

# The Names of God

## The Compound Names

### *In the Book of Genesis*

#### Part I

##### Introduction:

1. The principle of “progressive revelation” teaches that God’s revealing of His will becomes increasingly detailed as time progresses.
2. This is seen in the names of God as they are made known in the Scriptures.
  - a. Genesis 1:1 – *Elohim* Presents God’s might and power in Creation (plural)
  - b. Genesis 2:4 – *Jehovah* Presents God’s eternal nature and personal compassion
  - c. Genesis 2:4 – *Jehovah Elohim* Presents the combining of God’s attributes
  - d. Genesis 14:18 – *El* Presents God’s strength and greatness
  - e. Genesis 15:2 – *Adonai* Presents God’s authority and lordship
3. This is seen also in the combining of these primary names with other descriptive terms to give a deeper and fuller understanding of the character of God.

- I. *El Elyon* - The Most High God (Genesis 14:18-22)
  - A. This name of God is found in the context of the Battle of the Kings.
    1. In the region of the Dead Sea, a confederation of five kings went to war with coalition of five kings – including the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah.
    2. The group that included Sodom and Gomorrah were defeated and spoiled.
    3. At this time, Lot lived in Sodom and was taken captive by the opposing force.
    4. When Abraham learned of this, he gathered the men of his household (318 total) and pursued the fleeing army all the way to Dan.
    5. There, he defeated the army and recovered the people and possession that had been taken.
    6. As he returned, Abraham met Melchizedek who was the priest of the Most High God.
    7. The priest pronounced a blessing upon Abraham and Abraham gave a tenth of the spoil to Melchizedek.
    8. When the king of Sodom offered the material possessions to Abraham, he refused to accept them – lest some should think that the king of Sodom had made him wealthy instead of God.
  - B. This name of God is used three ways in this passage:
    1. To identify the priesthood of Melchizedek
    2. To identify the faith of Abraham
    3. To identify God – the Most High, possessor of heaven and earth
  - C. The meaning of this name is important and should be considered.
    1. *El* refers to God and His characteristic strength and might.
      - a. God had demonstrated His strength by blessing Abraham with victory over his enemies.
      - b. This victory belonged to the Lord, and it served as a reminder of His great power.
    2. *Elyon* means, “An elevation; lofty, high, or upper.”
      - a. In reference to God, it means, “Supreme, High, or Most High.”
      - b. By Abraham’s victory over the kings, God had proved His greatness above the false gods of the defeated nations.

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- D. This name is used for God in several other passages (Numbers 24:16; Deuteronomy 32:8; Psalm 7:17; 9:2; 18:13; 21:7; 46:4; 47:2; 50:14; 57:2; 73:11; 77:10; 78:17, 35, 56; 82:6; 83:18; 87:5; 91:1, 9; 92:1; 97:9; 107:11; Isaiah 14:14; Lamentations 3:35, 38).
1. Psalm 47 gives a beautiful description of the meaning of this name.
  2. Psalm 83 shows this name in relation to God's judgment.
  3. Psalm 97 shows this name in relation to God's majesty.
- E. There is no being higher than Jehovah.

## II. *El Roi* - God Who Sees (Me) (Genesis 16:13)

- A. This name is found in connection with the birth of Ishmael.
1. Sarah was unable to have children; so, after ten years in the land of Canaan, she convinced Abraham to conceive a child by her handmaid, Hagar.
  2. When Hagar was found to be with child, Sarah was upset and began to oppress her handmaid with heavy burdens.
  3. As a result, Hagar ran away into the wilderness – apparently on her way back to Egypt.
  4. The angel of Jehovah appeared to her and instructed her to return to Sarah.
  5. Also, He promised that through her son, Ishmael ("*God will hear*"), a great multitude of offspring would be born.
  6. Thus, Hagar called God "*El Roi*," the God Who sees me.
- B. This name indicates that God is aware of all that happens with His creation.
1. *El* refers to God and His strength and power.
    - a. God had shown His power in His omniscience.
    - b. He was aware of Hagar no matter where she fled.
  2. *Roi* means, "Sight, vision, seeing, or looking."
    - a. Thus, God is able to see and know all.
    - b. Furthermore, He is able to comfort, help and provide.
- C. This name teaches that God is in control of His world.
1. He saw the mistakes of Abraham, Sarah and Hagar; yet, He remained in control.
  2. Hagar could run from Sarah, but she could not escape the sight of God.
  3. Ishmael was not the son of promise, but he was still the offspring of Abraham – and, God made sure that he was taken care of.
- D. This name teaches about the mercy and grace of God.
1. Abraham, Sarah and Hagar sought to replace God's plan with their own scheme.
  2. Yet, God remained merciful and gracious to them – not allowing Hagar or Ishmael to be lost and die in the wilderness.
  3. In fact, God would form a great people through the lineage of Ishmael.
- E. The lesson for the child of God is powerful: *God is always present and always aware.*
1. When we are lost in sin, He sees and provides a way of forgiveness.
  2. When we are persecuted, He sees and provides strength and hope.
  3. When we feel forsaken, He sees and provides comfort and promise.