

El Elohe Israel - God Is a Personal God

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I. El Elohe Israel

A. Definition

El = the Almighty;

Elohe = God;

Israel = He will be a prince with God; prince with God; contender of God; he strives with God; soldier of God; God will rule; God ruled man; ruling with God; one that prevails with God.

Possible translations for **El Elohe Israel**:

"God, the God of Israel";

or "mighty is the God of Israel";

or "the mighty God of Israel".

El Elohe Israel is found only in Gen 33:20

There he (Jacob) set up an altar and called it El Elohe Israel.

B. Background: To understand the story let's look at the following Scriptures.

1. When Abraham came into the land of Canaan, he built an altar to the Lord as an act of worship. The Lord promised the land to Abraham and his descendants (Ge 12:6-8).
2. Jacob is sent to Paddan-aram, to protect him from Esau (his brother) and to find a wife (Ge 28:1-2).
3. On his journey he has a dream from which God speaks to him (Ge 28:15-17).
Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, " Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it." He was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."
4. Jacob names this place Bethel (the house of God) and makes a vow to God (Ge 28:20-22).
Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me and will keep me on this journey that I take, and will give me food to eat and garments to wear, and I return to my father's house in safety, then the LORD will be my God. This stone, which I have set up as a pillar, will be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."
5. After more than 20 years Jacob returns to Canaan. To the land of his brother and to an uncertain future. He is troubled and unable to sleep and finds himself wrestling with an angel. Jacob names this place Peniel stating that he has "seen God face to face." (Ge 32:24-32)
v. 30 So Jacob named the place Peniel, for he said, " I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been preserved."
6. The next day he meets his brother Esau and gives him a great gift from his wealth because he sees his brother as "one sees the face of God." (Ge 33:8-11)
v. 10 Jacob said, "No, please, if now I have found favor in your sight, then take my present from my hand, for I see your face as one sees the face of God, and you have received me favorably.
7. Jacob continues his journey back to Canaan and comes to the city of Shechem. After purchasing a piece of land he builds an altar to the Lord and calls it El-Elohe-Israel (Ge 33:19-20)
v. 20 Then he erected there an altar and called it El-Elohe-Israel.
8. In Shechem, Leah his daughter is raped and the sons of Jacob deceive the people by falsely making a covenant with them. They kill every male of the city (Ge 34)

9. God now speaks to Jacob to fulfill his vow at Bethel (Ge 35:1).
 v. 1 Then God said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel and live there, and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau."
10. After arriving he builds an altar to the Lord and calls the place El-Bethel because it was there that God revealed himself to him (Ge 35:7).
11. God again speaks to him and changes his name from Jacob to Israel and confirms the Abrahamic covenant with him (Ge 35:10-15).
 10 God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; You shall no longer be called Jacob, But Israel shall be your name." Thus He called him Israel. 11 God also said to him, "I am God Almighty; Be fruitful and multiply; A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, And kings shall come forth from you. 12 " The land which I gave to Abraham and Isaac, I will give it to you, And I will give the land to your descendants after you." 13 Then God went up from him in the place where He had spoken with him. 14 Jacob set up a pillar in the place where He had spoken with him, a pillar of stone, and he poured out a drink offering on it; he also poured oil on it. 15 So Jacob named the place where God had spoken with him, Bethel.

Notes:

1. This was the very spot where Abraham built his first altar in the promised land (185 years before; Ge 12:6-7). Jacob now consecrates anew this altar to the God of promise.
2. Before this altar, Jacob only refers to the Lord as "the God of my father Isaac." He never once called him "the Lord my God." But now, in naming this altar "El-Elohe-Israel," (His name was now Israel.) Jacob calls God "his God". Jacob finally submits to the Lord and begins to worship the Lord.
3. The God of Jacob's fathers was now Jacob's personal God, for He had fulfilled His promises and protected him (28:13-15).
4. The name **El-elohe-Israel** indicates that Jacob was confessing, using his new name Israel, that El was his God, "a Mighty God is the God of Israel."

II. Names of God in combination with "Israel"

- A. "The God of Israel," is used 203 times in the OT.
- B. "The LORD (Jehovah) the God (Elohim) of Israel," is used 162 times in the OT.
- C. **God is also invoked in relation to Israel without mentioning one of His names:**
 "Holy One of Israel," Is used 31 times in the OT.
 "Mighty One of Israel," Is used 3 times in the OT.
 "Mighty One of Jacob," Is used 5 times in the OT.

III. God is the God of persons and peoples

By means of these phrases, the covenantal relationship between God and his people was expressed and God's unchanging character was positively acknowledged.

He is a personal God, identifying Himself with individuals, families and nations.

God of Abraham.

Used 10 times in the OT and 1 time in the NT.

(Ge 31:42, 53; Ex 3:6, 15, 16; 4:5; 1 Ki 18:36; 1 Ch 29:18; 2 Ch 30:6; Ps 47:9; Ac 3:13)

God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Used 4 times in the OT and 3 times in the NT.

(Ge 28:13; Ex 3:6, 15, 4:5; Mat 22:32; Mk 12:26; Lk 20:37)

Note: in Ge 28:13 Jacob isn't included because God is speaking to Jacob.

God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

Used 2 times by Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 3:17, 18).

IV. Application

A. I have the blessings of Abraham

Gal 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us--for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE"-- 14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. (Gal 3:9, 29)

I renounce the lie that I have to connive to get the blessings of God.

I receive the truth that Jesus took the curse so that God's blessings flow towards me.

B. I Am A Child of Promise

Rom 9:7-8 nor are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, but: "Through Isaac your descendants will be named." That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants. (Rom 4:13; Gal 4:28)

I renounce the lie that I am god forsaken.

I received the truth that I'm special (a child promise) and precious to God.

C. I am chosen

John 15:19 ...but I chose you out of the world

(Deut 7:6; 14:2; Ps 105:43; Isa 41:9; Eph 1:11; 1 Thes 1:4)

I renounce the lie that I am ordinary and a nobody.

I received the truth that I'm special (chosen) and precious to God.

D. God answers my prayers

Eph 3:20 Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, (Jn 14:13-14; 15:7-8, 16; 16:23-26; Mt 7:7-8; 21:22; Mk 11:23-24; Lk 11:9-10; 1 Jn 3:21-22; 5:14-15)

I renounce the lie that God isn't concerned about my needs.

I received the truth that God is working on my behalf even when I can't see it.

E. I have God's destiny towards me

Jer 29:11 For I know the plans that I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. (Rom 5:9-10; 1 Thes 1:10; 5:9; 2 Thes 2:13)

I renounce the lie that the future is hopeless.

I received the truth that God has good plans for me, that I have destiny.

F. I have God's protection

2 Thes 3:3 But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.
(1 Pt 1:5; Ps 41:1-3; 121:5-8)

I renounce fear that causes me to live in self protection.

I received the truth that God is on my side and is protecting me from all harm

Il in the house of the LORD forever.

G. He is my Lord and my God

Phil 3:8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing
Christ Jesus my Lord (Phil 2:9-11; Jn 20:28; Ps 16:2)

I renounce the lie that I don't know the Lord personally.

I received the truth that God is revealing Himself to me.

The following References were used in this study:

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