

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- αὐτῇ ἡβίβλος γενέσθω οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς ὅτε 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 אֵלֵיכֶם 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 יְהוָה לֹא יִשָּׂא אֶת שְׁמוֹ לְשׁוֹן אֱשֶׁר יֵשׂא אֶת שְׁמוֹ לְשׁוֹן 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. οὐλήμψητὸδὸνομακυρίουτοῦθεοῦσουεπίματαιἰσὺντοῦγάρμηκαθαρίσηκύριοςτὸνἄμβανοντατὸδὸνομααὐτοῦἐπίματαιῶ... - “YHWH will not hold him guiltless...”	יְהוָה
Object	YHWH is the object receiving the action	Psalm 18:1 plugin-autotooltip__default plugin-autotooltip_bigPsalm 18:1 Hebrew יְהוָה לַיהוָה אֶשֶׁר דָּבַר לַיהוָה אֶת דְּבָרֵי הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת בְּיוֹם הַצִּיל אֹתוֹ מִכַּף כָּל אֲנִיּוֹ וּמִיַּד מִכָּד שְׂאוֹל 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. εἰςτὸτέλοςτῶπαῖδικυρίουτῶἀλλάλασεντῶκυρίουτοῦςλ... - “I love You, O YHWH, my strength.”	יְהוָה
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.”	יְהוָה
Vocative (address)	Used when addressing God directly	Psalm 8:1 plugin-autotooltip__default plugin-autotooltip_bigPsalm 8:1 Hebrew יְהוָה לַיהוָה אֶשֶׁר דָּבַר לַיהוָה אֶת דְּבָרֵי הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת בְּיוֹם הַצִּיל אֹתוֹ מִכַּף כָּל אֲנִיּוֹ וּמִיַּד מִכָּד שְׂאוֹל CHOIRMASTER. 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. εἰςτὸτέλοςἐπὲρτῶνληνῶνψαλμὸςτῶκύριεὸκύριοςἡμῶνὥςθεουμαστὸντὸδὸνομάσουἐνπάσητῇγῆῃὅτιἐπὲρθηρῆσουῶπεράνωτῶνσὺνῶρανῶν... - “O YHWH, our Lord, how majestic is Your name...”	יְהוָה

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 plugin-autotooltip__default plugin-autotooltip_bigGenesis 2:4 Hebrew וְעֵלָה תּוֹלְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ בַּהֲבָרָאם 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- αὐτῇ ἡβίβλος γενέσθαι οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς ὅτε ἡ 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 plugin-autotooltip__default plugin-autotooltip_big1 Samuel 1:3 Hebrew וְעֵלָה הָאִישׁ הַהוּא מֵעִירוֹ מִיָּמִים לְמִיָּמָה לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת וּלְזַבֵּחַ לַיהוָה צְבָאוֹת בְּשָׁלָה וְשָׁנִי בְּנִי עָלִי חֲפָנִי וּפְנִחָס כַּהֲנִים ESV Now this man used to go up year by year from his city to worship and to sacrifice to the LORD of hosts at Shiloh, where the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests of the LORD. NIV καὶ ἀνέβαιεν ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἡμερῶν εἰς ἡμέρας ἐκ πόλεως αὐτοῦ ἐξ ἡπροσκυνεῖν καὶ θυσιάζειν τῷ κυρίῳ ὡς θεῷ εἰς καὶ ἐκεῖ...	יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת
YHWH Shalom	“The LORD is peace”	Judges 6:24 plugin-autotooltip__default plugin-autotooltip_bigJudges 6:24 Hebrew וַיִּבֶן שָׁם גִּדְעוֹן מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה וַיִּקְרָא לוֹ יְהוָה שָׁלוֹם עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה עוֹדָנוּ בַּעֲפָרַת אֲבִי הָעֶזְרָי 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 θυσιάζειν τῷ κυρίῳ ὡς θεῷ καὶ ἐκάλεσεν...	יְהוָה שָׁלוֹם
YHWH Yireh	“The LORD will provide”	Genesis 22:14 plugin-autotooltip__default plugin-autotooltip_bigGenesis 22:14 Hebrew וַיִּקְרָא אַבְרָהָם שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא יְהוָה יִרְאֶה אֲשֶׁר יֹאמַר הַיּוֹם בְּקֶרֶב 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 ἐκάλεισεν τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ τόπου ἐκεῖνου σὺν τοῖς ῥοεῖς ἰδεὶν ἵνα σήμερον ἐν τῷ ὄρει κυρίου ὡς ᾧ θη...	יְהוָה יִרְאֶה

YHWH Tsidqenu	"The LORD our righteousness"	Jeremiah 23:6plugin-autotooltip__default plugin-autotooltip_bigJeremiah 23:6 Hebrew יהוה צדקנו יקראו יְהוָה אֱשֶׁר יִשְׁכֵּן לְבֵטָח 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 ἰσραὴλ καὶ ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σκεπὴν ὠνοειπεποιθήσκα...	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	Hebrew Text
to / for YHWH	לִיהוָה
from YHWH	מִיהוָה
in / by YHWH	בִּיהוָה
with YHWH (object marker + name)	אֶת־יְהוָה
upon / against YHWH (context determines nuance)	עַל־יְהוָה

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