Praying The Names of God

NOTE: The actual names of God should stimulate your personal prayer. - It is well to use this information in a group session to train and encourage your people. - We suggest you orally introduce each of the 7 Names and provide a few minutes for personal application of one sub- item – 2 to 3 minutes. -Then you move on to the next topic. - After your introductory time provide for an additional 40 minutes later (5 minutes for each of the 8 parts) for private prayer in a secluded area – preferably outdoors.

- For further home use suggest participants to only use one point of each Name at a time. This provides for a more manageable, simple, and repetitive use in a reverent rather than mundane way.

- For deeper love of God you will find it invaluable to write down your own thoughts, questions, and verses relating to each Name.

**Introduction**

The names of God are beautiful to consider and encompass many of His attributes. It is beneficial to meditate on both as you seek to know Him more deeply. Sometimes there seem to be contradictions, but there are many different facets of His character, all of which contribute to a jewel beyond comparison.

## Overview of the Names of God in Scripture

The material in this section is quoted from “The Names of God” by J. Hampton Keathley, III.[[1]](#footnote-1)

**(1)** ***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).

Compounds of *El*:

**• *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. 6:31; 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).

**(2) *Yahweh (YHWH):*** Comes from a verb which means “to exist, be.” 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).

Compounds of *Yahweh:* Strictly speaking, these compounds are designations or titles which reveal additional facts about God’s character.

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

**• *Yahweh 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).

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

**• *Yahweh 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).

**• *Yahweh Maccaddeshcem*:** “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).

**• *Yahweh* Ro’i*:*** “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).

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

**• *Yahweh Shammah*:** “The Lord is there.” Portrays the Lord’s personal presence in the millennial kingdom (Ezek. 48:35).

**• *Yahweh Elohim Israel:*** “The Lord, the God of Israel.” Identifies Yahweh as the God of Israel in contrast to the false gods of the nations (Jud. 5:3.; Isa. 17:6).

(3) ***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).

(4) ***Theos*:** Greek word translated “God.” Primary name for God used in the New Testament. Its use teaches: (1) *He is the only true* God (Matt. 23:9; Rom. 3:30); (2) He is unique (1 Tim. 1:17; John 17:3; Rev. 15:4; 16:27); (3) He is transcendent (Acts 17:24; Heb. 3:4; Rev. 10:6); (4) He is the Savior (John 3:16; 1 Tim. 1:1; 2:3; 4:10). This name is used of Christ as God in John 1:1, 18; 20:28; 1 John 5:20; Tit. 2:13; Rom. 9:5; Heb. 1:8; 2 Pet. 1:1.

(5) ***Kurios*:** Greek word translated “Lord.” Stresses authority and supremacy. While it can mean sir (John 4:11), owner (Luke 19:33), master (Col. 3:22), or even refer to idols (1 Cor. 8:5) or husbands (1 Pet. 3:6), it is used mostly as the equivalent of Yahweh of the Old Testament. It too is used of Jesus Christ meaning (1) Rabbi or Sir (Matt. 8:6); (2) God or Deity (John 20:28; Acts 2:36; Rom. 10:9; Phil. 2:11).

(6) ***Despotes*:** Greek word translated “Master.” Carries the idea of ownership while *kurios* stressed supreme authority (Luke 2:29; Acts 4:24; Rev. 6:10; 2 Pet. 2:1; Jude 4).

(7) ***Father*:**A distinctive New Testament revelation is that through faith in Christ, God becomes our personal Father. Father is used of God in the Old Testament only 15 times while it is used of God 245 times in the New Testament. As a name of God, it stresses God’s loving care, provision, discipline, and the way we are to address God in prayer (Matt. 7:11; Jam. 1:17; Heb. 12:5-11; John 15:16; 16:23; Eph. 2:18; 3:15; 1 Thess. 3:11).

1. J. Hampton Keathley, III, “The Names of God”, http://www.bible.org/page.php?page\_id=220, accessed Jan 28, 2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)