

## THE NAME OF THE ONE AND ONLY TRUE GOD

God has a name. Few know it and fewer still use it. Why is this? Many scriptures tell us to use the name of the Lord? A few of these verses include I Kings 8:33 *“confess Your name”*, 2 Chronicles 6:33 *“know Your name”*, Psalm 9:10 *“and those who know Your name will put their trust in You; for You, LORD, have not forsaken those who seek You”*, Psalm 20:7 *“trust in the name of the LORD our God.”* How about this one? Proverbs 30:4 *“Who has ascended into heaven, or descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name, and what is His Son’s name, If you know?”* Praise the Lord because God has revealed His name and His Son’s name to us. Following is a discussion of God’s revelation of His name, His Son’s name and what man has done with them.

In Exodus 3:13-15 during Moses’ encounter at the burning bush, Moses asks God a question, when *“they say to me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say?”* God’s answer is *“I AM WHO I AM”* (literally ‘to be’) ... *has sent me to you. Moreover God said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: ‘The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Issac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.’”* So is God’s name LORD? No. Most study Bibles will provide you with the literal translation of LORD. It is YHWH. It is known as the Sacred Tetragrammaton. Remember that old Hebrew did not utilize vowels. A utilization of the modern pronunciation points and vowels produces a rendering of the name of God as Yahweh (yă-(,)w). It may also be seen as Yahveh (yă-(,)v). So why is LORD used?

Recall that in the history of the Kingdom of Israel, a civil war following the reign of King Solomon resulted in the nation being divided. Ten of the tribes formed the Northern kingdom (referred to as Ephraim in the scriptures) and the other two tribes formed the Southern kingdom (referred to as Judah in the scriptures). Neither kingdom was obedient to follow God’s commandments and as a result (Deut. 28:15-68) Ephraim was conquered and dispersed by the Assyrians while Judah was captured by the Babylonians. After a remnant of Judah returned from the Babylonian exile, the religious leaders were zealous about keeping God’s laws. Therefore when Exodus 20:7a said *“You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain”*, and similarly Leviticus 24:16a *“And whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death”*, the religious leaders decided that it would be best for the people not to even say God’s name. Instead God’s name was referred to as ‘the Name’ (Hebrew HaShem) or simply as Lord. From this tradition, the scribes when copying the scriptures, would place Adonai, which is Hebrew for Lord, above YHWH. The reasoning was to remind a person reading the scriptures not to say the actual name of God but to say ‘Lord’ instead.

Now we fast forward to the medieval times when Christian translators reading the Hebrew text encountered this rendering. Unfortunately Christianity had decreed anything Jewish as evil (this was the time of the Crusades which were directed at the killing of both Jews and Muslims). So apparently in ignorance, the consonants of YHWH and the vowels from Adonai were combined. The result was a hybrid man-made name of God, jehovah. It is important to realize that God never decreed himself to man as jehovah.

Today most translations use the rendering LORD for YHWH. Notice that this 'LORD' is spelled with a capital L, small capital O, small capital R and small capital D. Therefore we can know when the text is referring to the actual name of God. One major translation that does not utilize LORD is the New International Version (NIV). The NIV instead uses Lord.

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So why is all of this important? I hope that the verses quoted at the beginning have already emphasized the importance of knowing, confessing, proclaiming and calling upon the name of the one and only true God. God seeks a personal relationship with us. When you converse with your friends do you use their name? Why not get more personal with God and use His name? Remember God Himself said in In Exodus 3:15 *"This is My name forever."* Need God say anything else.

Now that we have seen God's revelation of His name, what about the second part of Proverbs 30:4 regarding knowing His Son's name? Would it surprise you that the name of God's son can be found in the Old Testament? I hope not, because He is the Word and all things were made through Him by Him and for Him (John 1:1-3 and Colossians 1:16). Matthew 1:21 says *"And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."* This scripture gives a hint to the meaning of Jesus' name. The meaning has been obscured by the English rendering, Jesus. The translation directly from Hebrew to English gives a better hint to the meaning. The directly translated name is Yeshua, Yahshua or Yahsha. Notice that the 'Yah' is short for Yahweh and the shua or sha means salvation. Therefore Jesus or Yeshua means Yahweh is salvation. Now as you study you can see the promise of the LORD's Salvation and know that in the original text you just read the name of God's Son. Let's look at an exciting revelation of the name of Jesus.

Remember the story of Jonah. Jonah was disobedient to God's commandment for him to take the Word of God to Nineveh. So he tried to flee from God but ended up in the belly of a great fish for three days and three nights. Now Jonah, in the belly of the fish (in the belly of Sheol as Jonah himself proclaims) prayed to God. When he cried out *"Salvation is of the LORD"*, he cried out the name of Jesus!!! (YAHWEH is SALVATION!!!) and the LORD made the fish vomit Jonah onto dry ground.

So now as you read the scriptures you will be able to identify God's name and the name of His Son and you will be able to answer the question posed in Proverb 30:4 *"What is His name, and what is His Son's name, If you know?"*

Following are some more scriptural references to the Messiah in the Old Testament: Psalm 22, Isaiah 61:1-2a (see Luke 4:16-22), Isaiah 53, Zechariah 11:12-13 and Zechariah 13:6. There are many many more so please share them as you find them.