuke you and lay the charge before you" (Psalm 50:21).

"You thought I was one like yourself." He isn't like us. He *relates* to us more deeply than we can ever imagine, but he is not *like* us. His ways are higher than our own, and he is set apart from everything and everyone else in existence in holiness, strength, and power.

6. Yahweh Keeps His Covenant with Us

We talked earlier about how God only uses the term “Yahweh” with his friends – the people who know him and who are in covenant with him. Yahweh is the covenant-keeping name.

God calls himself “Yahweh” when he first enters into the covenant with Abraham, a subtle promise that he will forever be faithful in keeping his word. When he reveals himself again as “Yahweh” to Moses, it is our reminder that he is unchanging, and we can trust him not to back out or change his mind.

God will never stop wanting us, and he will never cease in his pursuit of us. He is the ultimate covenant-keeper, the one who keeps his promises and does what he said he will do.

We can trust God as much as we want and it will never be too much. He will always measure up.

7. Yahweh Is Full of Mystery... but Worth Seeking!

Only a mysterious God would ask us to know him as the God who *is who he is*. We weren't meant to understand everything about him, as evidenced by the fact that we simply *can't*!

We worship a God of mystery, yet a God who is closer than our very breath. Yahweh is a paradox, one we will never reach the end of when it comes to our understanding of him. There is simply too much of him to know fully in one lifetime!

But we can always seek more.

That should be our daily goal — to move one step closer to knowing the God who is. The richness and fullness of perfect love await anyone seeking to know the one who would do anything to have us.

And that is worth the pursuit.