



The NAMES OF GOD, A Bible Study For the Alabama Legislative Staff

Our next installment in our study of God's names, as revealed in Scripture, is here! As stated before, it makes sense that a Being as infinite and impressive as the Creator of the universe might have many specific names, each adding to our understanding of Him. So far we have covered: #1 Elohim (God), #2 Jehovah or Yahweh (covenantal name for I AM, self-existing One), #3 El Shaddai, God Almighty, and #4 El Elyon, God Most High. NOTE: Past Bible Studies are posted at: <https://capitolcom.org/bible-studies/alabama/>.

5. EL OLAM - אֵל עוֹלָם "Everlasting God"

As a reminder we are starting with the names which build on "El". Here it is coupled with OLAM, meaning everlasting or forever. That word appears 413 times in the Old Testament. We recognize that the promises of God require a forever deity to confirm and fulfill them. What would that do to our expectations and trust in the LORD if we were to discover He was not everlasting and forever unchanging!

Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba and called there on the name of the Lord, the **Everlasting God**. -- Genesis 21:33

Abraham had just entered into a covenant with Abimelech regarding a well dug at Beersheba. The reference here seems to be an appeal to the God who never ceases to exist to keep the covenant information into perpetuity.

We also see the Hebrew word OLAM appear in Jeremiah 10:10 as "everlasting King", so not exactly an appearance of "El Olam"; but this is also the LORD speaking about Himself, so definitely worth mentioning.

6. EL ROI - אֵל רֹאִי "The God Who Sees"

Certainly we know that the spirit of God misses nothing in His creation, but the instance of this name comes from Genesis 16:13, when the servant Hagar had fled from Sarah upon conceiving a child by Abraham. Sarah knew Abraham was to be the father of many but had yet to conceive a child with him, and the biological clock was ticking away (she was approaching 90 years old!). Sarah basically distrusts God's, takes things into her own hands then chases Hagar away from their settlement! Hagar finds herself alone in the wilderness. Enter the angel of the LORD, a specially designated messenger who very likely is Jesus Christ before His incarnation (before being born as a man). He instructs Hagar that she will have a son, name him Ishmael, and she should return to Sarah's employ. Out of this one child will a great nation arise. It is in her response to this news that we see El Roi appear:

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So she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, “You are a **God of seeing**,” for she said, “Truly here I have seen him who looks after me.” -- Genesis 16:13

It is comforting to know that God sees us in our times of need; it is equally sobering to know He truly sees all.

7. EL GIBBOR - אֵל גִּבּוֹר “Mighty God (Warrior God)”

This may seem a redundancy since we already talked about Elohim and El Shaddai (God (plural), and God Almighty), but as God is the only truly Mighty Being in creation, let’s see how the Scripture uses this particular name to instruct us further. First of all, *gibbor* denotes a warrior in Hebrew and appears most often when describing the mighty heroes of the time (e.g., David’s mighty men in 2 Samuel 23). We see this word applied to God during the writing of the prophets, in the period after King David.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, **Mighty God**,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. -- Isaiah 9:6

For the first time in Scripture God is called a mighty warrior in this way. And this familiar Christmas verse foretells the birth of Jesus Christ, the warrior God who brings us peace.

A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God. – Isaiah 10:21

The very next chapter finds EL GIBBOR used again. This passage concerns the coming judgments, first by the Assyrians, then the Babylonians, resulting in a great scattering of the people. This is a shocking prophecy, given while Judah is still a sovereign kingdom. Only a remnant will return, but they return to the Mighty Warrior God. This is a comfort, though few, they will still be very strong—in His might. Maybe when we are feeling few in number in standing for God’s righteousness we should remember Jesus Christ is actually a warrior at our side (see Revelation 19:11-16 for how He will return)!

You show steadfast love to thousands, but you repay the guilt of fathers to their children after them, O great and mighty God, whose name is the Lord of hosts, --
Jeremiah 32:18

Our last textual example comes from the prophet Jeremiah, prophesying after the second Babylonian siege has begun. This verse appears in a prayer of Jeremiah. How could this powerful God allow His people to be taken in battle? God is their protector but He also promised to allow them to be besieged if they did not keep His commands. God is able to keep all His promises, even the ones which result in judgment. What a mighty, all-seeing and warrior God we serve! More names of God coming in August!

Questions? Please feel free to contact me if I can be any assistance in helping your understanding of God’s Word!

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