

יהוה

Meaning

- Yahweh - God's personal name

It is not a generic term for “god”, but rather the word יהוה (YHWH) is the name by which God uniquely identifies himself in the Old Testament.

First appearing in [Genesis 2:4](#)plugin-autotooltip__default plugin-autotooltip_bigGenesis 2:4

Hebrew אֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ בְּהִבְרָאָם בַּיּוֹם עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶרֶץ וּשְׁמַיִם ESV These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens. NIV This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created. When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens- αὐτὴ ἡ βίβλος γενέσθω οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς ὅτε ἦ ἡμέρα ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν..., it occurs over 6,000 times in the Old Testament.

Frequently translated into English as “LORD” (all capital letters).

Pronunciation

In ancient Israel, the name was considered too sacred to pronounce aloud. When reading Scripture, Jews would often substitute אֲדֹנָי (Adonai, “Lord”) instead.

The Masoretes (medieval Jewish scribes) added the vowel points of “Adonai” to “YHWH” leading to the hybrid form “Jehovah.”

Most English Bibles today translate it as “LORD” (all in capitals) to distinguish it from “Adonai” (Lord).

Meaning and Etymology

The name is related to the Hebrew verb הָיָה (hayah, “to be”), suggesting meanings such as:

- “I am who I am” ([Exodus 3:14](#)plugin-autotooltip__default plugin-autotooltip_bigExodus 3:14

Hebrew וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל מֹשֶׁה אֲנִי אֲהִיָּה אֲשֶׁר אֲהִיָּה וַיֹּאמֶר כֹּה תֹאמַר לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲהִיָּה שְׁלַחְנִי אֲלֵיכֶם ESV God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” NIV God said to Moses, “I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’

καὶ ὁ θεὸς πρὸς ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὢν καὶ τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραὴλ ὁ ὢν ἀπέσταλκέν με πρὸς ὑμᾶς...)

- “He is”
- “He causes to be”

This conveys that God is self-existent, eternal, and unchanging. He is the One who depends on nothing else for existence and brings all things into being.

grammatical roles and syntactic relationships (for example, as subject, object, or in construct with another noun).

Basic Grammatical Function

Grammatical Function	Description	Example Reference	Hebrew Text
Subject	YHWH is the subject performing the action	Exodus 20:7 plugin-autotooltip__default plugin-autotooltip_bigExodus 20:7 Hebrew לא תשא את שם יהוה אלֵהֶיךָ לשוא כִּי לֹא יַנְקֶה יְהוָה אֶת אִשְׁרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁמוֹ בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה ESV “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. NIV “You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name. οὐλήμψητὸδνομακυρίουτοῦθεοῡσουεπίματαίψουγάρμηκαθαρίηγκύριοςτὸνλαμβάνοντατὸδνομααὐτοῦἐπιματαίψ... – “YHWH will not hold him guiltless...”	יהוה
Object	YHWH is the object receiving the action	Psalms 18:1 plugin-autotooltip__default plugin-autotooltip_bigPsalms 18:1 Hebrew לַמְנצֵחַ לַעֲבֹד יְהוָה לְדָוִד אֲשֶׁר דָּבַר לַיהוָה אֶת דְּבָרֵי הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת בְּיוֹם הַצִּיל יְהוָה אוֹתוֹ מִכַּף כָּל אֱנִיּוֹ וּמִיַּד שָׂאוּל ESV TO THE CHOIRMASTER. A PSALM OF DAVID, THE SERVANT OF THE LORD, WHO ADDRESSED THE WORDS OF THIS SONG TO THE LORD ON THE DAY WHEN THE LORD RESCUED HIM FROM THE HAND OF ALL HIS ENEMIES, AND FROM THE HAND OF SAUL. HE SAID: I love you, O LORD, my strength. εἰς τὸτέλος τῷ παιδικυρίου τῷ ἀλλάγησεν τῷ κυρίῳ τοὺς λ... – "I love You, O YHWH, my strength."	יהוה
Predicate / Apposition	Used in statements identifying or describing God	Exodus 15:3 plugin-autotooltip__default plugin-autotooltip_bigExodus 15:3 Hebrew יְהוָה אִישׁ מִלְחָמָה יְהוָה שְׁמוֹ ESV The LORD is a man of war; the LORD is his name. NIV The LORD is a warrior; the LORD is his name. NLT The LORD is a warrior; Yahweh is his name! LXX κύριος συντρίβων πολέμους κύριος ὄνομα αὐτοῦ KJV The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is his name. – “YHWH is a warrior.”	יהוה
Vocative (address)	Used when addressing God directly	Psalms 8:1 plugin-autotooltip__default plugin-autotooltip_bigPsalms 8:1 Hebrew עַל הַגִּיתִּיחַ עַל הַמְנֻצָּח לַיהוָה מִקְוֹר לְדָוִד ESV TO THE CHOIRMASTER: ACCORDING TO THE GITTITH. A PSALM OF DAVID. O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. NIV O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. εἰς τὸτέλος ἐπ' ἐτῶν ἠλθὺν ψαλμοὺς τῷ κύριῳ ἐκείνῳ ὅτι κύριός ἡ μὴ σὺ ὢν θεὸς πάντων τῶν οὐρανῶν καὶ πάντων τῶν ἐν γῇ... – “O YHWH, our Lord, how majestic is Your name...”	יהוה

Construct or Possessive Relationships

While YHWH itself does not take a construct ending, it appears in construct phrases, especially “YHWH of .”

Construct Phrase	Meaning	Example Reference	Hebrew Text
YHWH Elohim	“LORD God” — combining God’s personal and general titles	Genesis 2:4 Hebrew אֵלֹהֵי תוֹלְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ בַּהֲבֵרָאֵם בְּיוֹם עֲשׂוֹת יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶרֶץ וְשָׁמַיִם ESV These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens. NIV This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created. When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens- αὕτη ἡ βίβλος γενέσθω οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς ὅτε ἦ ἡμέρα ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν...	יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים
YHWH Tsevaoth	“LORD of hosts” — the God of angelic armies	1 Samuel 1:3	יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת
YHWH Shalom	“The LORD is peace”	Judges 6:24 Hebrew וַיִּבֶן שָׁם גִּדְעוֹן מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה וַיִּקְרָא לוֹ יְהוָה שָׁלוֹם עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה עוֹדָנוּ בַּעֲפָרָת אֲבִי הַעֲזָרִי ESV Then Gideon built an altar there to the LORD and called it, The LORD is Peace. To this day it still stands at Ophrah, which belongs to the Abiezrites. NIV So Gideon built an altar to the LORD there and called it The LORD is Peace. To this day it stands in Ophrah of the Abiezrites. καὶ ὡς κοδόμησεν ἐκεῖ θυσιαστήριον τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ ἐκάλεσεν...	יְהוָה שָׁלוֹם
YHWH Yireh	“The LORD will provide”	Genesis 22:14 Hebrew וַיִּקְרָא אַבְרָהָם שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא יְהוָה יִרְאֶה אֲשֶׁר יֹאמַר הַיּוֹם בְּהָר יְהוָה יִרְאֶה ESV So Abraham called the name of that place, “The LORD will provide”; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided.” NIV So Abraham called that place The LORD Will Provide. And to this day it is said, καὶ ἐκάλεσεν τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ τόπου ἐκεῖνου κύριος εἰδέναι ὡς ἡμερὸν ἐν τῷ ὄρει κύριος ὥφθη...	יְהוָה יִרְאֶה

YHWH Tsidqenu	“The LORD our righteousness”	Jeremiah 23:6 plugin-autotooltip__default plugin-autotooltip_bigJeremiah 23:6 Hebrew יהוה צדקנו יקראו יְהוָה יִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁכֵּן לְבֶטֶחַ וְזֶה שְׁמוֹ אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאוּ יְהוָה צִדְקָנוּ ESV In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.' NIV In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness. ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτοῦ σωθήσεται Ἰουδὰς καὶ Ἰσραὴλ κατασκήνωσει ἐποικιῶσά κα...	יהוה צדקנו
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Prepositional Phrases with יהוה

Here YHWH follows prepositions. The form itself remains unchanged, but the vowel under the initial consonant may slightly adjust because of the preposition.

Meaning	Prepositional Phrase	Example Reference	Hebrew Text
to / for YHWH	ליהוה	Exodus 28:36 plugin-autotooltip__default plugin-autotooltip_bigExodus 28:3 Hebrew וְאַתָּה תְּדַבֵּר אֵל כָּל חֲכָמֵי לֵב אֲשֶׁר מִלֵּאֲתִי רוּחַ חֲכָמָה וְעָשׂוּ אֶת בְּגָדֵי אֶהְרֹן לְקִדְשׁוֹ לְכֹהֵנִי לִי ESV You shall speak to all the skillful, whom I have filled with a spirit of skill, that they make Aaron's garments to consecrate him for my priesthood. NIV Tell all the skilled men to whom I have given wisdom in such matters that they are to make garments for Aaron, for his consecration, so he may serve me as priest. καὶ σὺ ἀλήσον πᾶσι το...	ליהוה
from YHWH	מִיְהוָה	Genesis 19:24 plugin-autotooltip__default plugin-autotooltip_bigGenesis 19:24 Hebrew וַיְהִי הַיּוֹם הַמָּסִיר עַל סֻדָּם וְעַל עֲמֹרָה גִפְרִית וְאֵשׁ מֵאֵת יְהוָה מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם ESV Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the LORD out of heaven. NIV Then the LORD rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah-from the LORD out of the heavens. NLT καὶ κύριος ἔβρεξε ἐν πυρὶ καὶ θείον καὶ πυρὸς ἀπὸ κυρίου ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ...	מִיְהוָה
in / by YHWH	בִּיהוָה	Psalms 64:10 plugin-autotooltip__default plugin-autotooltip_bigPsalms 64:10 Hebrew וַיִּירָאוּ כָּל אָדָם וַיִּגִּדּוּ פֶּעַל אֱלֹהִים וַיִּמְעָשׂוּהוּ הַשְׂכִּילִי ESV Let the righteous one rejoice in the LORD and take refuge in him! Let all the upright in heart exult! NIV Let the righteous rejoice in the LORD and take refuge in him; let all the upright in heart praise him! εὐφρανθήσεται δίκαιος ἐπὶ τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ ἐλπίζει παύτὸν καὶ ἐπαινεσθήσονται πάντες οἱ ἐυθεῖς τῇ καρδίᾳ...	בִּיהוָה
with YHWH (object marker + name)	אֶת־יְהוָה	Deuteronomy 6:13 plugin-autotooltip__default plugin-autotooltip_bigDeuteronomy 6:13 Hebrew וְיָרָא אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ תִירָא וְאֹתוֹ תַעֲבֹד וּבְשֵׁמוֹ תִשָּׁבַע ESV It is the LORD your God you shall fear. Him you shall serve and by his name you shall swear. NIV Fear the LORD your God, serve him only and take your oaths in his name. NLT You must fear the LORD your God and serve him. When you take an oath, you must use only his name. κύριον τὸν θεὸν σου φοβήθησιν καὶ αὐτῷ ᾠκισθήσιν καὶ πρὸς αὐτὸν κολληθήσιν καὶ τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ...	אֶת־יְהוָה
upon / against YHWH (context determines nuance)	עַל־יְהוָה	Numbers 21:7 plugin-autotooltip__default plugin-autotooltip_bigNumbers 21:7 Hebrew וַיָּבֹא הָעָם אֶל מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמְרוּ הָאָנּוּ כִּי דִבְרָנוּ בַיהוָה וְנָבָד הַתְּפִלָּל אֶל יְהוָה וַיִּסַּר מִעֲלֵינוּ אֶת הַנָּחָשׁ וַיִּתְּפֹלֶל מֹשֶׁה עֲדָה הָעָם ESV And the people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you. Pray to the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. καὶ παραγενόμενος ὁ λαὸς πρὸς ἔλεγον ὅτι ἡμάρτομεν ὅτι κατελάθησαμεν κατὰ τοῦ κυρίου καὶ κατὰ σοῦ ἐξῆλ...	עַל־יְהוָה

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