The Names of God
Lesson 3: Elohim
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1. Elohim Is the Only True God

Jeremiah 9:23-24

Pull out your Journal and ponder the following questions. We are going to come back to these in the spring.

1.1. Discussion

- If someone were to ask me to describe God, what would I say? Write down the words that come to mind when thinking of God. (Journal)
- Reread Jeremiah 9:23-24. What attributes of God will we learn when we truly "understand and know" God?
- What does it mean to "know" God? (Journal)
- Read the following verses and write down verbs describing what the people of God did regarding His name.

Genesis 26:25 Psalm 69:30 1 Kings 8:33 Daniel 2:20 Micah 4:5 Psalm 9:10

2 Chronicles 7:14

2. The First Name Used for God in the Bible

The first name of God in the bible is Elohim. It is Elohim who created the heavens and the earth in Genesis 1:1.

Genesis 1:1-2

El is the root of the word, and used in the generic 'god', unless capitalized as the proper name, El or God. Elohim is that this is the pluralized form of the word. The direct translation according to the above then would be 'Gods', yet perhaps a more accurate form would be 'Trinity'. From the first verses recorded by Moses, God presents himself as 'plural'.

2.1. Elohim Alone is Eternal

In the context of Genesis 1:1, this name is a declaration that God (Elohim) alone is eternal. In a humanistic system, the universe becomes god-like, creating life out of lifeless matter through some mindless random process. By declaring that Elohim alone is eternal and is the Creator of all that exists, scripture gives dignity and meaning to our life and existence. We can know that life has meaning and purpose. If we are to discover that purpose, we must know the one who alone is eternal, our Creator. Eternal life can only be found in a relationship to God, to Elohim, who is eternal.

Elohim continues to be used throughout the Old Testament and El, which means mighty, strong, and prominent, is used as part of compounds and phrases of his name in still more verses.

Deuteronomy 10:16-22

The omnipotence of God is expressed in El. To make a covenant implies the power and right to do so. It was under the name El that God made incredible promises to Abraham and Jacob.

Genesis 17:1 Genesis 17:7-8 Genesis 35:11

2.2. Elohim Alone is Creator

The name Elohim contains the idea of creative and governing power, of omnipotence and sovereignty. It is Elohim who, by His mighty power, creates the vast universe; who says, and it is done; who brings into being what was not; by whose word the worlds were framed.

Genesis 2:1-7

The first thing God wanted us to know about Himself is that He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth. It is most appropriate that by this name, Elohim, God should reveal Himself – bringing cosmos out of chaos, light out of darkness, habitation out of desolation, and life in **His image**. This is a critical component of our faith. All the other attributes of God are based on this affirmation that God existed prior to, is independent of, and sovereign over His creation…and the world reflects His glory.

2.3. Elohim Alone is in Control

To Elohim, even the stars and the sparrow are important. If the sparrows and the grasses of the field (that Elohim created) are important, how much more important are we? No matter what situation or mess you find yourself in, trust in Elohim, let Him have control of your life. He hears our prayers and answers them according to His will. Understanding that God is Elohim, the Creator and Sustainer of all that exists, gives us confidence to face life's difficulties.

Psalm 147

2.4. Elohim Alone Chooses

Ponder this for a moment; Elohim created all things, and of all the things He created, He chose us to be His.

2.5. Discussion

- When was a time I was chosen; and how did that make me feel?
- When was a time I was not chosen; and how did that make me feel?
- When was the last time I chose someone?
- Who do I need to choose today?

Ephesians 1:3-6

2.6. Elohim Alone makes Covenants

A covenant is a promise that someone makes to another. The intent of a covenant is that it will not be broken.

There is no consensus on the exact number of covenants between God and humanity; however, there are five foundational covenants that God makes with Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David, before establishing the new covenant through Jesus.

2.6.1.	**Noahic Covenant**	**Genesis 9:8-17**	
2.6.2.	**Abrahamic Covenant**	**Genesis 17:1-19**	
2.6.3.	**Mosaic Covenant**	**Exodus 19:1-6**	**Deuteronomy 28:1-14**
2.6.4.	**Davidic Covenant**	**2 Samuel 7:1-16**	
2.6.5.	**The New Covenant**	**Luke 22:19-20**	

We are humans and sinners who sometimes break our promises. Elohim does not break His promises.

Do you notice how the covenants progressively build upon one another, forming a complete redemptive storyline? God preserved the world through Noah, initiated redemption through Abraham, established the nation of Israel through Moses, promised an eternal shepherd-king through David, and then fulfilled all of his covenants through Jesus. With each covenant, God's promises and plans to save the world through the seed of the woman become clearer and clearer until we finally see that redemption can only come through Jesus Christ.

References: Parts of this study were contributed by "The Names of God" by Larry Brown and www.bibleproject.com.