

GOD'S TITLES

1. Definition.

- a. God's titles are "God's descriptions of himself that reveal aspects of his character. They are various designations by which he is to be addressed by human beings."

2. El Titles.

- a. Elohim (אֱלֹהִים): "God."

(1) The title *Elohim* emphasises God's omnipotence.

- (a) **Ge 1:1** 1 In the beginning God (אֱלֹהִים) created the heavens and the earth.
- (b) **Dt 10:17** 17 Yahweh your God (אֱלֹהִים) is God (אֱלֹהִים) of gods (אֱלֹהִים) and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God (אֱלֹהִים)....

(2) *Elohim* is a common noun describing the category "god," not a personal name.

- (a) **Ge 35:2** 2 Put away the foreign gods (אֱלֹהִים) that are among you....
- (b) **Ex 18:11** 11 Now I know that Yahweh is greater than all gods (אֱלֹהִים)....

(3) *Elohim* is plural in form but often used with singular adjectives, pronouns, and verbs.

- (a) **Ge 1:1** 1 In the beginning God (אֱלֹהִים) created (sing.) the heavens and the earth.
- (b) **Dt 6:4** 4 Hear, O Israel: Yahweh our God (אֱלֹהִים), Yahweh is one.
- (c) The singular form of *Elohim* is *El* or *Eloah*.

1) "The exact relationship between this name [Eloah] for God in Scripture and 'el or 'elōhîm is disputed and far from settled. It occurs in some of the oldest of poetry (Deut 32:15, 17) and very frequently (forty-one times) in the debates between Job (an ancient believer) and his friends. It appears therefore to be an ancient term for God which was later dropped...."¹

2) **Dt 32:15** 15 Then [Jeshurun] forsook God (אֱלֹהִים) who made him and scoffed at the Rock of his salvation.

(4) The plural form *Elohim* hints at the Trinity, which is clearly revealed in the NT.

- (a) **Ge 1:26** 26 Then God (אֱלֹהִים) said, Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness.
- (b) **Mt 28:19** 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit....
- (c) "More probable is the view that [*Elohim*] comes from [*Eloah*] as a unique development of the Hebrew Scriptures and represents chiefly the plurality of persons in the Trinity of the godhead."²

(5) *Elohim* is often used together with God's personal name, Yahweh.

- (a) **Ge 2:4** 4 These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that Yahweh Elohim (יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים) made the earth and the heavens.
- (b) **Dt 6:4** 4 Hear, O Israel: Yahweh our God (אֱלֹהִים), Yahweh is one.

¹ Jack B. Scott, "אֱלֹהִים 93" ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 43.

² Jack B. Scott, "אֱלֹהִים 93" ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 41.

- (c) **1 Ki 18:39** 39 When all the people [of Israel] saw it, they fell on their faces and said, Yahweh, he is God (אֱלֹהִים). Yahweh, he is God (אֱלֹהִים).
- b. El Elyon (אֵל עֵלְיוֹן).
- (1) *El Elyon* means “the Most High God” and emphasises God’s sovereignty.
 - (2) *El Elyon* commonly is how OT Gentile leaders address God.
 - (a) **Ge 14:18-23** 18 Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. Now he was a priest of God Most High (אֵל עֵלְיוֹן). 19 He blessed [Abram] and said, Blessed be Abram of God Most High (אֵל עֵלְיוֹן), the Creator (קַנָּה) of heaven and earth. 20 And blessed be God Most High (אֵל עֵלְיוֹן) who has delivered your enemies into your hand. 21 And the king of Sodom said to Abram, Give me the persons, but take the goods for yourself. 22 But Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lifted my hand to Yahweh, God Most High (אֵל עֵלְיוֹן), the Creator of heaven and earth, 23 that I would not take a thread or a sandal strap or anything that is yours....
 - 1) Four names of God are newly introduced in Ge 14-17, one per chapter (*El Elyon, Adon, El Roi, El Shaddai*).
 - (b) **Da 4:34** 34 At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High (אֵל עֵלְיוֹן) and praised and honored him who lives forever, for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation.
 - (3) Examples.
 - (a) **Ps 9:2** 2 I will be glad and exult in you. I will sing praise to your name, Most High (אֵל עֵלְיוֹן).
 - (b) **Ps 57:2** 2 I cry out to God Most High (אֵל עֵלְיוֹן), to God who fulfils his purpose for me.
 - (c) **Ps 78:35** 35 They [Israel] remembered that God was their rock, the Most High God (אֵל עֵלְיוֹן) their Redeemer (גֹּאֲלֵנוּ).
 - (d) **Ps 83:18** 18 ...That they may know that you alone, whose name is Yahweh (יְהוָה), are the Most High (אֵל עֵלְיוֹן) over all the earth.
 - (e) **Is 14:14** 14 I [Satan] will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will make myself like the Most High (אֵל עֵלְיוֹן).
 - (f) **Da 7:18** 18 The saints of the Most High (אֵל עֵלְיוֹן) shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, forever and ever.
 - (g) **Da 7:25** 25 He [the Antichrist] shall speak words against the Most High (אֵל עֵלְיוֹן), shall wear out the saints of the Most High (אֵל עֵלְיוֹן), and shall think to change the times and the law. And they shall be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.
 - (h) **Da 7:27** 27 The kingdom, the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High (אֵל עֵלְיוֹן). His kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.
- c. El Roi (אֵל רֹאֵי).
- (1) *El Roi* means “the God who sees me” and emphasises God’s omnipresence.
 - (2) **Ge 16:13-14** 13 So [Hagar] called the name of Yahweh who spoke to her, You are a God who sees me (אֵל רֹאֵי), for she said, Truly here I have seen (רָאִיתִי) him who

sees (ראה) me. 14 Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi (Well of the living one who sees (ראה) me). It lies between Kadesh and Bered.

d. El Shaddai (אל שדי).

- (1) *El Shaddai* means “the Almighty standing on a mountain” and emphasises God’s sufficiency.
 - (a) **Ge 17:1-2** 1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, Yahweh appeared to Abram and said to him, I am God Almighty (אל שדי). Walk before me and be blameless, 2 that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly.
- (2) *El Shaddai* was God’s title before he revealed his name to Moses.
 - (a) **Ex 6:2-3** 2 God spoke to Moses and said to him, I am Yahweh. 3 I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty (אל שדי), but by my name Yahweh I did not make myself known to them
- (3) Examples.
 - (a) **Ge 28:3** 3 God Almighty (אל שדי) bless you [Jacob] and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may become a company of peoples.
 - (b) **Ge 35:11** 11 God said to [Jacob], I am God Almighty (אל שדי). Be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come from your own body.
 - (c) **Ge 43:14** 14 May God Almighty (אל שדי) grant you mercy before the man, and may he send back your other brother and Benjamin.
 - (d) **Ge 48:3** 3 Jacob said to Joseph, God Almighty (אל שדי) appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, blessed me....
 - (e) **Ps 91:1** 1 He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High (עליון) will abide in the shadow of the Almighty (שדי).
 - (f) **Eze 10:5** 5 The sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard as far as the outer court, like the voice of God Almighty (אל שדי) when he speaks.
- (4) The title *El Shaddai* is also associated with God’s discipline and judgment.
 - (a) **Ru 1:20** 20 Do not call me Naomi. Call me Mara, for the Almighty (שדי) has dealt very bitterly with me.
 - (b) **Job 5:17** 17 Behold, blessed is the one whom God reproves. Therefore despise not the discipline of the Almighty (שדי).
 - (c) **Job 40:2** 2 Shall a faultfinder contend with the Almighty (שדי)? He who argues with God, let him answer it.
 - (d) **Is 13:6** 6 Wail, for the day of Yahweh is near. As destruction from the Almighty (שדי) it will come!
 - (e) **Eze 1:24** 24 I heard the sound of their wings like the sound of many waters, like the sound of the Almighty (שדי), a sound of tumult like the sound of an army.
 - (f) **Joe 1:15** 15 Alas for the day! For the day of Yahweh is near, and as destruction from the Almighty (שדי) it comes.

e. El Olam (אל עולם).

- (1) The title *El Olam* means “God Eternal” and emphasises God’s eternity.
 - (a) **Ge 21:33** 33 Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba and called there on the name of Yahweh the Everlasting God (אל עולם יהוה אלהינו).

- (b) **Is 40:28** 28 Have you not known? Have you not heard? Yahweh is the everlasting God (אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם), the Creator of the ends of the earth.

3. Other Titles.

a. Adon (אֲדֹנָי).

(1) Meaning:

(2) Emphasis: the master-servant relationship between God and man.

(3) Key verses.

- (a) **Ge 15:2** 2 Abram said, Lord Yahweh (יְהוָה אֲדֹנָי), what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?
- (b) **Ge 15:8** 8 [Abram] said, Lord Yahweh (יְהוָה אֲדֹנָי), how am I to know that I shall possess it?
- (c) **Ge 18:3** 3 My Lord (אֲדֹנָי), if I have found favor in your sight, do not pass by your servant.
- (d) **Ex 4:10** 10 But Moses said to the Lord, Please, my Lord (אֲדֹנָי), I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue.
- (e) **Jos 5:13-15** 13 When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing before him with his drawn sword in his hand. And Joshua went to him and said to him, Are you for us, or for our adversaries? 14 And he said, No, but I am the commander of the army of Yahweh. Now I have come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped and said to him, What does my lord (אֲדֹנָי) say to his servant? 15 And the commander of Yahweh's army said to Joshua, Take off your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy. And Joshua did so.
- (f) **2 Sa 7:18-21** 18 Then King David went in and sat before Yahweh and said, Who am I, my Lord Yahweh (יְהוָה אֲדֹנָי), and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far? 19 And yet this was a small thing in your eyes, my Lord Yahweh (יְהוָה אֲדֹנָי). You have spoken also of your servant's house for a great while to come, and this is instruction for mankind, my Lord Yahweh (יְהוָה אֲדֹנָי)! 20 And what more can David say to you? For you know your servant, my Lord Yahweh (יְהוָה אֲדֹנָי)! 21 Because of your promise, and according to your own heart, you have brought about all this greatness, to make your servant know it.
- (g) **Ps 16:2** 2 I say to Yahweh, You are my Lord (אֲדֹנָי). I have no good apart from you.
- (h) **Ps 141:8** 8 But my eyes are toward you, God, my Lord (אֲדֹנָי). In you I seek refuge. Leave me not defenceless.
- (i) **Is 6:1** 1 In the year that King Uzziah died I [Isaiah] saw my Lord (אֲדֹנָי) sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple.
- (j) **Mal 1:6** 6 A son honours his father, and a servant (עַבְדֵּךְ) his master (אֲדֹנָי). If then I am a father, where is my honour? And if I am a master (אֲדֹנָי), where is my fear? says Yahweh of hosts to you, O priests, who despise my name.

- (k) **Mt 22:42-45** 42 ... What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he? They said to him, The son of David. 43 [Jesus] said to them, How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls him Lord (κύριος), saying, 44 Yahweh said to my Lord (τῷ κυρίῳ μου), Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet? 45 If then David calls him Lord (κύριος), how is he his son?
- 1) See *Jesus as Lord*.
- (l) **Lk 6:46** 46 Why do you call me [Jesus], Lord, Lord (κύριε κύριε), and not do what I tell you?
- (m) **Jn 13:13-16** 13 You call me Teacher and Lord (ὁ κύριος), and you are right, for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. 16 Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant (δοῦλος) is not greater than his lord (κύριος), nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.
- (n) **Ro 10:9** 9 ... If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord (κύριον Ἰησοῦν) and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.
- 1) A Jew who confessed Jesus as κυριος would be understood to ascribe divinity to him.
 - 2) The essence of the Christian faith is to acknowledge Jesus as Yahweh of the OT.
- b. Holy One of Israel (קָדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל).
- (1) Emphasis: That the God of Israel, Yahweh, is the true, unique, incomparable God, and that Israel truly is God's chosen nation.
 - (2) Key verses.
 - (a) **Ps 71:22** 22 I will also praise you with the harp for your faithfulness, O my God. I will sing praises to you with the lyre, Holy One of Israel (קָדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל).
 - (b) **Is 1:4** 4 Woe, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, children who deal corruptly! They have forsaken Yahweh, they have despised the Holy One of Israel (קָדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל), they are utterly estranged.
 - 1) Isaiah uses this title for God 25 times.
 - (c) **Is 54:5** 5 For your Maker is your husband, Yahweh of hosts is his name. And the Holy One of Israel (קָדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל) is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called.
 - (d) **Jer 51:5** 5 For Israel and Judah have not been forsaken by their God, Yahweh of hosts, but the land of the Chaldeans is full of guilt against the Holy One of Israel (קָדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל).
- c. Master (δέσποτα).
- (1) Emphasis: God owns and rules over all of creation. He is authoritative and supreme.
 - (2) Key verses.
 - (a) **Lk 2:29** 29 Master (δέσποτα), now you are letting your servant (Simeon) depart in peace, according to your word.
 - (b) **Ac 4:24** 24 And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, Master (δέσποτα), who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them....

- (c) **2 Pe 2:1** 1 But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master (δεσπότης) who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.
- (d) **Jud 4** 4 For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord (δεσπότην 'καὶ κύριον ἡμῶν), Jesus Messiah.
- (e) **Re 6:10** 10 They cried out with a loud voice, O Master, holy and true (ὁ δεσπότης ὁ ἅγιος καὶ ἀληθινός), how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?