

Behold Your God — The Father

The Greek word ***theology*** is a compound of *theos*, meaning “God,” and *logos*, meaning “word, speech, decree, declaration, mandate.” Theology is a study about God. In a general sense, theology is a broad term covering the entire field of Christian belief (the study of Christ, the Holy Spirit, angels, salvation, etc.).

The study of theology proper is the study of God the Father.

God is called Father because He is the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the only true God Who has revealed Himself as the Father, (Ephesians 1:3; John 17:3). He is not the Father of the Lord Jesus from the time of Christ’s incarnation and earthly birth, but He is the eternal Father revealed before all of His creations. Jesus spoke of His eternal glory with God the Father before the creation, (John 17:5). All of the attributes, character, and essence of God are related to the Father. He is the cause of all things, yet is caused by nothing. He always was and ever shall be God. He is the eternal, imminent, and immutable God. God the Father is the creator of man, but He is only the Father of those who have accepted His Son. We who are Christians call Him our Father.

The Fatherhood of God is related to children.

All of mankind is God's creation, yet, all people are not children of God. The supernatural birth that comes as a result of salvation causes a person to become a “son and if a son, then an heir of God and joint-heir through Christ,” (Galatians 4:7). On the cross, Jesus cried, Matthew 27:46 “*My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?*” He called Him “*God*” not “*Father*,” because Jesus was taking the place of the sinner. All our sins were laid on Him, the Just dying for the unjust. From the cross with all of our sins laid upon Him, He could only use the title “*God*.” He is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing, (Ephesians 1:3).

NAMES OF GOD

ELOHIM

Elohim that is used more than two thousand times in the Old Testament is a “plural of majesty” and is the general name for God. It is derived from the abbreviated name, *EL*, meaning “to be strong” (cf. Genesis 17:1; 28:3; 35:11; Joshua 3:10) or “to be preeminent.” In English translations *EL* is usually translated “God.” *Elohim* emphasizes God’s transcendence that He is above all others who are called god. *Elohim*, the plural form of *EL*, was introduced in Genesis 1:1. *EL* and *Elohim* seem to be interchangeable (cf. Exodus 34:14; Psalms 18:31; Deuteronomy 32:17, 21). *EL* is the singular form of *Elohim*.

The Hebrew word “EL” is connected to many names in the Bible.

- “Beth-el” meaning “house of God” (Genesis 12:8).
- “Dani-el” meaning “God is my judge” (Daniel 1:6).
- “El-ijah” meaning “my God is Jehovah” (1 Kings 17. 1).
- “Immanu-el” meaning “God with us” (Isaiah 7: 14).

When “EL” is used at the beginning or ending of a name, it always means “God.”

ADONAI

Adonai (Hebrew — *Adhon* or *Adhonay*) means “lord” or “master” and is usually translated “Lord” in English Bibles. *Adonai* occurs 449 times in the Old Testament and 315 times in conjunction with Yahweh. In Genesis 24:9, “*Adhon*” emphasizes the servant-master relationship that Abraham had with his servant. “*Adhon*” suggests God’s authority as Master; One Who is sovereign in His rule and has absolute authority (cf. Psalms 8:1; Hosea 12:14). [Jehovah is *Adhon*] *Adonai* should be understood to mean “Lord of all,” (Deuteronomy 10:17; Joshua 3:11). *Adonai* may also be a personal address meaning “my Lord.”

YAHWEH

The name *Yahweh* translates the Hebrew tetragrammaton (four lettered expression) YHWH or Jehovah and JHVH. The name was originally written without vowels and has an uncertain pronunciation. *Yahweh* is the unspeakable name of God due to the reverence and fear of almighty God. The American Standard Version translates it “Jehovah.” Most modern translations render it “LORD” (to distinguish it from *Adonai*, “Lord”). Jewish scholars have generally pronounced the unspeakable name as “*Adonai*” instead of actually pronouncing YHWH, out of respect for the sacredness of the covenant name. When Moses asked God’s name, the Lord told him to tell the people, “I AM WHO I AM...The LORD...has sent me to you. This is My name forever” (Exodus 3:14–15). “Jehovah” the eternal “I AM” is the common designation of God in the Old Testament and is used 6,828 times. *Yahweh* has particular significance to the “I AM” claims of Christ (John 6:35; 8:12; 10:9, 11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1). Christ's statements claimed equality with Yahweh. This emphasizes the unity of the triune Godhead. By the name *Yahweh*, God identified His personal relationship as the “Redeemer” of His people, Israel. This is the name that Abram responded to in acknowledging the God of the Abrahamic Covenant, (Genesis 12:8). By the name Yahweh, God brought Israel out of Egypt, delivered them from bondage, and redeemed them (Exodus 6:6; 20:2). Whereas *Elohim* and *Adonai* were designations known to other cultures, the revelation of *Yahweh* was unique to Israel.

Compound Names of God

There are a number of compound forms of the name of God involving the names El (or Elohim) and Yahweh.

- ***El Shaddai*** — “God Almighty,” suggests the power or strength of God. By this name, God is also seen as a covenant-keeping God (Genesis 17:1–8).
- ***El Elyon*** — “God Most High,” emphasizes the supremacy of God. He is the true God and Creator of heaven and earth, Who is above all so-called gods (cf. Genesis 14:18–22). Melchizedek recognized Him as “God Most High” the possessor of heaven and earth (v. 19).
- ***El Olam*** — The “Everlasting God,” stresses His unchanging character (Genesis 21:33; Isaiah 40:28).

Some names of God describe Him or His actions.

- ***Jehovah-Jireh***, “The LORD Will Provide” (Genesis 22:14)
- ***Jehovah Rapha***, “I am the Lord who heals you,” (Exodus 15:26).
- ***Yahweh-Nissi***, “The LORD Our Banner” (Exodus 17:15)
- ***Yahweh-Shalom***, “The LORD is Peace” (Judges 6:24)
- ***Yahweh-Sabaoth***, “The LORD of Hosts” (1 Samuel 1:3)
- ***Jehovah M'Kaddesh***, Jehovah is our “Sanctifier” (Leviticus 20;7 8; Exodus 31:13; Deuteronomy 14:2)
- ***Jehovah Elyon***, Jehovah “Most High” (Psalms. 7:17)
- ***Jehovah Ra ah***, Jehovah is my “Shepherd” (Psalms. 23:1)
- ***Yahweh-Tsidkenu***, “The LORD Our Righteousness” (Jeremiah 23:6).
- ***Yahweh-Adonai***, “Sovereign Lord” (Genesis 15:2).

The Nature Of God

When referring to the nature of God, it is necessary to consider God the Trinity. What is said in reference to God the Father is also indicative of God the Son and Holy Spirit.

God is Spirit

John 4:24 NIV “God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”

The spirituality of God refers to His invisibility and immensity. God’s essence is free from limitation of time and space. Throughout the Old Testament, God is referred to as a spiritual being, although He is attributed with anthropomorphic terms. (Human-like form or terms) Almighty God has revealed Himself in various ways. He manifested Himself to Moses in a burning bush, (Exodus 3:4). God was not the burning bush, but was revealed to Moses in the bush. He revealed Himself as a Pillar of Cloud and a Pillar of Fire to the whole house of Israel, (Exodus 13:21). God was not the pillar of cloud or the pillar of fire, but was manifested to Israel in them. In the New Testament, the Father revealed Himself in His Son’s actions, words, miracles,

etc.. Yet, the Father is not the Son. Jesus appeared in the Old Testament in pre-incarnate manifestations. This means He appeared in visible form before the incarnation, before His birth in Bethlehem.

Theophanies

These visible appearances are called “*Theophanies*” - a visible manifestation of God. Theophany comes from the Greek words *theos* (God) and *phano* (to appear). A theophany is an appearance of God to a person or group when He shows Himself as He truly is to some degree. A theophany can be a physical, visual, or audible manifestation of God in His full glory and power. Genesis 12:7, the LORD appeared to Abram. Exodus 40:34 Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. Isaiah 31:4 So the LORD of hosts will come down to fight on Mount Zion and on its hill. Luke 9:29 And as He [Jesus] was praying, the appearance of His face was altered, and His clothing became dazzling white. Many of the Theophanies are truly “*Christophanies*” or a visible manifestation of the pre-incarnate Christ. Theophanies are different in nature from visions or anthropomorphic revelations. Anthropomorphic revelations are divine metaphors ascribing to God human characteristics, or a bodily form.

Anthropomorphic revelations

Neh' fesh	Soul	Leviticus 26:11
Roo'akh	Spirit	Genesis 1:2
Ah'yin	Eyes	Psalms 11:4; Hebrews 4:13
'ozen	Ears	2 Kings 19:16
Saw-faw	Lips	Job 11:5
Peh	Mouth	Deuteronomy 8:3
O'ref'	Neck	Jeremiah 18:17
Zer-o-ah	Arms	Exodus 15:16
Yawd	Hand	Numbers 11:23
Yaw-meen	Right Hand	Exodus 15:16
Ets-bah	Finger	Exodus 8:19
Labe	Heart	Genesis 6:6
Cheq	Bosom	Psalms 74:11
Had-ome	Foot	Isaiah 66:1

God is Light

1 John 1:5 NKJV This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

John 1:5 NIV The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

“*God is light*” refers to the fact that the Divine nature is of necessity self-revealing and entirely holy. As an essential property of every aspect of His very nature, it is necessary for God to reveal Himself in every property of His

being. In God, there is perfect purity of every aspect of Himself. His love is pure love. His power is almighty omnipotent power. His goodness has no shadow of evil. The unity of the Godhead is revealed when Jesus the incarnate Son of God said He was Light (John 11:12). The Revelation reveals that God is Light.

Revelation 21:23 NIV The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.

The brightness of God's radiant glory surrounds Him in every appearance, (Ezekiel 1:27-28; 8:2; Psalms 50:2; Luke 2:9; Ezekiel 10:4; 2 Samuel 22:13; Matthew 17:5). God dwells in unapproachable light, (1 Timothy 6:16). This light seems to not only permeate the atmosphere around His being, it also radiates from within Him. God is light and in Him is no darkness, (1 John 1:5).

God is Love

1 John 4:7-8 NKJV Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

1 John 4:9 NKJV In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.

John 3:16 NIV For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Love is the essential self-giving nature of God. God does actions of love because He is by nature, character, and essence Love. As with each expression of the divine nature, every disposition of God's fellowship and relationship with His creation is a revelation of His love, for God is love. God has demonstrated His love toward us through the death of His Son on the cross.

God is a Person

When God is called a person, it does not mean that God is a human being, but He does actions of person, possesses the personality and attributes of a person, and is a rational being with self-awareness. God the Father has every aspect of an individual being with mind, emotions, and a will. When God loves, grieves, hates, rejoices, cries, provides and cares, it indicates that He is a Person with a personality. We are made in His image and likeness. Jesus talked to the Father, a Person.

John 17:5 NIV And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

He is God the Father in relation to the Trinity. He is the Father, and Jesus is the Son, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. Jesus clearly stated in John 8:41-47 what is meant by "God the Father."

How do we come to recognize the Fatherhood of God?

John 8:41 NIV You are doing the things your own father does.” “We are not illegitimate children,” they protested. “The only Father we have is God himself.”
John 8:42-43 NIV Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me. Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say.

The Fatherhood of God refers to the relationship God has to the redeemed. This relationship comes as a result of the new life that we have through Christ. In this new life, we have been made ‘sons of God’ and ‘joint-heirs with Jesus Christ,’ (Romans 8:17). Jesus gave us the privilege of coming to the Father in heaven in prayer.

Matthew 6:9-10 NKJV In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.

Matthew 6:11-13 NKJV Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

In John 16, Jesus expanded on the blessings we receive through this new relationship with the heavenly Father.

John 16:23 NKJV And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you.