

## YAHWEH: THE COVENANT NAME OF GOD

יהוה

THE TETRAGRAMMATON

**Yahweh (יהוה)** is the divine covenant name of God, appearing nearly 7,000 times in the Old Testament. Rather than a mere identification label, it is a direct revelation of His eternal self-existence, holiness, and absolute faithfulness to His people across the Scripture.

### I. THE DIVINE NAME OF GOD

Written with four Hebrew consonants (יהוה / YHWH), it is known as the **Tetragrammaton** (four letters). Because ancient Hebrew omitted vowels, the precise historical pronunciation is preserved as **Yahweh**. In scripture, names signify foundational reality: **character, identity, authority, and purpose**. Yahweh discloses His personal name because He intentionally seeks to be known by His people.

#### NOTES

### II. FIRST SCRIPTURAL APPEARANCE

Genesis 1 uses **Elohim** (God), emphasizing supreme power and creative majesty. The covenant name Yahweh debuts in **Genesis 2:4**: “...in the day that the **LORD** God made the earth and the heavens.” This transition signals God's desire to enter into relationship with humanity.

### III. REVELATION TO MOSES

At the burning bush (Exodus 3:13), Moses asks for God's name. God declares: “**I AM THAT I AM**” אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה / *Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh*), meaning **I Am, I Will Be, or I Exist**. God then explicitly anchors this phrase to His memorial covenant name: **Yahweh** (Exodus 3:15).

#### NOTES

### IV. CORE THEOLOGICAL MEANINGS

- **Self-Existence:** Everything else relies on something to exist. Yahweh depends on nothing; He is the source of all reality.
- **Eternality:** He never came into being and will never cease (Psalm 90:2).
- **Immutability:** His core character and standard promises are entirely unchanging (Malachi 3:6).

### V. THE COVENANT NAME

Yahweh is fundamentally relational. Disclosed during the historical deliverance from Egypt, it is permanently linked to **redemption, deliverance, and promise-keeping**. It guarantees the absolute covenant formula: “*I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God*” (Exodus 6:7).

## VI. YAHWEH AND ISRAEL

Surrounding nations served localized, morally flawed, and dependent idols (Baal, Molech). Yahweh revealed Himself as uniquely distinct: the living, omnipresent Creator sovereign over all nations (Isaiah 45:5), establishing Israel as a holy kingdom under His kingship.

### NOTES

## VII. HOLINESS OF THE NAME

Because the name carries His personal presence, it is holy. The Third Commandment (Exodus 20:7) forbids taking the name “*in vain*.” This broad warning prohibits false representation, breaking oaths sworn in His name, and religious hypocrisy.

## VIII. THE TRANSLATION TRADITION ("LORD")

Out of deep reverence, historic Jewish tradition substituted the spoken name YHWH with **Adonai** (“Lord”) or **HaShem** (“The Name”). Modern English Bibles preserve this convention by printing YHWH as **LORD** in all capital letters.

## IX. COVENANT DISTINCTIONS AND TITLES

Hebrew Identifier	Scriptural Translation	Key Scripture
<b>Yahweh-Jireh</b>	“The LORD Will Provide”	Genesis 22:14
<b>Yahweh-Rapha</b>	“The LORD Who Heals”	Exodus 15:26
<b>Yahweh-Nissi</b>	“The LORD Is My Banner”	Exodus 17:15
<b>Yahweh-Shalom</b>	“The LORD Is Peace”	Judges 6:24
<b>Yahweh-Rohi</b>	“The LORD Is My Shepherd”	Psalms 23:1
<b>Yahweh-Tsidkenu</b>	“The LORD Our Righteousness”	Jeremiah 23:6

**Names or Descriptions?** YHWH is the singular personal name. These compound expressions are relational descriptions. Much like a single man can be a father, husband, and judge, these titles reveal dynamic facets of the one true God's character.

### NOTES

## XI. REVEALED IN JESUS CHRIST

The New Testament systematically identifies Jesus with Yahweh:

- **The "I AM":** Jesus openly claims absolute divine pre-existence in John 8:58: *“Before Abraham was, I am.”*
- **Applied Text:** Old Testament texts tracking Yahweh are directly applied to Christ (e.g., Isaiah 40:3 with John the Baptist; Joel 2:32 in Romans 10:13).
- **Divine Identity:** Jesus shares the identical attributes, lordship, and worship due strictly to Yahweh (Philippians 2:10-11 / Isaiah 45:23).

### NOTES

## XII. MODERN SIGNIFICANCE & CONCLUSION

Understanding Yahweh anchors daily faith: His **self-existence** provides absolute security; His **immutability** ensures His promises are secure; and His **personal focus** invites intimate relationship. Fully revealed in Jesus Christ, Yahweh remains the living God who redeems and stays faithful forever. The ultimate goal of learning His name is to ignite heartfelt, reverent worship.