

Did you know the Bible mentions the name of the God of Israel 6,828 times? (Strong's #H3068 & #H3069) Yet, if you ask most people the name of God, they can't tell you. Many can name the gods of other countries, cultures and pagan religions, but not the name of the one and only true God – YHVH (יהוה in Hebrew).

Why is this? Why isn't His name spelled out in our Bibles? And, what have we missed all these centuries by not using His actual name?

As with other traditions and customs, the reasons for this have evolved over the centuries. The most prominent comes from the Hebrew rabbis who've guarded and passed down the scriptures. They believed that the name was too holy to pronounce, and thus instructed the priests and scribes to change it to "Adonai" when they came across it. The word "LORD" (in all caps) in our Bibles today is the English translation of the word "Adonai."

Ironically, another reason using the name of Yehovah was discouraged was in order to demonstrate the universal sovereignty of Israel's God over all others. In the 3rd century BCE, "As Judaism became a universal religion through its proselytizing in the Greco-Roman world, the more common noun *elohim*, meaning 'god,' tended to replace Yahweh to demonstrate the universal sovereignty of Israel's God over all others." (<http://www.elijah.com/whythlrd.htm>). Christians began making the change in the 2nd century CE, and it became a prominent practice by the 4th century, with the Church Fathers translating the scriptures to Latin replacing "YHVH" with "Dominus" meaning Lord. (<http://www.elijah.com/whythlrd.htm>)

From that noble beginning, the word "LORD" replaced the Hebrew name "YHVH" (or יהוה) in our Bibles. Today, as a result of man's changes to the word of Yehovah, his name has been completely overshadowed by names of other man-made gods.

Other contributing factors to the disappearance of Yehovah's name through the centuries include debates on how to say the name "YHVH" accurately, so as not to misrepresent or dishonor Him. Still others are wanting to protect the name from being erased or defaced

(based on Deut 12:3-4 and others), which has led Jews today to write "G-d" as a way of protecting the name in written form from dishonor or disregard, should the paper it's written on be ruined or discarded.

In our desire to honor Yehovah, we've made new rules contrary to his word that have resulted in just the opposite. We've virtually nearly erased his very name from the earth, while the names of other gods gain prominence. We've replaced the word nearly every time and, consequently, shrouded Yehovah from view in our cultures and even in our churches.

Today, with so many people and cultures recognizing some sort of made-up god or gods, many have come to believe – either ignorantly or deliberately (or both) – that all gods are ultimately referring to the one true God – whatever name you want to call him or her. There's this notion of "the universe" – one authority in the cosmos that unites all the gods. For instance, many of your friends - believers included - likely think that both Christians and Muslims serve the same god, and just call him by a different name. Some would prefer that Christians go on thinking this, because it promotes peace and unity of mankind. But Muslims don't believe in or serve the God of Israel, Yehovah, and when Yehovah's followers acquiesce to believing in "God" instead of using his name, we're actually showing our naivety, allowing their god to be equal with Yehovah, and robbing Yehovah of his glory.

When we don't use the name Yehovah or specify the God of Israel, our hearers or readers can insert whatever god they'd like, giving their god credence, glory, honor and visibility. In the case of Muslims, they use their god's name all the time, several times per day. We now live in a world where more people know the name of the Muslim god, than the one true God – Yehovah.

THE POWER OF THE NAME

Why would Yehovah inspire nearly every writer of the books of the Bible to use his name if he didn't want his people using it? In the books of Moses alone, the name YHVH (or יהוה) is spelled out in the Hebrew manuscripts over 1,600 times, beginning in Genesis 2:4. Imagine if every time you saw the word "LORD" (in all

caps) it read Yehovah or Yahweh (as some pronounce it). You'd be seeing and saying his name nearly 7,000 times as you read through the Bible. This was the intent of the authors of the Bible, and, might I add, of Yehovah himself ("All scripture is inspired by Yehovah..." 2 Tim. 3:16).

Why does Yehovah want us using his name? In searching the scriptures for references to using his name, I came to understand the many benefits of doing so.

(I have restored "Yehovah" where the word "LORD" appeared in the following verses.)

His Name Provides Strength & Protection

- Psalm 20:1, 7-8 (NASB) May Yehovah answer you in the day of trouble! May the name of the God of Jacob set you securely on high! ...Some boast in chariots and some in horses, but we will boast in the name of Yehovah, our God. They have bowed down and fallen, but we have risen and stood upright.
- Deuteronomy 28:7 & 10 (NASB) Yehovah shall cause your enemies who rise up against you to be defeated before you; they will come out against you one way and will flee before you seven ways.... So all the peoples of the earth will see that you are called by the name of Yehovah, and they will be afraid of you.
- Proverbs 18:10 (NASB) The name of Yehovah is a strong tower; the righteous runs into it and is safe.
- Psalm 118:10 (NASB) All nations surrounded me; In the name of Yehovah I will surely cut them off. They surrounded me like bees; they were extinguished as a fire of thorns; In the name of Yehovah I will surely cut them off.
- Joel 2:32 (NASB) And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of Yehovah will be delivered;
- Zephaniah 3:12 (NASB) But I will leave among you a humble and lowly people, and they will take refuge in the name of Yehovah.
- Psalm 124:8 (NASB) Our help is in the name of Yehovah, who made heaven and earth.
- Isaiah 50:10 (NASAB) Who is among you that fears Yehovah, That obeys the voice of His servant, That walks in darkness and has no light? Let him trust in the name of Yehovah and rely on his God.

His Name Provides Blessing

- Numbers 6:27 (NASB) So they shall invoke My name on the sons of Israel, and I then will bless them.

- Exodus 20:24 (NASB) You shall make an altar of earth for Me, and you shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen; in every place where I cause My name to be remembered, I will come to you and bless you.
- Deuteronomy 21:5 (NASB) Then the priests, the sons of Levi, shall come near, for Yehovah your God has chosen them to serve Him and to bless in the name of Yehovah; and every dispute and every assault shall be settled by them.
- 2 Samuel 6:18 (NASB) When David had finished offering the burnt offering and the peace offering, he blessed the people in the name of Yehovah.

We Can Praise and Honor Him by Using His Name

- Malachi 3:16 (NASB) Then those who feared Yehovah spoke to one another, and Yehovah gave attention and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear Yehovah and who esteem His name.
- Isaiah 24:15 (NASB) Therefore glorify Yehovah in the east, the name of Yehovah, the God of Israel, in the coastlands of the sea.
- Micah 4:5 (NASB) Though all the peoples walk each in the name of his god, as for us, we will walk in the name of Yehovah our God forever and ever.
- Joel 2:26a (NASB) "You will have plenty to eat and be satisfied and praise the name of Yehovah your God, who has dealt wondrously with you;
- David loved to praise the name of Yehovah. See Psalms 7:17; 102:21; 103:1; 113:1-3; 135:1; 145:1 & 21; 148:5 & 13.

Yehovah Considers Not Saying a Name an Act of Dishonor Reserved for His Enemies

- Exodus 23:13 (NASB) Now concerning everything which I have said to you, be on your guard; and do not mention the name of other gods, nor let them be heard from your mouth.
- Joshua 23:6-7 (NASB) Be very firm, then, to keep and do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, so that you may not turn aside from it to the right hand or to the left, so that you will not associate with these nations, these which remain among you, or mention the name of their gods, or make anyone swear by them, or serve them, or bow down to them.
- Psalm 16:4 (NASB) The sorrows of those who have bartered for another god will be multiplied; I shall not pour out their drink offerings of blood, nor will I take their names upon my lips.

- Psalm 109:13 (NASB) Let his posterity be cut off; in a following generation let their name be blotted out.
- Psalm 9:5 (NASB) You have rebuked the nations, you have destroyed the wicked; you have blotted out their name forever and ever.
- Deuteronomy 29:20 (NASB) Yehovah shall never be willing to forgive him, but rather the anger of Yehovah and His jealousy will burn against that man, and every curse which is written in this book will rest on him, and Yehovah will blot out his name from under heaven.
- Exodus 17:14 (NASB) Then Yehovah said to Moses, "Write this in a book as a memorial and recite it to Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven."
- Deuteronomy 25:19 (NASB) Therefore it shall come about when Yehovah your God has given you rest from all your surrounding enemies, in the land which Yehovah your God gives you as an inheritance to possess, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven; you must not forget.
- Deuteronomy 9:14 (NASB) Let me alone, that I may destroy them and blot out their name from under heaven; and I will make of you a nation mightier and greater than they.

We are Encouraged – Even Commanded – to Say His Name

- Exodus 3:15 (NIV) God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'Yehovah the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, the name you shall call me from generation to generation."
- Exodus 9:16 (KJV) And in very deed for this [cause] have I raised thee up, for to shew [in] thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.
- Psalms 105:1 (KJV) O give thanks to Yehovah; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.
- Psalm 113:1-3 (NASB) Praise Yehovah! Praise, O servants of Yehovah, Praise the name of Yehovah. Blessed be the name of Yehovah from this time forth and forever. From the rising of the sun to its setting the name of Yehovah is to be praised.
- 2 Samuel 7:26 (KJV) And let thy name be magnified forever, saying, Yehovah of hosts is the God over Israel: and let the house of thy servant David be established before thee.
- Psalm 34:3 (NASB) O magnify Yehovah with me, and let us exalt His name together.

Our Patriarchs Called on His Name

Abraham

- Genesis 12:8 (NASB) Then he proceeded from there to the mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to the LORD and called upon the name of Yehovah.
- Genesis 13:4 (NASB) ...to the place of the altar which he had made there formerly; and there Abram called on the name of Yehovah.
- Genesis 21:33 (NASB) Abraham planted a tamarisk tree at Beersheba, and there he called on the name of Yehovah, the Everlasting God.

Isaac

- Genesis 26:25 (NASB) So he built an altar there and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants dug a well.

Moses

- Exodus 34:5 (NASB) Yehovah descended in the cloud and stood there with him as he called upon the name of Yehovah.
- Deuteronomy 3:23 (NIV) For I will proclaim the name of Yehovah. Come, declare the greatness of our God!

Elijah

- 1 Kings 18:24 (NASB) Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of Yehovah, and the God who answers by fire, He is God." And all the people said, "That is a good idea."

David

- Psalms 116:4 (KJV) Then I called upon the name of Yehovah; O Yehovah, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.
- Psalms 116:13 (KJV) I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of Yehovah.
- Psalms 116:17 (KJV) I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of Yehovah.
- Psalm 119:55 (NASB) O Yehovah, I remember your name in the night, and keep your law.

We'll Say His Name in the Millennium

- Zephaniah 3:9 (NASB) For then I will give to the peoples purified lips, That all of them may call on the name of Yehovah, To serve Him shoulder to shoulder.
- Isaiah 12:4 (KJV) And in that day shall ye say, Praise Yehovah, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted.
- Isaiah 52:6a (KJV) My people shall know my name.

SAY THE NAME OF YEHOVAH!

What have we lost by hiding - and even avoiding - the name of Yehovah for so many centuries? Start now – take refuge in his name, say it, proclaim it, write it, praise his name, bless his name and be blessed by it, magnify his name, love and honor it. I encourage you to read Yehovah back into the scriptures and see how he reveals himself to you. Call on his name - use it in prayer, praise and with other people. Regain what you've been missing and may his name be known throughout the earth!

O magnify Yehovah with me and let us exalt his name together.

Psalm 34:3

And Yehovah will be king over all the earth; in that day Yehovah will be the only one, and His name the only one.

Zechariah 14:9

To see the Hebrew transcript of the Bible, I recommend the Hebrew Interlinear Bible on Scripture4all.org.
A good read on this topic is "Shattering the Conspiracy of Silence" by Nehemia Gordon.