

DISCOVERING GOD'S WORD

God's Names



PURPOSE

Names are the way we identify ourselves. Sometimes they are chosen for a significant reason. A person might be named after a friend or family member, or because the name holds a distinct meaning for the parents. God reveals Himself to us through His names given in the Bible. These names tell us who He is, or something about what He does. This merit badge will help your Cadets learn more about God by studying His names.

LEARNING

1.
 - a. ASV — Jehovah
 - b. NIV — Lord
 - c. HCS — Yahweh
 - d. NKJ — Lord
 - e. KJV — Lord or Jehovah
2. God told Moses to tell the Israelites that “I AM WHO I AM” had sent him. This is God’s own self-identification, and would have been understood by the Jewish leaders of Moses’ day.

God chose to identify Himself this way to distinguish from the many pagan gods of that day. The name reveals Him as the covenant faithful God who is dependable in all circumstances.

3. Old Testament Names

	Hebrew Name	English Translation
e	Adonai <i>Genesis 18:3</i>	a. God our Creator
d	El Elyon <i>Genesis 14:19</i>	b. The Lord Will Provide
j	El Shaddai <i>Genesis 28:3</i>	c. Lord, Jehovah
h	El Olam <i>Isaiah 26:4</i>	d. The Most High God
a	Elohim <i>Genesis 1:1</i>	e. Lord, Master (teacher)
c	Yahweh <i>Psalms 11:4</i>	f. The Lord my Shepherd
f	Jehovah-Raah <i>Psalms 23:1</i>	g. The Lord our Peace
i	Jehovah-Rapha <i>Jeremiah 30:17</i>	h. Everlasting God
b	Jehovah Jireh <i>Genesis 22:14</i>	i. The Lord that Heals
k	Jehovah Sabaoth <i>1 Samuel 17:45</i>	j. All Sufficient, Lord God Almighty
g	Jehovah Shalom <i>Judges 6:24a</i>	k. The Lord of Hosts

Adonai (Genesis 18:3) • Lord, Master, teacher
He said, “If I have found favor in your eyes, my Lord, do not pass your servant by.”

To avoid taking God’s name in vain, Old Testament people sometimes used Adonai as a substitute for Yahweh (YHWH). This verse reminds us that we are to give God full control of our lives — as we would as servants to a master, or students in a classroom to their teacher.

El Elyon (Genesis 14:19) • The Most High God
and he blessed Abram, saying, “Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth.”

“El” is another name that is translated as “God” and is often used with other words to describe God’s attributes. “Elyon” literally means “Most High” and expresses God’s extreme sovereignty and majesty. In this verse, Melchizedek (a king and priest from Jerusalem) was giving Abram a blessing from God Most High.

El Shaddai (Genesis 28:3) • All Sufficient, Lord God Almighty
May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and increase your numbers until you become a community of peoples.

This verse shows the power and might of our God, who is able to completely supply all our needs — physically and spiritually.

El Olam (Isaiah 26:4) • Everlasting God
Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD, is the Rock eternal.

The word “Olam” literally means forever. So when these two words are combined, we learn that God is eternal.

Elohim (Genesis 1:1) • God our Creator
In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Out of nothing, our God created everything we are and everything we see and know! Wow!

Yahweh (Psalm 11:4) • Lord, Jehovah
The LORD is in his holy temple; the LORD is on his heavenly throne. He observes the sons of men; his eyes examine them.

Yahweh is considered, by Jewish tradition, too holy to voice. It is actually spelled YHWH (without vowels). This modern spelling includes vowels to help with pronunciation. It is not certain what the correct pronunciation actually is. Different versions of the Bible use different words in place of Yahweh or Jehovah. Most common is LORD. Jehovah is translated as “Existing One.” This demonstrates that God reveals Himself unceasingly.

Jehovah-Raah (Psalm 23:1) • The Lord my Shepherd
The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.

A shepherd leads and feeds his flock. An extended translation of this word means friend or companion, showing how intimate God desires the relationship between Him and His people to be.

Jehovah-Rapha (Jeremiah 30:17) • The Lord that Heals

'But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds,' declares the LORD, 'because you are called an outcast, Zion for whom no one cares.'

God is the Great Healer who will heal both our physical and emotional needs.

Jehovah Jireh (Genesis 22:14) • The Lord will Provide

So Abraham called that place The LORD Will Provide. And to this day it is said, "On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided."

When Abraham was asked to sacrifice Isaac, and was ready to do so in obedience to God, God Himself provided a substitute to sacrifice in Isaac's place. God will always provide whatever we need.

Jehovah Sabaoth (1 Samuel 17:45) • The Lord of Hosts

David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied."

This name refers to God as the God of armies, both spiritual and earthly. He is the ruler — King of heaven and earth.

Jehovah Shalom (Judges 6:24a) • The Lord our Peace
So Gideon built an altar to the LORD there and called it The LORD is Peace.

Shalom is translated as peace, therefore God is revealing himself as a God of peace.

4. New Testament Names

Matthew 1:21 Who He Is What He Does
"She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

Jesus is perhaps the most widely known name. This verse not only gives us the name of Jesus, but declares what He does. The name means "savior," and Jesus will save His people from their sins.

Matthew 16:16 Who He Is What He Does
Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

There are two names here. The first is "Christ," which is the New Testament word for the Old Testament word "Messiah." It means He is the promised One. It therefore tells us Who He is. The second name in this verse is "Son of the Living God." This name relates Jesus to the Father and states His deity.

John 1:1 Who He Is What He Does
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Jesus is called "the Word," which tells us Who He is. He is the final and full revelation of God Himself. So it also tells us what He does, because He reveals to us the very person and being of God.

John 1:29 Who He Is What He Does
The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

This reveals Christ's work as the Lamb of God that was to be the slain payment for sin. He is the fulfillment of the Old Testament lamb that was sacrificed as sin offering before Almighty God.

Matthew 3:17 Who He Is What He Does
And a voice from heaven said, "This is my son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

God the Father clearly states here that Jesus is His Son. It is a revelation of Who He is.

Matthew 23:8 Who He Is What He Does
"But you are not to be called 'Rabbi,' for you have only one Master and you are all brothers."

"Rabbi" means teacher, which tells us both who Jesus is and what He does. He teaches the truth and meaning of God's revelation to man. The other name is "Master," which also gives us a title of authority and tells us what He does. He is the one in control. He gives the commands that we are to obey.

Matthew 23:10 Who He Is What He Does
Nor are you to be called 'teacher,' for you have one Teacher, the Christ.

Like Rabbi, "Teacher" tells us who He is and what He does.

John 1:34 Who He Is What He Does
I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God.

The name tells us Who He is. It is the very center of His being and enables Him to be the savior from sin.

Romans 8:15 Who He Is What He Does
For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."

This is the only verse in this section that does not refer to a name of Jesus. Instead it is a name for God the Father, and we are told by His Son, Jesus Christ to call God Father, and to refer to Him as our Father. He wants us to be that close to Him — to be His family.

5. a. To “hallow” something is to make it holy, or to set it apart to be exalted and to be worthy of absolute devotion.
- b. We are to pray “hallowed be your name.” So we are to regard God and His name with complete devotion and absolute loving admiration. It is crucial to reserve a place of deep respect for God’s name, and to never take His name lightly. Instead we are to always rejoice and praise God for the way He reveals Himself through His names.

DOING

1. Choose one Old Testament “name” verse and memorize it. Recite it to your counselor, tell him what the name in that verse means, and why you chose it.
2. Choose two New Testament “name” verses and memorize them. Recite them to your counselor, tell him what the names mean, and why you chose those verses.
3. Writing out the names or working them into a poster will make the boys more familiar with them. Hopefully it will help them to remember the names and their meanings.
 - a. Self-explanatory.
 - b. Self-explanatory.
4. a. **John 6:35** • *I am the bread of life*. • Jesus says this in the context of the manna that God gave Israelites in the desert. In the same way, Jesus is the food that will satisfy us for eternal life.
- b. **John 8:12** • *I am the light of the world*. • Light shows the way. It brightens the road or path so one can see where they’re going. Jesus is the light in a world of darkness, showing the way to eternal life.
- c. **John 10:7** • *I am the gate for the sheep* • A knowledge of old Jewish practices helps us understand this. After a shepherd had herded his sheep into the pen for the night (usually a cave or a high-walled pen), he would lay in the doorway. Anything going

in would have to pass over him. He provided the protection for the sheep inside. Similarly, Jesus is the protection for the believer against the evil that would seek to enter and to destroy him.

- d. **John 10:11** • *I am the good shepherd* • There’s a picture here of the shepherd as he leads and protects his sheep. He was the one who led the sheep and showed where the food was, but also provided protection and rescued sheep in peril. Jesus is the One who protects, rescues, and delivers us when we get ourselves in trouble.
- e. **John 11:25** • *I am the resurrection and the life*. • Jesus was speaking to Martha, the sister of Lazarus, when He said this. Her brother had just died. With these words, Jesus claimed the ability to give deliverance from death. Then He proved it by raising Lazarus from death to life. With Jesus as the resurrection and life, we can be sure that death won’t be the end for us either. Though we will die physically, we will live forever with Jesus in heaven.
- f. **John 14:6** • *I am the way and the truth and the life* • This is Jesus’ universal and exclusive claim. There is only one way to the Father, and it is Jesus. No one can get to heaven by his good deeds or by some other religion. Jesus is the Way. He is also the Truth, the revelation of all that God wants us to know. He is also the life. We live with Him, and in Him, and forever in heaven through Him.
- g. **John 15:5** • *I am the vine* • This is the picture of the vineyard. The grapevine grows and produces branches. The branches draw their life from the vine. The vine is the vehicle for nutrients to pass from the soil to the branches so they will become productive. They need to be attached to have life. So it is with Jesus and His people. Only through Him do we draw what we need for eternal life. He gives us what we need to be productive and to bear fruit for Him.