

What Is God's Name?

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Several listeners have e-mailed me over the last month or so to ask the question, when you or one of the speakers at Pacific are quoting the Old Testament and reading from it, why are you using the name *Yehovah* rather than *LORD*? It's an important question because *LORD* (spelled with all capital letters, or all caps) occurs more than 5,500 times in the Old Testament, so it's obviously an important subject that we need to talk about today.

By way of introduction, to first answer the question, we need to back up and ask, why do we have names at all? What's the point of them and why do we have them? In researching this subject, I came across a book titled [A Brief Introduction to the History of Names](#), by Christine Elliot, published in 1997. It was quite interesting. Her research showed that most names have had some sort of original meaning, or some sort of descriptive meaning, and were more than just a pleasing collection of sounds. It's interesting that one of the first examples she used was from the Bible. She mentioned that Rachel named her last son Benoni, which means *son of my sorrow*. There's a meaning to that name. Then his father Jacob changed his name to Benjamin, which means *son of my right hand* (in Genesis 35). Thus we see that from ancient times, names had meanings and were descriptive.

The spread of Christianity caused a trend in the naming of individuals. Christians were encouraged to name their children after apostles and martyrs, and you know those names. There were Christian names of Jewish origin such as Mary, Martha, Matthew, James, Joseph and John, that were very popular in the first millennium and on into the second. Due to their domination of the culture, Greek and Roman names entered the Christian name pool, in commemoration of various martyrs over the centuries: Anthony, Catherine, Margaret, Mark, Nicholas, Paul; these came to be used and were quite common. The point is, from Adam on, and throughout the Bible, most were single names. We call them given names today because they were given by one's parents; people didn't choose their own names, they were given their names by their parents.

Over time, surnames came into use. Surnames today are called last names. They were used to distinguish two people with the same first name, who lived in the same area. Christine Elliot mentions three different categories of names in her book. One she calls patronymic. *Patro* is from the Latin *pater*, meaning "father"—that means a name associated with the parents, the mom or the dad. For example, Richard's son Martin might be called Martin Richards or Martin Richardson. So the last names—the surnames—began to be used. In Scotland or Ireland, the patronymic form was Mac or was shortened to Mc. So Dougal's son would be called McDougal or Gregor's son would be called McGregor. These are examples of patronymic names.

The second category are the toponymic names, meaning people were named after the place they came from. Thus we have last names such as London, York, and Kent, indicating that the person with that surname came from a particular village, town or city. The last name Fen would indicate somebody who lived near a marsh. So would the name Hill—you have two Johns and one might be living near a prominent hill, so he came to be known as John Hill. That's how toponymic names came into use.

The third category is epithetic names. Those are a kind of description of the individual, like a personal characteristic. Somebody with the last name Fairweather might have been someone who was cheerful or sunny, so he was known as John Fairweather, because he was always positive and upbeat. On the other hand, the name Conan is Irish and Gaelic, and means hound or wolf, so maybe it described someone's appearance or personality. Finn would describe somebody who was fair complected or bright in coloring.

We know, obviously, that last names applied in epithetic forms to occupations. We have names such as Baker, Brewer, Carpenter, Weaver, Taylor and Smith. John the Baptist today would be called John Baptist because such a name would indicate what he did. Then another type of epithetic name was related to one's office or status. The surname or last name Marshall would apply to somebody who tended horses, or somebody who had a high office. The name Steward or Stewart was somebody who managed an estate, or was a caretaker of an estate. The last name Abbot was someone who was head of an abbey. So rather than be John of the Abbey, he became known as John Abbot, because he was head of the abbey.

The point is that names are important. Names are descriptive, and as we all know, people do get upset when their names are mispronounced, misspelled, misquoted and misused, because names are important. The question is, what about God Almighty? He has many titles but what about His name? Does God have an actual name? If you asked the average church member, going back fifty years, does God have a name, most of us would have probably scratched our heads and said, we never thought of that; maybe it's God, maybe it's Lord, maybe it's the Almighty. Shame on us, because I had to ask myself how I could go for decades not asking or considering the question until fairly recently.

Another huge question for you: Do you think God might be upset if His name were misquoted, misused, misapplied or ignored? Do you think He might be upset about that? Do you think Satan might want that to happen, that God's name would be misapplied, misused, ignored, or somehow in error? Would Satan like that to happen? I think we know the answer to that. So the title of the sermon is:

What Is God's Name?

It is a very important subject. If we're going to put God first, we'd better know His name. We have three points. The first point is:

1. We need to understand the difference between a title and a name.

There's a huge difference. The Supreme Being has titles, such as *the Almighty* and *the Most High*. We have a sermon in our archives, given on September 16, 2017 ("Who Is the Most High God, the Almighty God?"), that examines the titles Almighty and Most High. Another two titles the Supreme Being has are *LORD of Hosts* and *Living God*. We have sermons from July 14 and July 21 of 2018 that address that subject. The term "god" is both a title and a description. It's like the word "president". If you say president, for example referring to the President of the United States, that is a title given to the person holding that office, but it also describes what that person does, and it means "one who presides". You can have a President of the Kiwanis Club, who presides over that club, and you can have a President of the United States, who presides over that nation—both of these are titles and descriptions.

Let's look at the Hebrew word for "god" for a moment. It's Strong's #430 and as we know, in the plural form it's *elohim*. Let me quote from Strong's; it says of *elohim*, *gods in the ordinary sense, but specifically used (in the plural thus, especially with the article [as when paired with the word "the", as in "the God"] of the supreme God; occasionally applied by way of deference to magistrates, angels and judges.*

Thus we see that the word "god" or "gods" describes a class of beings. It's used in the Bible to refer to God the Father and to His Son, Jesus Christ. It also refers to pagan gods and to human beings, so if that is the case, how could the word "god" be God's name? It can't be—it's a title that is descriptive. An analogy would be, instead of calling you by your specific name, somebody walked up to you and said, "Hello, human." That's kind of vague because "human" describes a member of a class of beings—it is not an individual name; "god" is in the same category—it's not an individual's name. So we have to be very careful to distinguish between titles and names.

I have The Complete Word Study Dictionary of the Old Testament by Baker and Carpenter, a very good resource, and they say this about Strong's #430, the term "god". Notice this, I'm quoting now: *A masculine plural noun, meaning, God, gods, judges, angels. Occurring more than 2,600 times in the Old Testament, this word commonly designates the one true God [Baker and Carpenter reference Genesis 1:1, but notice this] and is often paired with God's unique name, Yehovah.* They quote for reference Genesis 2:4 and Psalm 100:3. Isn't it interesting that Baker and Carpenter say that God has a unique name? He has a name that applies only to Him. Maybe this is an important subject and maybe we ought to look into it. If we want to put God first, if we want to worship Him, does He have a unique name that applies only to Him, that is not a class, category or title? We need to find out. That leads to point number two:

2. Does God have a unique name?

We're going to spend a bit of time on this second point. Let's go to Exodus 6:2, to the beginning of the Bible. Does God have a unique name? God has appeared to Moses,

He is talking to Moses. We have proved that in numerous sermons over the last couple of years.

Exodus 6:2 *And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the LORD:*
3) *And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by [the next three words “the name of” were added by the translator and are not in the Hebrew] the name of God Almighty,*

God Almighty in Hebrew is *El Shaddai*, *El* meaning God, *Shaddai* meaning Almighty;

3 continued) *but by my name YEHOVAH was I not known to them.* (KJV)

In the King James, *YEHOVAH* is actually spelled out in all caps. What a thing to have happen here! The title *LORD* in verse 2 and the name *YEHOVAH* in verse 3 are the same Hebrew word, Strong’s #3068, and quoting from Strong’s, it says, *Yehovah from #1961* (which is the root word for Yehovah). If you look up #1961, it’s *Hayah*, and it means *to exist*—that’s important. Strong’s goes on to say, *the self-existent or eternal Yehovah*. God’s name is often called the tetragrammaton, from the Greek. *Tetra* means four and *grammaton* means letters. It’s called the tetragrammaton because it contains four consonants. It is written in Hebrew with four consonants—YHVH—thus the term tetragrammaton.

The well-known Hebrew scholar and lecturer, Nehemia Gordon, as of 2019, has found in excess of 2,300 ancient Hebrew manuscripts containing the full spelling of Yehovah, and given the rules of Hebrew grammar, the full pronunciation. We prefer to spell and pronounce it as Yehovah, or Yeh-ho-VAH, as in the original Hebrew. Thus we have *LORD* in verse 2, but God says, My name is Yehovah; it’s been translated *LORD* in verse 2, but is actually not translated at all—it’s just given—as God’s name, Yehovah, in verse 3.

With that in mind let’s go to Exodus 3:14; this is at the burning bush and God the Father is addressing Moses.

Exodus 3:14 *And God [the Father] said unto Moses [out of the burning bush], I AM that I AM:* (KJV)

The New Living Translation I believe has a better translation of that. It says, *I am the one who always is*. Let’s just stop there and analyze that for a second. *I am the one who always is*. Let’s go back before the creation of the physical world, before the creation of the universe. Back then, God is saying, I am the one who always is. We come to today—right here, right now—God the Father says, I am the one who always is, right now.

Let’s project into the future 1,000 years and this same Supreme Being says, I am the one who always is. This is the only time this is mentioned in the entirety of God’s word. God said to Moses, I am the one who always is; and He said, thus shall you say to the

children of Israel: *I am the one who always is* has sent Me unto you—the only time this is mentioned. Verse 15.

15) *And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God [Yehovah Elohim—the LORD, the Eternal, the One who always is] of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations. (KJV)*

So in Exodus 3 and Exodus 6, the Supreme Being is saying this is My name. Back to The Complete Word Study Dictionary of the Old Testament, by Baker and Carpenter, which says this about Yehovah, #3068: *The word refers to the proper name of the God of Israel, particularly the name by which He revealed Himself to Moses. They quote Exodus 6, verses 2 and 3, which we just read. Going on: Most scholars agree that its primary meaning should be understood in the context of God's existence, namely that He is the I AM that I AM in Exodus 3:14 [which we just read].*

The One who was, the One who is, and the One who always will be. That is the connotation of the name Yehovah; I have always existed; I have never had a beginning. I live now and I exist now. I will never have an end; I will always be in the future. The problem is, the English word “lord” does not convey that meaning. Lord can apply to humans; it can apply to a whole variety of things; it doesn't convey the unique meaning of Yehovah.

The Hebrew scholar and lecturer, Nehemia Gordon, has written many books. I read his book called Shattering the Conspiracy of Silence a while back. He's addressing the issue of saying God's name—Yehovah's name. On page 66 he goes a little further; I'm going to quote from his book:

When God said at the burning bush, I AM that I AM, He was explaining the significance of His own name. The Hebrew word for I AM is Ehyeh, meaning to be. In biblical Hebrew, I AM really means something like I exist. By saying I AM that I AM, God is declaring that He is the one who is, the one who really exists. He is different from the other gods who only exist in the imagination of men. God's name Yehovah derives from the exact same Hebrew root as I AM, or I exist. Strictly speaking, this name is a combination of three forms of this Hebrew root: Hayah, Hoveh, and Yihyeh. These three words mean, respectively: He was, He is, and He will be. He has always existed, He exists now, and He will always continue to exist. God says I AM about Himself, but we are to call Him Yehovah, meaning, He was, He is, and He will be.

I have not corroborated his statement that Yehovah is a combination of those three forms of the Hebrew “to be”. I haven't yet been able to confirm that in my study of the composition of that name—it needs further study—but his point is very interesting indeed. The main point is that verse 14 helps us understand God's name, which is revealed in verse 15. “I AM” is not God's name, it is an explanation of God's name.

Every time we say Yehovah—His unique name—we are acknowledging that He has always existed, He exists now, and He will always continue to exist. As I said before, here's the problem: There is no equivalent Greek or English word that means what Yehovah means—there's just not. This is a problem with translations, when you go from one language to another, and you have a name here, but in the other language there is not a name that directly corresponds to it. That is true when you go from Hebrew to Greek or Hebrew to English. The English word Lord does not convey the full meaning, the true meaning, of the Hebrew word Yehovah—it just doesn't. For some, rather than say Lord some will say Eternal. That gets a little closer, but Eternal doesn't convey the full meaning of Yehovah—that He has no beginning, He has always been, that He lives and exists right now, in this present day, and that He will always exist and will never have an end. There is no English word that means all of that—there just isn't.

It's very clear in scripture that the Supreme Being's name is Yehovah. Let's go to Leviticus 19 and look first at verse 12. Yehovah here is speaking, and notice what He says. I've read right over this for years.

Leviticus 19:12 *And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am [Yehovah]. (KJV)*

The implication is, when He says you shouldn't swear by My name falsely, His name should be used, just not falsely. How could His name be used if one doesn't know His name? Obviously, back then, they knew His name—at that time, they knew His name. Now let's jump to Jeremiah chapter 15. Here we are a good way down the road, and notice what the prophet Jeremiah says in verse 16. Jeremiah is speaking, and he is talking to the Supreme Being; he is talking to Yehovah.

Jeremiah 15:16 *Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name ... (KJV)*

If they didn't know God's name, or God didn't have a name, how could this statement be true? Jeremiah says, I'm called by Your name.

16 continued) ... *O LORD God of hosts. (KJV)*

It's pretty clear that Jeremiah knew God's name. God's name was revealed at the time of the Exodus and was used all the way up to the time of Jeremiah. David knew God's name; let's go to Psalm 22, verse 22. David was a man after God's own heart, we know that. He loved God, he meditated on God; look at all the psalms that he wrote because his mind was on God the Father.

Psalm 22:22 *I will declare thy name unto my brethren: (KJV)*

This isn't some idle statement. He says, this is what I'm going to do; I'm going to write about You, I'm going to speak about You, I'm going to converse about You, and I'm going to speak of Your name.

22 continued) ... *in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.* (KJV)

How could David praise God? One way was by using His name, by using the name of Yehovah. Then David died, but he had wanted to build a temple to his God—God said, no, you can collect all the money, the gold, the silver, the wood, and all the trappings, but your son is going to build the Temple. Let's be turning to 1 Kings 8 and see the astonishing fact that the Temple was built in Yehovah's name. 1 Kings 8:23; this is Solomon's prayer when the Temple was dedicated.

1 Kings 8:23 *And he [Solomon] said, [Yehovah] God of Israel, there is no God like thee ...* (KJV)

Yehovah Elohim of Israel, there is no elohim like you. Remember the word *God* refers to a class of beings.

23 continued) ... *in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart:* (KJV)

Jump to verse 33. Solomon is giving a warning; God is inspiring him to do this.

33) *When thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name ...* (KJV)

Meaning, in their trials and troubles, they're going to call out to Yehovah—by His name.

33 repeated) ... *and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto thee in this house:*

34) *Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest unto their fathers.* (KJV)

Going on with this thought, let's go to the next chapter, 1 Kings 9 and verse 3. Yehovah is replying back to Solomon.

1 Kings 9:3 *And the LORD [Yehovah] said unto him [Solomon], I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name [not l-o-r-d, not g-o-d, but Yehovah] there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.* (KJV)

Think about that; even non-Israelites knew the name Yehovah. For time's sake we won't turn there but remember that after Moses' death, Israel went into the Promised Land; Joshua was leading them and sent two spies into Jericho where they met the woman named Rahab. You can look it up in Joshua 2. Rahab, being a pagan (this is her first contact with an Israelite), tells them (quoting from Joshua 2), Yehovah your God, He is God in heaven above and in earth beneath. She knew—the way she knew

(it comes out later in the chapter) is that the fame of Yehovah was preceding the Israelites because Yehovah wiped out Egypt—He wiped out all the people on the way to the Promised Land, and then they crossed the Jordan river, and here they are; the fame of Yehovah preceded them to the point that this pagan woman understood who Yehovah was and what He had done. So she made an appeal to them: This is the real deal, this is the real God, so would you please spare me and my family, and I will hide you, and that's exactly what happened. Looking into the future, Yehovah's name is going to be called upon in the Millennium. Let's go to Zephaniah 3—we don't often go there—and I'll read this out of the New King James; verse 9. God's name will be spoken aloud in the Millennium.

Zephaniah 3:9 *“For then I will restore to the peoples a pure language [why?], that they all may call on the name of [Yehovah] the LORD, to serve Him with one accord. (NKJV)*

People of the Millennium are going to know God's name, they are going to call upon His name. Now let's go to Malachi 1:11. This is talking about the Millennium; it's a millennial setting.

Malachi 1:11 *For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; [My name is going to be great] and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD [Yehovah] of hosts. (KJV)*

The Gentiles, the heathens, the pagans during the Millennium, will gradually come (it's not going to happen overnight) to know God's name, understand the meaning of God's name, they will use God's name, they will call out to Him, they will pray to Him, and they will sing to Him. Every Jew knew that Yehovah was the one whom they worshipped; think about that. Every Jew knew who God was and that His name was Yehovah. Let's go to John 4, verse 22—this is the account where Christ was speaking to the Samaritan woman at the well. I'm going to read this out of the New Living Translation. Christ says,

John 4:22 *You Samaritans know very little about the one you worship, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes through the Jews. (NLT)*

The Jews obviously knew Yehovah's name. Let's go to the next chapter, John 5:43; what did Christ say?

John 5:43 *I am come in my Father's name ... (KJV)*

Why would He make this statement if nobody knew what His Father's name was? He says, I am coming in Yehovah's name and He is My Father.

43 continued ... and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. (KJV)

Every Jew knew who Yehovah was, and knew His name. Paul did; remember, Paul was a Pharisee of the Pharisees. Let's go to Romans 1, verse 8. Paul is speaking and he was trained in the classical tradition of the Pharisees. He sat at the feet of one of the most prominent rabbis of the time.

Romans 1:8 *First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ ... (KJV)*

So he is making a distinction between His God and Jesus Christ.

8 continued) *... for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. (KJV)*

Paul, being a good Pharisee, knew who was his God and what his God's name was. Christ is called the Son of God, meaning the Son of Yehovah, forty-five times in the New Testament. Let's go to Mark 1, verse 1. The young man Mark was actually the nephew of Barnabas. He was a good Jew, and notice what he says in the very beginning of his gospel account.

Mark 1:1 *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; (KJV)*

Mark, being a good Jew, knew that Christ was the Son of Yehovah—God's name. Now let's go to Luke 1:35, and I'm going to read this out of the New King James Version. An angel, sent from Yehovah, is appearing to Mary, a young Jewish woman. He's telling her something astonishing. Can you imagine what her reaction was when she heard these words?

Luke 1:35 *And the angel answered and said to her [Mary], "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; (NKJV)*

Being a good Jewess, she knew who was the Highest and what His name was.

35 continued) *... therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. (NKJV)*

God, whom she knew to be Yehovah. She knew the Highest. The term *Highest* was referring to Yehovah, the God whom she and the nation worshipped.

We've started at the beginning in Exodus, now let's go to the end of God's word and see if we see some consistency here. Keep in mind that the book of Revelation was written in Greek. The words we quoted and read in Exodus were obviously in Hebrew. The Septuagint (keep this in mind) is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament. So the Hebrew is going directly into Greek in the Septuagint. Just keep that in mind because we're going to see something very interesting. Let's go to Revelation 11:17, out of the New King James. I want you to notice a phrase here.

Revelation 11:17 *“We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty ... (NKJV)*

We’ve read that before—*Lord God Almighty*, but notice this:

17 continued) ... *The One who is and who was and who is to come ...*

Does that sound familiar? Isn’t it somewhat similar to what we read in Exodus?

17 continued) ... *because You have taken Your great power and reigned.*
(NKJV)

There is only one Almighty, only one Being who can be Almighty—that is a title of God, as we’ve shown before. It sounds familiar, doesn’t it? With this in mind, let’s go to chapter 21, the next to last book of God’s word, and we’ll read verse 22. The King James says:

Revelation 21:22 *And I saw no temple therein: for the LORD God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. (KJV)*

We’re seeing a distinction being made here between *the Lamb* and *the LORD God Almighty*. The term *LORD God Almighty* occurs in four other verses in the book of Revelation. In each of the verses we just read, with the three Greek words translated *LORD God Almighty* in Revelation, if you go back to the Septuagint and look at the translation of the Old Testament, where we read in Hebrew, it’s *Yehovah El Shaddai*; it is exactly the same three Greek words—exactly. We see at the very end of the Bible and the very beginning of the Bible, *LORD God Almighty* in Revelation, *Yehovah El Shaddai* in Hebrew, are translated exactly the same at the beginning of God’s word and at the end of God’s word. God is consistent—absolutely consistent. Yehovah is His name; He is God Almighty.

Why didn’t those who translated the Bible into English, in 1611, just use the name Yehovah? Why did they use *the LORD* instead? It’s caused so much confusion, so much consternation, so much arguing—so why did they do it? Why didn’t they just translate it directly, like we read in Exodus 6:3, as YEHOVAH? Why didn’t they do that? One reason is King James sponsored the translation of the Bible that bears his name. Because he was paying the translators, he had some influence over them, and one of his instructions was to stress the authority of the king, the authority of the nobility, the authority of royalty. He wanted that cemented in the mind of the people.

The English word “lord” was commonly used. King James himself was addressed as Lord, among other titles. There were other designated lords who owned tracts of land given to them by the king, so they were lord of this manor and lord of that tract of land, thus the title “lord” was known among the common people. So he pressured them to translate Yehovah as the LORD, and in his mind, doing so would uphold the royalty, uphold the nobility, and cement in the people’s mind the authority of the king. The English word “lord” suited his purposes. The King James version set a precedent and

most of the other translations have followed suit. There are a few that don't do that and directly translate it Yehovah [or a variation of that name] in the Old Testament, but there was a precedent set.

As we've mentioned before, another issue is there is no equivalent word in Greek or in English for Yehovah. He was, He is, He will be—we just don't have a word for that in English, neither is there one in Greek, that translates as such directly. In the New Testament, the Greek word *theos* is translated as "God" and *kurios* is translated as "Lord", but both in the New Testament—*kurios* and *theos*—can refer to pagan gods and human beings, not titles at all. Let's go to 1 Corinthians 8:5; here we see this directly in one verse. The Corinthian church was steeped in idolatry. Corinth in that day—the best way to describe it—was a combination of New York City and Las Vegas. Anything that was evil and bad went on in Corinth.

1 Corinthians 8:5 *For though there be that are called gods [theos], whether in heaven or in earth [referring, obviously, to pagan gods] (as there be gods [theos] many, and lords [kurios] many) ... (KJV)*

The word *theos* is used twice, *kurios* is used once, and here they're not referring to God the Father nor to Jesus Christ, they're referring to pagan gods and individuals.

Now let's go to Acts 7; we're going to break into Stephen's account, as he was recounting the history of Israel that led to his stoning. We're going to break into this account where he was talking about Moses leading Israel out of Egypt. Verse 40.

Acts 7:40 *Saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us: for as for this Moses [remember, he was up on the mountain forty days and nights, and they wondered what was going on], which brought us out of the land of Egypt, we [know] not what is become of him. (KJV)*

Jumping to verse 55.

55) *But he [referring to Stephen], being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God [with a capital G, which is theos], and Jesus standing on the right hand of God [theos] ... (KJV)*

We see in one section of scripture that *theos* can refer to idols and it can also refer to God Almighty. In fact, *theos* can even refer to Satan. Let's go to 2 Corinthians 4:4, and see that. *Theos* is not a name of God, it is a descriptive term that has broad applications.

2 Corinthians 4:4 *In whom the god [theos] of this world [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God [theos], should shine unto them. (KJV)*

We see that the English words *lord* and *god* are titles that are descriptive; they have broad applications, but neither one is the name of God, and neither one refers to the name of God. Let's go to Isaiah 42:8, another very clear scripture, where we are told God's name. It can't be more plain once one sees it; it jumps out everywhere.

Isaiah 42:8 *I am the LORD: (KJV)*

Yehovah. It's LORD in the King James but in the original Hebrew it is Yehovah.

42 continued) ... *that is my name:*

The LORD is a descriptive title, not the name of God.

42 continued) ... *and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images. (KJV)*

Yehovah—the Almighty, the Most High, the Living God, the LORD of hosts—is saying, Yehovah is My name. Knock knock, will you listen? This is My name. He is saying, I'm not going to give My glory to anything else, and, in this context, especially not to an idol.

God retains His glory as the Supreme Being. The fact is, the Son would never seek to take His Father's glory. How many times did Christ say, My Father is greater than I; or, I came to do the will of My Father; or, I came to serve My Father; or, all that I speak is what the Father tells Me; or, I don't do anything of Myself? Christ would never seek to take the glory of His Father, and in return His Father has showered Him with glory beyond measure, second only to God the Father's glory. Christ is at His right hand, in glory, and He will be King of the kings of the earth. He is our High Priest; He is the mediator; He is our intercessor; He is the redemption; He is the rock, along with His Father; He is our Savior, along with His Father. Christ has great glory, second only to His Father.

The question becomes, if the Father tells us plainly that He is not going to share His exclusive glory with an idol, or even with His Son because He is Supreme, then why are so many trying so hard to take away the Father's glory and give it to the Son? Why is that happening? The whole Protestant religion today is founded upon giving the Father's glory to the Son. Protestantism is centered on Christ. Christ is the creator, the sacrifice, the exclusive savior, and the Father is hardly even mentioned. Taking the Father's glory and applying it to the Son is at the heart of Protestant doctrine. This is something we have to be very, very careful about. Some in the greater churches of God are coming close to taking the Father's glory away and giving it to the Son; that is something they should be very, very careful not to do.

We have to understand that the Supreme Being's titles are many, but His name is Yehovah. The Bible is clear on that. One last scripture, before we close this second point; let's look at the most famous prayer in all of Christianity—Matthew 6:9. We all

know this by heart. Most of us probably know the thee's and thou's in the King James, so I'll quote the King James. The Son of the Father is telling us how we ought to pray.

Matthew 6:9 *After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, [notice the next four words] Hallowed be thy name. (KJV)*

The Greek word for “hallowed” means revered, exalted, respected, esteemed, honored. Revere, exalt, respect, esteem, honor—what? Your name. Let me ask a simple question: How can we do that if we don't know our Father's name? Christ said, I want you to hallow My Father's name. Okay, but we don't know the Father's name—is that right? Is that what God wants us to do? No. We have to know our Father's name in order to hallow His name. The fact is, none of us chose our own names—we didn't. We were given our names by our parents, that's why they're called our “given” names. However, the Almighty, the Most High, chose His name—very important point. The Almighty chose His name and He says, this is My name, I'm revealing it to you.

Shame on us if we don't acknowledge His name, if we deny His name, or if we refuse to say the name of Yehovah—shame on us if we do that. Is it wrong to use the titles God or Lord or Almighty? Of course not, but we have to understand that they're titles, not God's name. If we want a personal relationship with God, our Father, would we not want to use His name when we talk to Him? Would we not want to use His name correctly when we read scripture? That's why we do this, why we know His name.

The third and last point, which we need to be aware of:

3. Satan is doing all in his power to prevent God's people, and society in general, from acknowledging and using God's name.

Let's go back to Genesis 11:1 and see a perfect example of this. Satan does not want God's name known, Satan does not want God's name used. I'm going to read this out of the New Revised Standard Version.

Genesis 11:1 *Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. (NRSV)*

Easy to communicate. Verse 4.

4) Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name [for Yehovah?—No] for ourselves; otherwise we shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.” (KJV)

They didn't want a name to honor Yehovah, they wanted to make a name for themselves. They wanted to build a tower to where God was, where they could be supreme, just like Satan wanted, to be like God. Do you think Satan was involved with this process? Of course he was.

Let me give you two historical examples of satanic persecution inflicted upon believers just for saying the name Yehovah. There was a Jewish chronicle written before 70 A.D., called the Megillat Ta'anit, and it refers to the time period that we call the time of the Maccabees, between 168 and 165 B.C. This was a time when the Greeks took over the entirety of the Middle East, and Antiochus Epiphanes was the Greek king. He reigned from 175 to 184 B.C. Quoting from this chronicle, it says:

The Greeks made decrees to eradicate Israel, ordering them to deny the Kingdom of heaven, to declare that they have no portion with the God of Israel, and not to mention the heavenly name on their lips.

This is a decree from Antiochus Epiphanes, the Greek king. Three hundred years later the Babylonian Talmud was written during the time when Hadrian was the emperor of Rome. He reigned from 117 to 138 A.D. So this is about three hundred years later, after this first Jewish Chronicle, but notice the theme—nothing changes. There was a Rabbi named Hanina ben Teradyon who was brought before a Roman council because he was caught saying the name of Yehovah out loud. They questioned him and he mentioned the name of Yehovah in front of the council. He said, Yehovah is my God and He tells me to use His name. They immediately sentenced him to death by burning because he dared mention the name of Yehovah. They wrapped him in the very scroll that he quoted from, then set the scroll and him on fire; they sentenced his wife to be executed by decapitation and sent his daughter to a brothel because he dared name the name of Yehovah. These two examples were roughly three hundred years apart—one before Christ walked the earth, one after Christ walked the earth, and both of these pagan rulers, one Greek and one Roman, forbade circumcision, forbade keeping of the Sabbath, and forbade speaking God's name, Yehovah.

Satan was behind it all because he wants to eradicate the name of God. During that time—those three hundred years after the destruction of the second Temple—it became a rabbinical tradition to not speak Yehovah's name. That's been well documented. Historians have offered three possible explanations as to why. Two are possibly true and one cannot be true.

The first one, according to historians, is because there's a rabbinical tradition that God's name is too holy to be said aloud, therefore one of His titles should be used instead, such as El Shaddai or Adonai [God Almighty or Lord]. Sometimes God's people have a tendency to take things to an extreme. So, His name was too holy—that's one historical explanation.

The other is that the Jews were simply trying to avoid persecution. We just read of two horrible deaths, and some historians believed the Jews stopped saying the name of God—Yehovah—out loud in the synagogues, and some would even cough when His name came so they wouldn't have to say it, in order to avoid persecution.

A third reason commonly given, that I don't think can even be true, is that the proper pronunciation had been lost over time; the Jews didn't want to risk mispronouncing His

name, and because they didn't know how to pronounce it, they said one of His titles. That's a common idea out there but it cannot be true because there are more than 2,300 ancient Hebrew manuscripts containing the full spelling of God's name—not just the consonants but with the vowels. Then when you apply the Hebrew rules of grammar, you have the pronunciation: Yehovah or Ye-ho-VAH. Regardless of the rationale behind the attempt of rulers, pagan and otherwise, to try to outlaw the speaking of God's name, the being behind it is Satan. He wants to destroy the knowledge of God, the use of God's name, and the very name of our Father.

Let's bring it up to the present day. (I received notice of what follows on Thursday night; I'm so thankful one of the brethren sent this to me.) On June 29, 2008, a letter was written to the Catholic bishops from the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. That's a long title of a department at the Vatican; we would call them the truth police. So this letter was sent to all of the Catholic bishops all over the world under the direction of Pope Benedict. Let me read this letter in which the Bishops are reminded of previous teachings and traditions.

In accordance with immemorial tradition ... the name of Almighty God expressed by the Hebrew tetragrammaton [YHVH or Yehovah] and rendered in Latin by the word Dominus is to be rendered into any given vernacular by a word equivalent in meaning.

We've already seen there is no word, equivalent in meaning, in either English, Greek, Spanish, or Portuguese, for that matter. Going on:

Notwithstanding such a clear norm, in recent years the practice has crept in of pronouncing the God of Israel's proper name, known as the holy or divine tetragrammaton [YHVH].

So some people are using the name Yehovah within the Catholic church. Then a list of directives is given. Let me read the first directive.

In liturgical celebrations, in songs and prayers, the name of God in the form of the tetragrammaton is neither to be used nor pronounced.

Who do you think is behind that? Catholic church, Greek government, Roman government, all the way back to Babylon, the fact is Satan does not want God's name known or pronounced. Not only do humans want to worship anything but God, they also steadfastly resist knowing God's name, using God's name, and saying God's name. The one provoking all of this is the archenemy and the adversary—Satan.

Let's conclude, very quickly. The Most High chose His own name. He wants us to know His name, He wants us to use His name, He wants us to honor His name. Let's go to Jeremiah 16 and verse 21. Yehovah is speaking.

Jeremiah 16:21 *Therefore, behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know mine hand and my might; and they shall know that my name is The LORD [Yehovah]. (KJV)*

That's very clear. Now let's go to the last book of the Old Testament, Malachi, and in verse 1 of chapter 2, let's look at a warning for us today. This is addressed to the priests, by the way.

Malachi 2:1 *And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you. 2) If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart [to do what], to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD [Yehovah] of hosts, [if you fail to give glory to My name] I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart. (KJV)*

To do what? To give glory to God's name. One Jewish scholar lamented about the Holocaust and asked the question, could the Holocaust have come upon the Jewish people because they refused to call upon the name of Yehovah? This is a Jewish scholar, this isn't somebody from Christianity at all, this is a Jewish scholar posing this question. So why do we say Yehovah rather than LORD? Because that is our Father's unique name. Let's close with a final scripture that applies to all of us today. It is Malachi 3:16, and I'll read it out of the New King James. Think about this as it applies to our circumstances today.

Malachi 3:16 *Then those who feared [Yehovah] the LORD spoke to one another, and [Yehovah] the LORD listened and heard them; so a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear [Yehovah] the LORD and who meditate on His name. (NKJV)*

Meaning, meditate on all that His name means and all that His name implies: I AM the One who has always been, I AM the One who exists now, I AM the One who always will be. Let's understand that the name Yehovah is the very unique name of the God whom we worship.