Carefully systematize all the statements, declarations, and inferences regarding the God of the Bible, we come to discover that this infinite and personal God is the sum-total of His infinite perfections. God is portrayed as personal rather than impersonal, active rather than passive towards his dealings with creation, people, and events.

Many scholars discuss God's perfections using a two-fold classification in an effort to better understand how the Judeo-Christian theology of God is disclosed in biblical literature: (1) incommunicable attributes and (2) communicable attributes. Incommunicable attributes are attributes that belong to Him alone (e.g., infinity; simplicity) whereas communicable attributes are attributes that people may possess in various degrees (e.g., holiness; justice; love).

We also have several other ways to examine and reflect upon the nature of God as understood in Hebrew Bible. For example, we can examine the personhood (e.g., interactive relationships with Israel) by carefully examining the historical context-background with a wide array of tools: archeology, grammar, history, and literary analysis. One popular approach is to focus on analogies that are about God—with many of them being anthropological (e.g., God is referred to as a bridegroom in Isaiah 61:10, a father in Deuteronomy 32:5, a physician in Exodus 15:26, and a shepherd in Psalm 23:1).

Below is an examination into the nature of God by focusing on many of the significant names in the Hebrew Bible. This not only adds to our understanding of Jewish monotheism, but also contributes to our understanding of other world religions that find its historical source in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Christianity). While this list of the names of God is not exhaustive, it is chronological. Lastly, this listing is still in progress as continual insights are made.

Therefore, whether one is studying Theology Proper, tracing how the God of the Bible is historically disclosed in Hebrew Bible, thinking about the relationship of God of Bible to other portrayals of God or gods in religious studies, this approach should prove beneficial.

**SHARED BELIEFS:**

In his book, *Israelis, Jews and Jesus*, Jewish author, Pinchas Lapide, observes that while significant differences exist in both belief and practice, Judaism & Christianity share many common beliefs. He writes:

*We Jews and Christians are joined in brotherhood at the deepest level, so deep the fact that we have overlooked it and missed the forest of brotherhood for the trees of theology. We have an intellectual and spiritual kinship which goes deeper than dogmatics, hermeneutics, and exegesis. We are brothers in a manifold 'elective affinity'

- In the belief in one God our Father,
- in the hope of His salvation,
- in ignorance of His ways,
- in humility before His omnipotence,
- in the knowledge that we belong to Him, not He to us,
- in love and reverence for God,
- in doubt about our wavering fidelity,
- in the paradox that we are dust and yet the image of God,
- in the consciousness that God wants us as partners in the sanctification of the world,
- in the condemnation of arrogant religious chauvinism,
- in the conviction that love of God is crippled without love of neighbor
- in the knowledge that all speech about God must remain in a stammering on our way to Him.

~ Pinchas Lapide,

### Elohim: 
**Mighty One:**

This a plural term for God usually speaking of either His majesty or His plenitude.

Elohim emphasizes God's transcendence; God is above all others who are called God.

In Genesis 1:1 where this name is first used, Elohim means "The fullness of Deity" or God-very God."

"El" is a common Semitic term for "God."

NET Bible states, "This frequently used Hebrew name for God is a plural form. When it refers to the one true God, the singular verb is normally used, as here. The plural form indicates majesty; the name stresses God's sovereignty and incomparability-he is the "God of gods" (pg. 2). Second Beta Edition.

1. This is the standard Hebrew term for God. Used more than 2000 times in Hebrew Bible.
2. Elohim comes from the abbreviated name, El, which seems to have a root meaning "to be strong" (cf. Gen. 17:1; 28:3; 35:1; Joshua 3:10) or "preeminent." This word is related to similar words for deity found throughout almost all Semitic languages.
3. The basic meaning is probably "Mighty" or "Almighty."
4. This word often occurs in a form called "the plural of majesty" or "the plural of intensity."
5. As a normal plural, that is, "gods," it is used to refer to the false gods of 1 Kings 19:2.
6. In English translations, Elohim is usually translated as "God."
7. Some understand the relationship between El and Elohim be that whereby the Elohim is the plural form of El. In cases like Exodus 34:14; Psalm 18:31; Deut. 32:17, 21, both terms seems to be interchangeable. But in other passages like Isaiah 31:3, El draws the distinction between God and human so that El "signifies the power and strength of God and the defenselessness of human enemies" TDOT, 1:273-74.

| Genesis 1:1, 26-27; 3:5; 31:13; Deut. 5:9; 6:4; Psalm 5:7; 86:15; 100.3 |

### El Elyon: 
**"Most High" or the "strongest Mighty One."

"El" (common Semitic term for God) is added to "Most High"

In context this name is used here to express God's power over the nations.

"God Most High" is known from Ugaritic texts of the Late Bronze Age (Ugarit was a Canaanite city along the coast of what is now Syria).

NET BIBLE states, "Unlike the normal Canaanites, this man [Melchizedek] served 'God Most High'- one sovereign God, who was the creator of all the universe. Abram had in him a spiritual brother" (pg. 34).

1. This term for God as used in Genesis 14:18 expresses God's power over the nations.
2. The language describing Melchizedek (which means "king of righteousness") by the priest of the "LORD, God Most High" is used in his blessing of Abram with reinforced words (vs. 19: Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; [vs. 20] and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!"

2. Interestingly, El Elyon is used in Isaiah 14:14 in the context of utter arrogance whereby Assyrian, Babylonian, or Lucifer himself states, "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High." clouds, I will be like the most High."


### El Roi: 
**The Mighty One who sees:**

Literally, "God of my seeing." According to NET, "The pronominal suffix may be understood either as objective ("who

1. Hagar, an Egyptian, who had come to faith in the Lord of Abram and Sarai, gives God a commemorative name, "You are the God Who Sees."

She is greatly moved by God's intimate knowledge of her situation.

| Genesis 16:13 |
### Hebrew Names in Genesis

**El Shaddai:**  
_Altmighty God or All-sufficient God:_

1. This name emphasizes God’s power. The context is that God has the power to bring about in Sarai a son for Abram.

2. According to *Jewish Study Bible*, pg. 37, this name may have originally meant, “God, the One of the Mountain” and thus expresses the association of a deity with his mountain abode which was well known in Canaanite literature (cf. the Lord, Him of Sinai.” In Judges 5:5). In the Priestly conception, the four-letter name translated as LORD was disclosed only in the time of Moses (Exod 6.2-3), and El Shaddai was the name by which God revealed Himself to the patriarchs.”

3. NET BIBLE, “Isa 14:13 and Ezek 28:14, 16 associate such a mountain with God, while Ps 48:2 refers to Zion as ‘Zaphon,’ the Canaanite Olympus from which the high god El ruled. (In Isa 14 the Canaanite god El may be in view. Note that Isaiah pictures pagan kings as taunting the king of Babylon, suggesting that pagan mythology may provide the background for the language and imagery)” (pg. 38).

**El Olam:**  
_Everlasting God or God of Eternity:_

“El” is followed by the perfection of "everlastingness."

1. Translated in *Jewish Study Bible* as “Everlasting God” (pg. 45).

2. Interesting to note the context in Isaiah 40:28 and in particular, its association with the well-known passage, Isaiah 40:31.

**Yahweh Yireh:**  
_“The Lord Sees” or “Yahweh will provide”_  
(Gen. 22:14).

1. In Genesis 22:8 the phrase, "God will provide" is not only the certain theme, but also the turning point in this account.

2. The key idea is that God will provide a
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>This name of God is developed from Abraham’s statement of faith (vs. 8).</strong></th>
<th><strong>sacrifice instead of Isaac.</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>3. It is also interesting to note that Genesis 22:15-18 is one of the central passages for the Abrahamic Covenant, namely, God’s unilateral and unconditional promise to create a nation through Isaac.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **El Elohe Israel:**
*God, the God of Israel (El-elohe-yisrael):*
This is a transliteration from the Hebrew even though it is not entirely understood how this name should be interpreted grammatically. | |
| According to NET BIBLE: Because of the difficulties of translating this name, “One option is to supply an equative verb as in the translation: ‘The God of Israel [is] God’. Another interpretative option is ‘the God of Israel [is] strong for ‘mighty’ (pg. 77).” | |
| **Genesis 33:20** | **Exodus 3:14; cf. Genesis 12:8; 13:4; 26:26; Exodus 6:3; 7; 20:1; 33:19; 34:5-7; Psalm 68:4; 76:1; Jeremiah 31:31-34.**

1. In this passage we discover that Jacob, who has now been renamed Israel, constructed an altar for the worship of the Lord like Abraham, his grandfather (12:7). The name he bestowed upon the altar was “God, the God of Israel.” This title at this point of Jacob’s life reflects his mature faith and intimacy with God. |
| **Yahweh (Jehovah):**
*The Self-Existant One:*
Faithfulness of God: “I am [or will be] who I have been,” or “I will be who I will be.”

*Ontological nature of God: “I AM WHO I AM.”*
Flowing from pure actuality (existence with no possibility to not exist or to be anything other than pure & simple existence) are a number of infinite perfections (attributes): *God’s simplicity* (God is indivisible, for there no potential for change), *asety* (self-existence; A Being who is existence, pure & simple, could not have come into existence or cease to exist since Being is existence itself), *immutability* (no potential for change for a Being of pure actuality is a simple Being with no parts), *necessity* (pure actuality has no potential not to exist, and a Being with no potential not to exist must exist necessarily. And what must exist necessarily is a necessary being), *eternality* (nontemporality-Pure Actuality cannot change, is not in time but is eternal), & *infinity* (without limits for Being has no potential for any kind of limitation; Pure Actuality is Infinite). This understanding of God is reaffirmed in N.T. literature (e.g., Revelation 1:4). |
| 1. This is name is the personal and proper name for God. |
| 2. Name Yahweh ("yod"-"heh"-"vav"-"heh" in Hebrew) translates the Hebrew tetragrammaton (four lettered expression) YHWH. In ancient times the “vav” was pronounced the “w.” Since the name was originally written without vowels, it is not clear how this name should be pronounced. Thus, many translate YHWH as “Jehovah” or “LORD” (to distinguish it from Adonai, “Lord”). Jewish scholars typically pronounce this word, “Adonai” instead of actually pronouncing YHWH, out of respect, honor, and worship in view of the sacredness of this covenant name. |
| 3. Notwithstanding, it seems that YHVH was pronounced “Yahweh.” But by Second Temple times Jewish people began substituting “adonai” and other surrogates. |
| 4. This word is used 6,828 times in Hebrew Scripture. |
| 5. This word seems to be related to the verb “to be” (Hayah). The verb is in present tense emphasizing the idea that God has continual existence in Himself. Thus, Exodus 3:14-15, the Lord declares, “I am WHO IAM... The Lord... has sent me to you; This is My name forever.” |
| 6. The three occurrences of “I AM” in verse 14 represent forms of the Hebrew verb “to be” and in each case they are related to His divine name. |
7. God is pure “I AM”-ness; He is the self-existent One who depends on no one else for His being. In other words, God is Pure Existence. This means that God is pure actuality, with no potent for existence. Pure actuality or pure existence asserts that there is no possibility to not exist or be anything other than existence. In other words, pure actuality has no potential for nonexistence; no potential for change. Thus, the implications of this notion is that God exists independently of all else, (Genesis 1:1; Psalm 90:2), God gives existence to everything else (Genesis 1:1; 1:21), and God is pure existence (Exodus 3:14).

8. By the name Yahweh, God identifies Himself in this His personal relationship with Israel, and it was to this name that Abram responded in acknowledging the Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis 12:8. Moreover, it was this name that God delivered Israel out of Egypt, emancipated them from bondage, and redeemed them (Exodus 6:6; 20:2).

9. While “Elohim” and “Adonai” are designations known to other cultures, the revelation of Yahweh is unique to Israel.

10. Exchanging Yahweh for “THE LORD” goes back to the Greek translation of the Septuagint (3rd century BC) which renders this name for God with the Greek word, “kyrios” (Lord).


12. Jehovah (English) is the harmonization of YHVH with the vowels of “adonai.”

13. ESV Study Bible notes three likely nuances of meaning of this name of God: (1) God is self-existent and independent; (2) God is Creator & Sustainer of all that exists; (3) God is immutable (pg. 149).

### Adonai: Lord, Master:

The name of God used for Yahweh when the proper name of God came to be thought of as too sacred to pronounce.

Adonai is understood to mean “Lord of all” or “Lord par excellence” (cf. Deuteronomy 10:17; Joshua 3:11).

Adonai is also used as a personal address meaning “my Lord.” **TDOT**: 1:59-72; *Nelson’s Expository Dictionary of the Old Testament*, 228-29.

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**Exodus 4:10-12**: Josh. 7:8-11

1. The designation “Adonai,” from the Hebrew “Adhon” or “Adhonay” in its root actually means “lord” or “master.”

2. Adonai occurs 449 times in Hebrew Bible and 315 times in conjunction with Yahweh.

3. This word is typically translated “Lord” in English Bibles.

4. Adhon stresses the servant-master relationship (cf. Gen. 24:9) and implies God’s authority as Master. He is the One who is sovereign in His rule, possessing absolute authority (Psalm 8:1; Hosea 12:14).

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**Yahweh Rapha:** 1. NET BIBLE notes, “The name I Yahweh am...” **Exodus 15:26**
| **Yahweh who heals:**  
This name is used to testify of the power and mercy of God. | your healer comes as a bit of a surprise to the reader. One would expect, 'I am Yahweh who heals your water'; but it was the people he came to heal, because their faith was weak. God will let Israel know here that he can control the elements of nature to bring about a spiritual response in Israel (see Deut. 8)" (pg. 156). |
| --- | --- |
| **Yahweh Nissi:**  
Yahweh is my banner  
*(Yahweh nissi; nissi)*:  
Contextually, the phrase stands as a battle call against the Amalekites. | 1. Nissi may mean "standard" or "pole."  
NET: "Note that when Israel murmured and failed God, the name commemorated the incident or the outcome of their failure. When they were blessed with success, the naming praised God. Here the holding up the rod of God was preserved in the name for the altar—God gave them the victory" (pg. 161). |
| **Yahweh Maccaddeshem:**  
Yahweh your sanctifier | 1. ESV Study Bible notes, "This section [Exodus 31:12-17] explicitly reminds Israel of what the instructions about the tabernacle signify: remembering the Sabbath by keeping it holy is integral to Israel’s life as the people who are sanctified (or ‘made holy’) by the Lord (see 20:8-11; 35:1-3). This passage grounds Israel’s Sabbath observance both in creation (31:17; cf. 20:11), which Israel shares with all mankind, and in God’s special choice of Israel (‘sanctify,’ 31:13; ‘covenant forever,’ v. 16). The form of the fourth commandment in Exodus (20:8-11) stresses the first, while that in Deuteronomy (Deut. 5:12-15) stresses the second. This section shows that there is no tension between the two emphases" (pg. 196). |

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**Exodus 17:15**

**Exodus 31:13**
| **Yahweh Elohim:**  
**Yahweh, the Mighty One**  
(The Lord God of Israel) | Judges 5:3; Isaiah 17:6  
Deuteronomy 6:4 |
|---|---|
| Judges 5:3: | **Yahweh Shalom**  
(Yahweh is peace): |
| 1. Cited together in the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4):  
"Hear, Israel! Yahweh [is] our Elohim; Yahweh [the only] One" (Deut.6:4).  
*Jewish Study Bible* makes some interesting comments on Deuteronomy 6:4: "...In Hebrew, it is possible to form a sentence by simply joining a subject and a predicate, without specifying the verb, 'to be.' The Hebrew here thus allows either 'YHVH, our God, YHVH is one' or 'YHVH is our God, YHVH alone.' The first, older translation, which makes a statement about the unity and indivisibility of God, does not do full justice to this text... The verse makes not a quantitative argument (about the number of deities) but a qualitative one, about the nature of the relationship between God and Israel. Almost certainly, the original force of the verse, as medieval Jewish exegetes in translators' note... recognized, was to demand that Israel show exclusive loyalty to our God, YHVH—but not thereby to deny the existence of other gods! In this way, it assumes the same perspective as the first commandment of the Decalogue, which, by prohibiting the worship of other gods, presupposes their existence... Once true monotheism became the norm in the Second Temple period, this earlier perspective became unintelligible. Second Temple readers and translators of the Shema were thus forced to read this and similar passages in a way that made consistent with the normative monotheism... That process of interpretation is already evident in the Septuagint's translation (3rd century BCE): 'the Lord is one.' As the basis for most subsequent translations, that reading is the source for the common understanding of the verse" (pg. 380). | **Yahweh Sabbaoth: Yahweh of hosts (armies): The LORD OF HOSTS.** |
| | 1. Interestingly, the name for the altar is reflective of the Lord’s words to him in Judges 6:23: "Peace to you." Thus, in verse 24 Gideon "built an altar for the LORD there, and named it, 'The LORD IS ON FRIENDLY terms with me.'"  
2. *Jewish Study Bible* states, "The name of the altar is related to God’s comforting words in v. 23: 'All is well'" (pg. 524). |
| | 1. In 1 Samuel 1:3 we have the first appearance of this title. This title is not only used in Samuel, but very often in the Psalms and Prophets.  
2. The word "Hosts" (tseba'ot) seems to be the plural of an abstract noun meaning "numberlessness" or "plentifulness."  
3. *ESV BIBLE Notes,* "It [hosts] refers to numerous entities such as heavenly bodies (Isa. 40:26), angelic beings (Joshua 5:14), 'army of the Lord', the armies of Israel (1 Sam. 17:45), or all creatures (Gen. 2:1). The title may originally have been particularly connected with worship at the Shiloh sanctuary (see 1 Sam. 4:4), in which case | 1 Samuel 1:3  
17:45; Psalm 24:10; 46:7, 11. |
'hosts' would probably have referred to angelic beings, portrayed as ‘God’s enemies’ (pg. 491).

4. Psalm 24:10 and 46:7, 11 offers a portrayal of the LORD as a mighty warrior-king who leads armies into battle.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yahweh Raah: Yahweh is my shepherd:</th>
<th>Psalm 23:1 “The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. David takes the metaphor of a sheep and shepherd and applies it to himself (sheep) and God as a “shepherd.” David speaks as if he was the sheep.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. This metaphor of God as shepherd is also used in Genesis 48:15; 49:24; Psalm 28:9; 80:1; 95:7; 100:3, and is also used in Rev. 7:17; cf. Psalm 49:14.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yahweh Tsidkenu: Yahweh our righteousness (justice):</th>
<th>Jeremiah 23:6; Jeremiah 33:16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The Hebrew for Justice, צִדְקֵנ (ṣēḏeq), is used very broadly in its usage here perhaps including all the nuance you see below: “vindication” as seen in legal contexts (cf. Job 6:29), “deliverance” or “salvation” as seen in exilic contexts (c. Isaiah 58:8), and justice-as in the sense of ruling (cf. Lev. 19:15).</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. NET states, “Here it sums up the justice that the Lord provides through the raising up this ruler as well as the safety, security, and well-being that result” (pg. 1354).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. This name for God is generated from a textual play of words. Zedekiah’s name is “The Lord is my righteousness.” Even though Zedekiah may have failed as the last king of Judah, a new king will come and Judah will be saved and Israel will dwell securely. The name by which he will be called is “Yahweh Tsidkenu.” See, Zedekiah failed because he not only placed on the throne as a puppet ruler by Nebuchadnezzar, but he also rejected the words of the prophet Jeremiah. Zedekiah rebelled against his Babylonian captors which destroyed Jerusalem in 586/587 BC.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. JEWISH STUDY BIBLE states, “The name of the king, The Lord is our Vindicator, in Heb is a play on the name Zedekiah, and might suggest that the ideal future king will be named YHVH Tsidkenu, the same elements in the name Tsidkiyah (Zedekiah) in reverse order” (pg. 972).</td>
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</table>

This title is applied to the Davidic ruler whose rule will be just and right. The city will be restored and so the provisions of this ruler will provide become identified with the city.

Related, check out other
| **Yahweh El Gemolah:**  
**Yahweh God of recompense:** | 1. “For the Lord is a God who punishes” or “God of retribution”  
2. “גְּמֻלוֹת אֵל”: See also related usages, cf. Ezek. 32:21; Job 41:47; Psalm 82:1; Joshua 22:22; Psalm 36:7, 80:11. | **Jeremiah 51:56:**  
In the context of the Babylonian Captivity we see this title used:  
“54 Cries of anguish will come from Babylon, the sound of great destruction from the land of the Babylonians. 55 For the LORD is ready to destroy Babylon, and put an end to her loud noise. Their waves will roar like turbulent waters. They will make a deafening noise. 56 For a destroyer is attacking Babylon. Her warriors will be captured; their bows will be broken. For the LORD is a God who punishes; he pays back in full.” |

| **Yahweh Nakeh:**  
**Yahweh who smites (strikes):** | נָכָה: to smite, strike, beat, scourge, clap, applaud, and give a thrust. 1 This is a a particular hiphil verb nuance implying strike.  
2. *Jewish Study Bible* states, “Ezekiel again employs the statement doom is coming, but shifts his language to that of the ‘Day of the LORD’ traditions” (pg. 1055).  
3. The context (vv. 4, 27) is to bring about discipline in order to bring about a better understanding of Himself. | **Ezekiel 7:9:**  
“My eye will not pity you; I will not spare you. For your behavior I will hold you accountable, and you will suffer the consequences of your abominable practices. Then you will know that it is I, the LORD, who is striking you.” |

| **Yahweh Shammah:**  
**Yahweh who is present (there):** | 1. Here in Ezekiel 48:35 the design name for the city from that day is “The LORD IS THERE” (Isaiah 60:14; 62:2-4, 12; Jer. 3:17; 33:15-16).  
2. “This return of the Lord and the regathering of His people is predicted by Ezekiel in 11:17; 20:33-44, 37:15-28; 39:21-29). The Lord was forced to depart from the city and temple because of the wickedness of the Israelites (8:6; 10:18). But here, Ezekiel foresees the return of God in all His glory to His people, His temple, and His land (New Illustrated Bible Commentary, 1005). | **Ezekiel 48:35:**  
“The circumferences of the city shall be 18,000 cubits [about six miles]. And the name of the city from that time on shall be, “THE LORD IS THERE.”  
See also Jeremiah 3:17; 33:16; Zechariah 2:10; and in New Testament Literature, Revelation 21:3; 22:3.” |

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3. The Jewish Study Bible states: “The name of the city is THE LORD IS THERE to signify the return of God's presence (see Isa. 60.14; Jer. 23.6), reversing the divine abandonment that was the theme of the prophecies of retribution in the bulk of the book” (pg. 1137).

“"A good character is the best tombstone. Those who loved you and were helped by you will remember you when forget-me-nots have withered. Carve your name on hearts, not on marble." ~ Charles Spurgeon

"In the name of God, stop a moment, cease your work, look around you. ~ Leo Tolstoy"

BIBLIOGRAPHY: