

Elohim

God's names matter! Attached to each name is a set of Character qualities, promises, and meanings. Unless you fully know, and understand these things, you run the risk of not accessing or utilizing them in the way God has designed.

I. The Very first namer God reveals to us in scripture is Elohim

A. Genesis 1:1 "In the beginning God (Elohim) created the heavens and the earth."

1. The Verse stating that "beginning gives us a deep character quality of God, God Creator.
2. In this verse God is showing us something very unique, he is showing us that he is transcendent(goes beyond ordinary limits) - that he is distinct from his creation.
3. This also shows us that God Elohim, is outside of the restrictions of time. By the statement "In the beginning God created, we discern that God created the beginning. God created time, and if God created time then we clearly see that God precedes time, because God can not create something that already exists.

B. Although transcendent Elohim reveals a God who abides in the realm that we know. The prophet Jerimiah offers a glimpse into this balance of God's presence.

1. Jeremiah 23:23-24 "Am I a God who is near, declares the LORD, and not a God far off? Can a man hide himself in hiding places so i do not see him? Declares the LORD. Do I not fill the heavens and the earth ?"
 - a) This passage in Jerimiah reveals that God is both transcendent, and immanent. He is here, there, and everywhere.
 - b) Elohim Created the heavens and the earth, existing outside of it, but Elohim also fills the earth existing in it.
 - c) The theological term for this is omnipresent - God is everywhere and present at the same time.
 - d) We must understand this to be true, we must understand this to be his nature, his silence must not be confused with him being absent, and nor does his distance beile his presence.

II. Elohim is personal

A. When reading Genesis 1 we see that Elohim is associated with very personal attributes.

1. Genesis 1:3-5 “Then God said, let there be light, and there was light. God saw the light was good; God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light day, and the darkness he called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.”
 - a) We see God said, God saw, God separated, and God called
 - b) Each of these reveals the very personal and engaging character of God
 - c) It is important to recognize and have established as truth, that God is outside of creation and time and that he is other dimensional, but we must not leave it at partial truth and realize that God is also intensely personal
 - (1) Genesis 3:8 “ They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the Garden.”
 - d) If we refer to God as energy or a force than we do not refer to Elohim, because Elohim personally interacts with his creation

III. Elohim is plural

- A. Elohim is not only personal it is also plural
- B. The word Elohim is actually the plural version of El or Eloah
- C. The interesting aspect of this plural word is that it uniquely refers to a singular Godhead.
- D. Elohim speaks on the plentitude of God 3 in 1 the Holy trinity
 1. Genesis 1:26-27 “Then God said, Let us make man in our Image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on earth. God created man in His own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. “
- E. God is a plural being although he exists as one God.
- F. God sometimes introduces a concept in the bible and then explains it later. We call this “progressive revelation” in this case, we find the plural form of elohim in Genesis without any clues of the trinity but between Genesis and Matthew we will notice progresive revelation so by the time we read the new testament we read and understand
 1. John 1:1 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, the Word was God.”
 2. John 1:14 “The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us”

3. Matthew 3:16 "After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting him."
4. Matthew 28:19 "Go and therefore make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit."

G. In Matthew we finally see the three distinct persons, one in essence, who make up the plural name of Elohim.

IV. Elohim is the Creator

- A. God identifies himself as Elohim 35 times at the start of scripture.
- B. The name Elohim appears throughout scripture 2570 times
- C. Elohim is the only name of God used from Genesis 1:1 to Genesis 2:3
- D. What does this show us ? God presented himself in the beginning only as Elohim as to make an emphasis in this name.
- E. One reason for this is God wants us to understand his power.
- F. The literal translation of Elohim is "Strong one" "Almighty" this has to do with God's sovereignty and his authority
- G. Elohim also identifies God as creator if we substitute the meaning of Elohim in Genesis 1:1 it would read " In the beginning, Elohim(mighty one) created."
- H. The term "created" is only used of God in the bible, it is not used of men. This is because men only have the capability to reconfigure, recalibrate, or reform things. Man can not create something from nothing here we see the theological term *ex nihilo* which is latin for "from nothing"
 1. The book of Hebrews describes the creative power of God Hebrews 11:3 "By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible."
 - a) The author of hebrews lets us know not only that the strong and powerful God created visible things out of the invisible, but also that God created the worlds (plural) And he did that out of nothing ! Now if that doesn't
 - b) fit the description of "Mighty" then I don't know what will.
 2. God didn't even need to use his hands to create- his mouth was enough
 3. We must marvel through Genesis 1 on how all God had to do was speak the world into existence and order.
 4. This may be a reason why doubting God's power makes no sense.

- a) For example when Abraham and Sarah doubted that God could create a child through them God replied Genesis 18:14 “Is anything too difficult for the LORD?”
 - 5. The name Elohim should bring faith over our circumstances and trust in who our God is and his infinite never ending capabilities.
 - 6. The strong one Elohim doesn't need raw materials in which to work with, the Almighty Elohim doesn't need logic or tangible solutions in order to accomplish his goals. All he needs is himself
 - I. Before God shows us his other characteristics, like his gentleness, His Fatherhood, or his grace, God introduces himself as Elohim The Great and Powerful
 - J. From the start he Shows us he is all-knowing, all-powerful, ever present.
- V. Elohim is a God who can transform a mess into a miracle
 - A. In Genesis 1:2 it says “The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.”
 - 1. The Hebrew phrase translated “formless and void” is “Tohu Wabohu” This phrase basically means a location that is entirely uninhabitable, without form, and void of life.
 - 2. We understand that God did not create a wasteland Isaiah 45:18 tell us “For thus says the LORD, who created the Heavens(He is the God who formed the earth and made it, He established it and did not create it a waste place, but formed it to be inhabited)”
 - 3. One of the greatest lessons to learn about Elohim is that in addition to creating something out of nothing, He can take something the devil has junked up and make it right again. Elohim restores
 - 4. Elohim is a God who can transform a mess into a miracle. He transforms darkness into light. He transforms the desolate, uninhabitable recesses of your soul into places of fertile growth.
 - B. When God does this he wants you and I to reflect him
 - 1. Genesis 1:26 tell us one of our primary purposes “The God said, “Let us make man in Our image, according to our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”
 - a) An image is a mirror, your image reflects you accurately
 - b) When God made mankind in his image in the image of the triune God, (God in verse 26 is Elohim the fullness of deity)

He commissioned mankind to a higher level than all the others.

- c) The flowers were not asked to be made in the image of God
- d) The beasts or the fish were not asked to be made in the image of God
- e) Only humanity was given the privilege and capacity to mirror God.
- f) Other creations can testify of God's majesty, but only mankind mirrors him.

VI. In Conclusion

- A. Other places to find the name Elohim Might creator or Almighty
 - 1. Genesis 3:5, Genesis 17:1, Genesis 28:3, Genesis 35:11, Deuteronomy 5:9, Deuteronomy 6:4, Joshua 3:10, Psalms 86:15, Psalms 100:3,
 - 2. In the English translation Elohim is usually translated as God
- B. Other places to see Elohim in its plural form
 - 1. Exodus 20:2-3, Exodus 34:14, Psalms 18:31, Deuteronomy 10:17 Deuteronomy 32:17, Deuteronomy 32:21
- C. The singular form of Elohim is El. It has the idea of strength, power, and might. El is used in the old testament of the Father, the Son, The Holy Spirit
 - 1. God the Father is El
 - a) Genesis 14:18
 - 2. God the Son is El
 - a) Isaiah 7:14
 - b) Matthew 1:21-23
 - 3. Holy Spirit is called El
 - a) Job 33:4
 - b) Job 37:10
- D. Elohim can make something out of nothing
- E. He can empower it to grow something even where nothing seems to be happening at all.
- F. Elohim brings order where there is chaos
- G. Elohim is great and powerful