

The Holy name of God

Ask a dozen different people what God's name is, and you will probably get a dozen different answers. Some people believe God's true name is so holy that it must never be uttered by a human and must never be written in full. Other people believe that God's name must be pronounced perfectly and often. Many of the people that believe His name must be perfectly pronounced will vastly disagree on what the actual pronunciation should be. The Hebrew of the Old Testament spells God's name with four letters known as the tetragrammaton shown below.

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Translated to English, the tetragrammaton or four letter word of God's name is "YHWH". There were no vowels in the original Hebrew, and since many people of the Jewish faith would never speak this name, the true pronunciation has certainly been lost. Many will insert the vowels of their choosing and come up with different pronunciations such as Yahweh, or Yahu. One will not find these names written in the King James Version (KJV) or virtually any other Bible. The tetragrammaton is generally translated as LORD (all capital letters) and appears nearly 7000 times in the KJV. There are other names used in reference to God such as El, Elohim, Hashem, Shaddai, Adonai, Elyon, Avinu, The Eternal One, Yahweh, Ehyeh, Eloah, Kyrios, Pantokrator, Yah, and Yahu.

One will not find those in the English translation of most Bibles either. We will find names such as I am, Father, Jehovah, The Almighty, The Ancient of

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What is God's name?

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What is God's name, and how important is it that we get it right? This pamphlet takes a look at those questions and uses scripture to arrive at a Biblical conclusion.

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days, God of Israel, Most High, God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, God Almighty, God of the Fathers, God of Heaven, God of the earth, God of the Hebrews, The Holy One of Israel, Lord God, Lord of Hosts, Lord of Sabaoth, Jesus, and Hosanna in our Bibles.

That is a lot of names. Which one is the right one? The short and long answers to that question are that they are all correct.

2Ti 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

This verse tells us what we read in the Bible is given by inspiration of God. The Bible that we have is inspired by God. (See the pamphlet titled "Which Bible should I read?") The scripture tells us God will preserve His word for us.

Psa 12:6 The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Psa 12:7 Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.

God has done just that. The Bible is the best-selling book of all time. There is no other book as widely distributed as the Bible. God has indeed preserved His word. We have seen the Bible gives many names for our God, yet there is no doubt that they all refer to the same entity.

There is a moment in the Bible when a man asks God what His name is. That moment is in Exodus 3:13.

Exo 3:13 And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me

unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?

This was God's reply:

Exo 3:14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

To understand this verse, we need to think about the reason for any name. A name is given to a person to distinguish that person from all other people. There is only one God. Therefore, does He need a name? No. He is God. He is the only God. There are no others, so there is no need for God to have a name. I AM is certainly sufficient to identify the one and only God. He exists. He is. There are no others.

There are pagan deities which some people call gods. God, the one true God, does not need a name to distinguish Himself from these pagan deities. God, the one true God, distinguishes Himself from these false gods by His ability to act. A figure of stone or wood cannot part the Red Sea, or send plagues upon Egypt, or pile up the waters of a flooding Jordan River, or crumble the walls of Jericho. A mythical figure cannot give a man a dream that will save millions from a 7 year drought or have a man build a boat that will save a handful from a worldwide flood. A statue of gold cannot wipe man from off the face of the earth and replenish it again. An idol cannot foretell the actions of a man and give that man the name of Cyrus more than a hundred years before he is born. These are actions that only God can perform. This is how we know the God that we serve. We know Him by His actions not by a name.

We show our reverence to Him by our actions, by our obedience to His word. He does not tell us to call Him by a certain name. He tells us to obey Him, to obey His commandments. We show our

adoration for Him by praying to Him. There is not one instance in the Bible where God is angry with anyone for calling Him by the wrong name. The only time God is angry with people in the Bible is when they fail to follow His commandments. Also, there is not one instance in the Bible when God rewards anyone for calling Him by a certain name. The only time God rewards people is when they are obedient to Him and follow His commandments. The Bible sets forth a straightforward message that Solomon summed up in the following verse.

Ecc 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

The Bible shows us who God is in a way that a name never could. The Bible shows us the character of God. It is the Character of God that we must reflect, not a name. Be merciful, generous, and judge righteously. Be humble, modest, peaceful, meek, and turn the other cheek.

There are some groups today that insist on calling God by a particular name. While reading the Bible, they will replace the name given in the Bible with the name that they have chosen for God. Some claim that only through deep linguistic study may we obtain the true name of God. I suggest that only through deep scriptural study may we come to know the true God and recognize the lack of necessity for a single name. When we come into harmony with the Biblical message, we will understand that God does not need to be identified by a name. God did not preserve the pronunciation of His name. He preserved a record of His actions. If we spend our time searching the scriptures and doing linguistic studies to find the "true name of God," we will have missed the whole message from God. What a shame that would be. Simply put, our God is too big, too powerful, and too magnificent for a single name.