

The Sacred Name of God

✖ In Hebrew, the sacred, divine name of God is spelled with four Hebrew letters: yod, hei, vav, and hei, or, in English, YHWH. This four-lettered name is called the tetragrammaton, which means “four letters.”

This name, YHWH, is found 6,823 times in the Hebrew Bible. Hebrew scholars and rabbis all agree that the exact pronunciation of these four letters has been lost throughout the centuries. Some suggest the name is pronounced Yehovah or Yahweh, while westerners say Jehovah, replacing the first letter Y (yud in Hebrew) with the English letter J, which does not exist in the Hebrew alphabet.

It is Jewish practice never to write this sacred name, but to replace it with the name Adonai, meaning, “the Lord.” There is also a rabbinical tradition of saying God’s name simply as Ha-Shem, meaning “the Name.”

The Jewish Mishna teaches that the high priest would pronounce the tetragrammaton when pronouncing the priestly blessing (Num. 6:24-27). However, outside of the temple, the name was replaced with Adonai.

The Mishna also teaches that on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), the sacred name was spoken, causing the people to fall upon their faces and begin blessing the name of the Lord.

If you have ever read a Jewish religious book, you will notice something that appears odd to non-Jewish readers. When writing the name GOD, the Jewish writer will leave out the O and write it G-D. One reason is because if the paper gets lost, erased, or placed in the garbage, God’s name has not been fully written; therefore, it is not defiled. The same is true if it were written fully on paper; they do not wish to erase or defile God’s name.

The Purpose of the Name

In the Old Testament God revealed Himself, His nature, and His character by His names. In fact, there are sixteen important names for God revealed throughout the Old Testament. Below is a list of those titles or special names, which reveal the nature of God.

The Compound Names	The Meaning of the Names	The Scripture Reference
Jehovah Elohim	The eternal creator	Genesis 2:4-25
Adonai Jehovah	The Lord our master	Genesis 15:2
Jehovah Jireh	The Lord the provider	Genesis 22:8-14
Jehovah Nissi	The Lord our banner	Exodus 17:15
Jehovah Ropheka	The Lord our healer	Exodus 15:26
Jehovah Shalom	The Lord our peace	Judges 6:24
Jehovah Tsidkeenu	The Lord our righteousness	Jeremiah 23:6
Jehovah Mekaddishkem	The Lord our sanctifier	Exodus 31:13
Jehovah Sabaoth	The Lord of hosts	1 Samuel 1:11
Jehovah Shammah	The Lord is present	Ezekiel 48:35
Jehovah Elyon	The Lord Most High	Pslam 7:17

Jehovah Rohi	The Lord my shepherd	Psalms 23:1
Jehovah Hoshenu	The Lord our maker	Psalms 95:6
Jehovah Eloheenu	The Lord our God	Psalms 99:5
Jehovah Eloheka	The Lord thy God	Exodus 20:2
Jehovah Elohay	The Lord my God	Zachariah 14:5

I am using the English transliteration of God's sacred name for the purposes of our English readers. The actual Hebrew name for Jehovah is Yahweh or Yehovah.

Ancient Hebrews would often approach God saying, "In the name of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" (Exod. 3:6, 15-16).

Christians approach the heavenly throne through the name of Christ, as the New Testament says: "Whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you" (John 16:23). "Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name" (Phil. 2:9).

Whether we approach God using *Ha Shem*, Adonai, Lord, Father, or, as Christians, approach the Creator using the name of Christ, we must always remember the sacredness and holiness attached to His name. It is a commandment to do so.

There are many unique aspects and layers of prophetic mysteries linked to the Hebrew alphabet. Since it originated in heaven, we may one day speak it in heaven.

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