

“The Names of God” Bible Study “Elohim”

As we seek to discover and expand our personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ, it is only fitting that we also learn the character of the God that we serve. We do this by researching the “names” of God. In Hebrew culture, one’s name described the uniqueness of one’s character or personality. Thus, the names of God show us a greater picture of who God is. This week, we will consider the name, *Elohim*.

What does the name “Elohim” mean?

The opening statement in scriptures includes the name “God” (*in the beginning God...*). The Hebrew word from which this word for God is translated is *Elohim*. This word is used for God 2,570 times in the Bible. There are two primary beliefs concerning the root from which the word is derived.

Some hold that it is derived from the shorter word *El*, which means “mighty, strong, and prominent.” The word *El* is translated 250 times and frequently in instances that indicated the great power of God (Numbers 23:22; Deuteronomy 10:17). From this root, *Elohim* expresses the general idea of greatness and glory. The name, however, contains the idea of creative and governing power, omnipotence and sovereignty (Genesis 1:1-2:4 it is used 35 times). It is *Elohim* that creates something from nothing and brings all things into existence (Hebrews 11:3; Acts 17:24).

Others think that the name is derived from *Alah*, which is said to mean “to declare or to swear.” Therefore, it is believed to imply a covenant relationship. To make a covenant implies the power and right to do so, and it establishes the fact of “absolute authority in the Creator and Ruler of the universe.” When making the covenant with Abraham, because there is none greater, He swears by Himself (Genesis 17:7). He establishes and upholds other covenants based on the same authority as a covenant maker and keeper (Genesis 6:18, 9:15-16; 1 Kings 8:23; Jeremiah 31:33, 32:40).

Why is the word *Elohim* in its plural form?

The *-im* suffix points to the fact that the word is in its masculine noun plural Hebrew form. Some scholars suggest that its plural form points to the Holy Trinity. According to this definition, the *Elohim*, or Godhead, covenanted within itself not only with the creation, but concerning the creation (Jesus becoming a priest after the order of Melchizedek - Psalm 110:4, Hebrew 6:20; Jesus was with the Father before the world began - John 1:1; 17:5; The world was created by Jesus - Colossians 1:16; Genesis 1:1; John 1:2). The entire creation was the work of *Elohim* and the object of a covenant within *Elohim* concerning its redemption.

Also, though *Elohim* is plural, it is usually accompanied by verbs and adjectives in the singular (Genesis 1:1; Psalms 7:9; 57:2) and by pronouns in the singular (Deuteronomy 32:39; Isaiah 45:5,22). In contrast, when the word *elohim* is used of heathen gods, it is in the plural (1 Samuel 4:8). However, there are also times when *Elohim* refers to Himself as *Us* (Genesis 1:26; 3:22; 11:7; 35:7; Isaiah 6:1). Though there are distinct personalities, there is only one God.

What does this name mean to us as Christians today?

We can take great joy in knowing that our God is given the name *Elohim*. This provides great blessing and comfort know that His name signifies His supreme power, sovereignty, and glory on one hand (Matthew 6:13b) and also signifies a covenant relationship that He is ever faithful to keep (Numbers 23:19). As we are reminded in Psalm 91:2, “I will be to you a God [Elohim] and we may say, “My God [Elohim], in whom I trust.

“The Names of God” Bible Study “Jehovah”

As we seek to discover and expand our personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ, it is only fitting that we also learn the character of the God that we serve. We do this by researching the “names” of God. In Hebrew culture, one’s name described the uniqueness of one’s character or personality. Thus, the names of God show us a greater picture of who God is. This week, we will consider the name, *Jehovah*.

Where does the name “Jehovah” originate?

If there is a single name of God that is the most important in all of Israelite and Christian community it is the name Jehovah. This name is used 6,823 times in the Old Testament. It is the personal name of God revealed in Exodus 3:13-15. It is most often seen in the bible translated “LORD” (notice all caps). The original spelling of the name was “YHWH.” It was a name so hallowed in the Jewish community that no one would dare to speak it. It was often replaced with the name “Adonai” or a word that literally meant “the name.” Because of the lack of vowels in the original Hebrew language, vowels were inserted so that it could be pronounced. With vowels, it is pronounced “YaHWeH.” So how do we get the name “Jehovah” from God’s name?

The actual word “Jehovah” is a hybrid word. The Jewish scholars used the vowels from Adonai and “combined” them with God’s personal name and created the name “JeHoVaH.” However, when we see the name Jehovah it is the name YHWH which is translated “LORD.” You will see this name by itself, connected to Elohim (Deuteronomy 12:4-7), or within the same sentence as Elohim (Genesis 2:4-6).

What does the personal name of God mean?

As mentioned earlier, the personal name of God is first revealed to Moses when he asks what name to tell the Israelites when they ask who sent him. The reply is, “I AM WHO I AM...you shall say to the Israelites, ‘I AM’ has sent me to you.” The name of God literally means “to be.” It speaks of the Being that is absolutely self-existent, who in Himself possesses permanent existence (Psalm 90:2; Isaiah 43:10-11). He is the eternal God that chooses to be revealed to humanity. Thus, when God seeks to make a special revelation of Himself, He uses the name Jehovah (Exodus 3:15; 6:2-4). In the name Jehovah, or LORD, God reveals Himself as a personal, living Being fulfilling to the people of Israel the promises made to their fathers. Just as Elohim is the general name of God concerned with creation and preservation through covenants (pointing to His works), Jehovah points to the God of revelation in the expression of Himself in His essential moral and spiritual attributes (pointing to His relationship). Though other nations had their elohim (gods), Israel’s Elohim (when not backsliding) was Jehovah (2 Chronicles 14:11).

Why is the name *Jehovah* unique?

The name Jehovah (LORD) points to a Holy God that desires a relationship with a righteous humanity. When you first see the name in Genesis 2:4-6, it is concerning a relationship that is to be desired with Adam. The name Jehovah will always point to one of five things: 1) the **righteousness and holiness of God** (Psalm 99:5,9; Isaiah 6:3; Daniel 9:14); 2) the **call to righteousness** of people that are in relationship with a holy God (Leviticus 11:44; 19:2; 20:26; 1 Peter 1:15-16); 3) the **penalty and punishment of people that sin** against the righteousness of Jehovah (Genesis 19:24; Exodus 32:33); 4) the **redemptive love of God** in sacrifices, atonement and/or salvation that restores His relationship with His people (Exodus 32:14; Leviticus 1-7; Judges 10:6-7, 16; Jeremiah 31:3; John 3:16); 5) the **fulfillment of a personal, divine promises** (Deuteronomy 12:1). Through the work of Christ, now the LORD is our Elohim and we have the privilege of experiencing the same blessings of Abraham as the Hebrew people. Praise God for loving us enough to make Himself our LORD!

“The Names of God” Bible Study “Adonai”

What does the name “Adonai” mean?

The name “Adonai” is translated in our Bible by the word “Lord” in small letters, only the first of which is capital. Used as a name of God, it occurs 300 times in the Old Testament. Not only is it used of God, it is also used of men 215 times and translated variously, “**master**,” “**sir**,” and “**lord**,” but for the most part, “master” (see Genesis 24:12 where Eliezer calls Abraham his “master”). The word “Adonai” is also translated a number of times by the word “**owner**.” However, when it is used of men, it is used in the singular form “adon.” Only of God is it used in the plural form (similar to Elohim in suggesting the Trinity). The name “Adonai” signifies ownership or mastership and indicates that God is the owner of each member of the human family and that He claims the unrestricted obedience of all (Deuteronomy 10:17; Job 28:28).

How was Adonai used in the Bible?

The use of the name “Adonai” reveals the relationship that God has toward His creatures and what He expects from them. It is most commonly used when others are referring to God as “Adonai.” It is first used in Genesis 15:2 where Abraham replies to God using this term that points to Jehovah also as Master. Abraham-having many servants-understood the relationship between Master and servant (Lordship=complete possession on one hand and complete submission on the other). He also understood that the purchased slave (considered a part of the family) stood in a much nearer relationship to his lord and had the right of the master’s protection and help and direction (Genesis 15:1). Thus the name “Adonai” pointed to God as a faithful, protective *Master* that leads and cares for His servants while expecting their obedience (Exodus 4:10-17-the Lord gets mad when Moses won’t serve Him). This position as “Master” and “Owner” in creation is clearly seen in the Psalms (97:5; 114:7; 135:5;141:8).

What is indicated when a person calls God “Adonai”?

In the Old Testament, those who know God as “Adonai” acknowledge themselves as His servants (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob-Exodus 32:13; Moses – Joshua 1:1; David 119:125). We see the name “Adonai” in the Isaiah and Jeremiah call narratives (Isaiah 6:1,8; Jeremiah 1:6) where the Lord commissions them for service and offers the necessary aid to fulfill it. The name is used over 200 times in Ezekiel pertaining to Israel and other nations (pointing to the God’s lordship over all the peoples of the earth - Ezekiel 13:9; 23:49; 24:24; 28:24; 29:16). This meaning is carried over into the New Testament. It is used hundreds of times of the Lord Jesus Himself (John 13: 13). It suggests that we are no longer our own, we belong to the Lord’s service (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Romans 12:1). This often seen and heard with Paul (Acts 9:6; 1 Timothy 1:12) and many other writers that call themselves “bondservants” of Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:1).

What are the expectations of our service to “Adonai”?

God is represented as the One who bestows gifts upon and equips His servants for their service (Ephesians 4:11-12; Romans 12:6-8). He protects, provides for and sustains His servants (2 Timothy 4:17-18; 2 Corinthians 12:9). As “Adonai,” He rewards the faithfulness of His servants and punishes their lack of it (Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 19:11-27)). There is a day of reckoning for all servants (Psalm 62:12; Luke 12:48). All souls will have to give an account for their service to the Lord (Revelation 20:12). But the Lord Jesus Christ will be the deliverance and surety in that day for all who have believed on and served Him (John 3:16). To act as our example, the Lord Jesus came in the flesh to model the service that Adonai expects of us (Romans 15:3; Matthew 20:28; Luke 22:27; Hebrew 2:10). As we follow Christ’s example, we also can learn how to give the Lord the service that He requires of each of us (John 13:15) – knowing that though we meet the needs of others, our ultimate service is to the Lord (Colossians 3:23). In other words, God expects one thing out of us, obedience.

“The Names of God” Bible Study “El-Shaddai”

What does the name “El-Shaddai” mean?

The name “El-Shaddai” is translated in the Hebrew as “God Almighty.” It appears together seven times in the Old Testament. The word for God is “El”. This word stands for might, power, and omnipotence, the name connected especially with Creation. The word “El” is translated “God” over two hundred times in the Bible with that general significance (Psalm 68:35, 77:14; Deuteronomy 3:24). The word “Shaddai” which is translated “Almighty” occurs forty-eight times in the Old Testament. The other word like it, “shad” is considered by many to be the root word for “Shaddai” and occurs twenty-four times translated as “breast.” As connected with the word “breast”, the title Shaddai signifies one who nourishes, supplies, satisfies (Isaiah 66:10-11). Connected to the word, “El” it becomes the “One mighty to nourish, satisfy, and supply.” With God it comes to mean the One who “sheds forth” and “pours” out sustenance and blessing. In this sense, the name signifies God as the source of all blessing and fruitfulness.

How was El-Shaddai used in the Bible?

The name “El-Shaddai” reminds us that God is the one that takes our lives from where we are to the place of fruitfulness that He desires to see us experience. The name “El-Shaddai” is first used in the Bible in the story of Abram. At 75 years old with a barren wife, God tells Abram to leave his family and go to a place that God would show him and God would make him a great nation and bless him (Genesis 12:1-4). When time had passed and there was no child born, Abram was worried that no heir would be born and the Lord assured him that he would father a great nation (Genesis 15:1-6). At 86 years old and with no child, he had a child with Sarai’s handmaiden, Hagar, to try to fulfill God’s plan through human means (Genesis 16:1-4). When Abram was 99 years old, God appears to him and presents Himself as “God Almighty” and reaffirms the covenant that was made with Abram. It is by this new name, in this connection, that God now reveals Himself as the Mighty Promiser and Giver of gifts. Abraham and Sarah had to learn that what God promises only God can give, that the promise was not to be made sure by works of the flesh. At 100 years of age, Isaac is born (Genesis 21:1-15). This name El-Shaddai reminds us that God, not ourselves is the source of every good and perfect gift (James 1:17) and that some things only God can do (Genesis 18:41). This name is first used when God changes Abram’s name to Abraham (“Father of many nations”) in Genesis 17:6 in the reaffirming of the covenant. It is used when Isaac blessed Jacob (Genesis 28:13), when God blesses Jacob (Genesis 35:11), and when Jacob blesses Joseph (Genesis 48:3-4; 49:22-26). It is used by Balaam when he receives the vision from “the Almighty” that shows Israel as a bountiful and victorious people (Numbers 24:4,16). Finally, it is seen in the book of Job (where it appears 31 out of the 48 times in the Old Testament) for the end of Job was even more blessed than the beginning.

What does the name El-Shaddai speak to us?

This name El-Shaddai introduces God to us as all-bountiful in the fullness and fruitfulness He imparts to all who trust Him and wait patiently upon Him. To experience the fullness of God, one must realize one’s own insufficiency. To experience God’s fullness, one must empty self. The more we empty self, the more God can fill us. Thus the name is also associated with judging, chastening, and purging. We see this with Naomi (Ruth 1:20-21), Job (42:5-6), and Christians (John 15:2), the day of the wrath of the Almighty (Revelation 16:7, 14). In each case, the individuals experience the difficulty of the Almighty prior to receiving a greater blessing from the El-Shaddai. The name “Almighty God” (El-Shaddai) speaks of a God that never wearies of pouring His mercies and blessings upon His people. We soon discover that His strength is made perfect in our weakness; His sufficiency is most manifest in our insufficiency; His fullness in our emptiness, that being filled, from us may flow rivers of living water to a thirsty and needy humanity.

“The Names of God” Bible Study “Jehovah-Jireh”

What does the name “Jehovah-Jireh” mean?

Like “El-Shaddai,” this is one of a series of compound names for God in the Bible. The first three names pointed to the essential traits of God (eternal, powerful, master). These names point us to the character and attributes of God. They are often used in conjunction with the essential name of God as a way of denoting the specific trait that God possesses. With that in mind, the name Jehovah-Jireh points to the LORD as our “provider.” The word “Jireh” is simply a form of the verb “to see.” It is translated “saw, provide, appear and looked” (Genesis 22:4,8,13,14). How does the translation “to see” lead to the translation “provide”? When we talk about God seeing, we understand that God “foresees (Isaiah 46:10).” God clearly recognizes what we need before it “appears” to us (Matthew 6:8). Because of God’s *provision*, God can supply the *provision* (*a latin word which means “to see beforehand”*). However, our ability to see the provision that God desires to reveal, requires that we have to trust Him enough to obey Him—even when we can’t see it. The provision is not witnessed until we accept God’s mandate understanding that it is according to God’s *provision*. God never creates a calling or gives an assignment without making sure that every divine provision needed will be realized. Thus, the name “Jehovah-Jireh” is translated “God will provide.”

How was “Jehovah-Jireh” used in the Bible?

The name “Jehovah-Jireh” is used in one particular passage in the Bible. Though the word “Jireh” is found over 1300 times in the Old Testament, this compound word is only found in the story of Abraham being called by God to sacrifice his son, Isaac (Genesis 22:1-19). In the narrative, God tests Abraham by asking him to take his son and sacrifice him on a mountain in Moriah. Abraham immediately goes to the mountain and prepares to sacrifice his son. When he is getting ready to kill his son, an angel tells him not to slay his son. He is told that it is clear that he fears God because He would not spare his son at God’s command. Abraham then looks and sees a ram caught in the thicket next to him. He takes the ram and slays him as a burnt offering instead of his son. He then names the place, “Jehovah-Jireh” or “God will provide.”

As stated earlier, the word “Jireh” appears quite often in the Old Testament (Genesis 1:4; Psalm 37:34). It is usually used to describe someone physically seeing something. Similarly, the word can point to the fact that something appears (and is therefore seen). Thus, we can conclude that the word “Jireh” means that something appears, is shown and ultimately is seen.

What does name “Jehovah-Jireh” speak to us?

This name “Jehovah-Jireh” reveals to us that the God that we serve is a God that foresees and supplies things that only He can make appear. At the end of the narrative, it is stated that the people of Israel say, “In the mount of the LORD it will be seen” (Genesis 22:14). In other words, *some things only the LORD can reveal to those that are in a space of obedience before the LORD.* The narrative teaches us several things that must happen before we will see the provision the Lord has for us to witness: 1) We must be in response to the authentic voice of the LORD (vv. 1-2); 2) There must be an absolute obedience to do *everything* that the LORD commands (vv.3-6); 3) There must be a confidence that the LORD’s plan is perfectly aligned with His will (vv. 7-8); 4) There must be a great commitment to the Blessor than the blessing (vv.9-12); 5) When God sees your willingness to make the sacrifice so that His will is done, then the provision is revealed to you. **“Jehovah-Jireh” reminds us that our God is a God that makes things “appear” in such a way that we “see” what we need has been “provided.”** ****Note**** This mountain in Moriah is the same mountain that becomes to home of Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 3:1) and ultimately the place where Jesus is crucified as the “needed” sacrifice for humanity (John 8:36).

“The Names of God” Bible Study “Jehovah-Rapha”

What does the name “Jehovah-Rapha” mean?

Like “El-Shaddai,” this is one of a series of compound names for God in the Bible. With that in mind, the name Jehovah-Rapha points to the LORD as our “healer.” The word “Rapha” is simply translated “to heal” or “to make healthful.” Other words that are translated from the word “rapha” are “physician, cured, repaired, and heal.” When combined with the name of God, we see the Lord identify Himself as the One that is able to give, restore and sustain our health. As a humanity that is at all times in the midst of sickness (whether physical, emotional, mental or spiritual), we are constantly in need of a God that has the supernatural ability to remedy our illnesses by making us healthy. It suggests that though we may manage our health, ultimately it is the LORD that gives us our health (Job 5:18; Psalm 147:3; Jeremiah 33:6)

How was “Jehovah-Rapha” used in the Bible?

The name “Jehovah-Rapha” (or LORD that heals you) is used in one particular passage in the Bible. Though the word “Rapha” is found over 60 times throughout the Old Testament, the only time when it is used by God in direct association with His character is in the story of the waters of Marah (Exodus 15:22-26). In this story, Moses and the children of Israel have just crossed the Red Sea and are now in the wilderness of Shur. While in the wilderness, they get thirsty and for three days are unable to locate any water (v. 22). They eventually come to a place called Marah (translated “bitter”). They find water, but, unfortunately, the water there is extremely *bitter* and cannot be used for drinking (v.23). This word “marah” is also used of water in Numbers 5:17-31 concerning the law of jealousies. The water in this passage is holy water mixed with dust from the floor of the tabernacle that causes it to become bitter and causes a curse to be realized in the recipients body (Numbers 5:27). Because the water is bitter or polluted, it is directly associated with causing sickness when consumed. The water represents the sinful heart. When the heart is sinful, it only produces cursed living. When the heart is righteous, it only produces healthy living. The children of Israel began to complain about the water and Moses sought the LORD. The LORD showed him a tree and when he put the tree in the waters, the water became sweet. At that moment, Moses presented a law (spiritual law) and tested it there (vv.24-25). The law simply implied that obedience to the LORD leads to health and disobedience leads to curses (restated in Deuteronomy 28). In the same manner that obedience of Moses with the tree led to the waters being made healthy, if the Hebrews remained obedient, they would find out that God could heal and sustain the health of their bodies the same way that He healed the waters. He reminds them that none of the curses that came upon the Egyptians (due to their disobedience) would come upon them. Then, He identifies Himself as “the God that heals” (v.26).

What does name “Jehovah-Rapha” speak to us?

This name “Jehovah-Rapha” reminds us of God’s “health assurance” plan. It reveals to us that the God that we serve is committed to providing a sustained health in the lives of those that obey Him. We are encouraged to know that as long as we follow the Lord with obedience, there are some illnesses (resulting from sin) that will not befall our lives. Also, we see that if there are moments of sickness that we face, our repentance and recommitment to God will allow us to see the sickness reversed and the healing restored (2 Chronicles 7:14). . **Your healing is based upon how you handle the tree (foreshadowing of the cross of Christ – Isaiah 53:5; 1 Peter 2:24) that the LORD shows you** After the experience at Marah, the Lord led them to Elim (v.27) where there were 12 wells of healthy water. After learned obedience at Marah they were guided to Elim. The scriptural passage shows us that our right-standing before/obedience to God will not only allow us to experience healing, but will guide us to a place of abundant living that exists on the other side of the healing (Numbers 12:13; Psalms 103:2-3; Jeremiah 30:17,22; Luke 4:18; James 5:13-15).

“The Names of God” Bible Study “Jehovah-Nissi”

What does the name “Jehovah-Nissi” mean?

Like “El-Shaddai,” this is one of a series of compound names for God in the Bible. With that in mind, the name Jehovah-Nissi points to the LORD as our “banner.” The word “Nissi” is defined as “something that is lifted up, a token that is to be seen afar off.” It is translated “pole, ensign, standard.” It is used to describe several different things: 1) a banner – that would be set on a high mountain to show a rallying point or signal (Isaiah 11:12); 2) a ship’s flag (Ezekiel 27:7); 3) a high column or pole (Numbers 21:8-9); and 4) a sign (metaphorically) by which anyone is warned (Numbers 26:10). Therefore the term “banner” in most cases was not necessarily a flag. Often it was a bare pole with a bright shining ornament that glittered in the sun. As an ensign or standard, it was a signal to God’s people to rally to Him. It stood for His cause, His battle. It was a sign of Divinely orchestrated deliverance and salvation.

How was “Jehovah-Nissi” used in the Bible?

The name “Jehovah-Nissi” (or LORD that our banner) is used in one particular passage in the Bible. Though the word “nissi” is found over 20 times throughout the Old Testament, the only time when it is used in direct association with God’s character is in the story of the battle at Rephidim (Exodus 17:8-16). In this story, Moses and the children of Israel –after leaving Elim, came to the wilderness of Sin (Exodus 16). There they were fed manna and quail by the LORD after complaining of having no food. Then they came to Rephidim and complained because there was no water (Exodus 17:1-3). At Horeb, the LORD commanded Moses to strike a rock with his rod and water came gushing out (Exodus 17:6). While there, Amalek came out to fight against Israel. Amalek was the grandson of Esau (Genesis 36:12) and the Amalekites were his descendants. Moses informs Joshua to choose men for the battle and go fight in the valley. Meanwhile, Moses would go and stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in his hand. As Moses held up his hands (with the rod in it), Israel prevailed. When his hands dropped, Amalek prevailed. As the battle continued, Moses’ got tired and his hands became heavy, so Aaron and Hur placed a rock under Moses (as a seat) and held up his hands until Joshua defeated Amalek. The LORD instructed Moses to record the events and tell Joshua that he would wipe out the name of Amalek from under heaven. Then Moses built an altar and called it, “Jehovahnissi” because the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation (Exodus 17:8-16).

What does to name “Jehovah-Nissi” speak to us?

This name “Jehovah-Nissi” reminds us that the LORD is the banner of victory even today. Each of us at some point will have to engage Amalek (or a spiritual enemy). The narrative shows Moses on the mountain with the rod (banner) and Joshua in the valley fighting. It indicates to us that in order to experience victory with God, we must learn how to bring the mountain and the valley together. The mountain symbolized the spiritual warfare and the valley symbolized the physical effort that must be made to secure victory. It is not enough to sit back and let God do all of the work. Nor is it enough to think that we can win the battle in our own ability and strength. Tony Evans suggests, *“As believers in Christ and followers of God, we have a responsibility to do all we can do in the challenges and trials we face. Yet unless God also supports and engages in the victory, our efforts won’t be enough.”* As our victory banner, we are reminded that some battles cannot be overcome without God’s assistance. This word for “banner” is also used in Numbers 21:7-9 for the pole that Moses lifted among the children of Israel to heal those that had been bitten by the serpents because of their sin. If they looked upon the pole they would be healed. Jesus references the same pole in John 3:14-15. It is a reminder that, in Jesus, the LORD is our “banner” or “pole of salvation” allowing us to experience eternal victory from sin instead of facing death at the hands of our enemy. The name Jehovah-Nissi reminds us to “look to the Banner” and know that we will win because God is working to secure victory for us.

“The Names of God” Bible Study “Jehovah-M’Kaddesh”

What does the name “Jehovah-M’Kaddesh” mean?

Like “El-Shaddai,” this is one of a series of compound names for God in the Bible. With that in mind, the name Jehovah-M’Kaddesh points to the LORD as “the One who Sanctifies.” The full name is “Jehovah Mekoddishkem.” The word “Kaddesh” means to “set apart or separate.” The Hebrew word for “sanctify” is also translated into the other words “dedicate, consecrate, sanctuary, hallow and holy.” The name *Jehovah M’Kaddesh* is only seen used twice in the Old Testament (Leviticus 20:8; Exodus 31:13). The concept of being “set apart” in Israel was used to describe various facets of Israelite life—each of which being directly connected to some level of worship. It denoted that something or someone had a special connection to God that made it unique and set apart. Such things as the Sabbath (Exodus 20:8,11), the feasts and celebrations (Leviticus 23), the hill of Zion, the city of Jerusalem, the altar, the tabernacle, and the Temple (also called the “sanctuary”). Most of all the people were designed to be sanctified—or set apart—for Jehovah (Deuteronomy 7:6). It is out of this understanding and desire for God’s people to be sanctified that we meet God as *Jehova M’Kaddesh*.

How was “Jehovah-M’Kaddesh” used in the Bible?

Though the word “Kaddesh” is found over 170 times in the Old Testament. As stated earlier there are only two places where we see the compound name of God, *Jehovah M’Kaddesh*, appear in the bible. The passage that we will consider is the passage found in Leviticus. The name Leviticus means “the book of life.” It was written to give the specific guidelines for how the people that were redeemed were supposed to worship God. In this passage (Leviticus 20:7-8), God makes it very clear that His desire is that the people be holy just as He is holy (or set apart). In Leviticus, the LORD introduces Himself as holy and therefore calls His people to be holy (19:2). Just as God is set apart and unique from all other gods (Deut. 4:35; Isaiah 44:6; 1 Samuel 2:2), He desires that those that serve Him reflect that same separateness and uniqueness from all other nations. Therefore, He calls them to be consecrated because they serve Him (the set apart God) and to follow His statutes that will guide them into also being “set apart.” The core concept is that God ultimately sanctifies us through position and process. Though He calls us to be sanctified and spiritually positions us to be set apart in redemption, He leaves it up to us to commit to the process of developing His nature (Lev. 19:2). God’s plan is simple: **Redemption, Calling, Response, Cleaning**. The process of God sanctifying us happens on the other side of redemption. This command is given after the Hebrews have been delivered from Egypt (post bondage). Sanctification is irrelevant where there has been no salvation. Then, God calls them to “live” sanctified (because He has set them apart through miraculous salvation). After this, they must make a decision to submit to the call of sanctification through consecration (setting themselves apart for worship). Finally, God guides them through the process of sanctification and, over time, God’s people become more like God through their devoted fellowship with God.

What does to name “Jehovah-M’Kaddesh” speak to us?

This name “Jehovah M’Kaddesh” reminds us that as we serve the LORD, we are to lead sanctified lives. What Jehovah was to His people in the OT, Jesus is to the church in the NT. He becomes our Jehovah M’Kaddesh. We are called to reflect the holiness of our holy God (1 Peter 1:15-16). Having been redeemed from sin and spiritually set apart through the blood of Jesus (Hebrews 10:10), we are now called to live in holiness, or separateness (Ephesians 1:3-4). However, we must first consecrate ourselves by presenting our lives to God as sacrifices for sanctification (Romans 12:1-2). Once we choose to consecrate our lives to develop His nature (2 Peter 1:4), we will experience the Christ-reflecting, Spirit-led inward-to-outward transformation of sanctification (1 Thessalonians 5:23). In the same manner that Jehovah sanctified Israel, we will then meet and know God as *the God who sanctifies*.