

ELOHIM (ONE GOD)*

The primary Hebrew word for God in the Scriptures is plural, used as a singular. He is the One true God.

SCRIPTURE†	MUSIC‡
(Strong's H430 / 2,606 occurrences) Genesis 1 Deuteronomy 6:4-9 Psalm 8 Psalm 18:30-34 Psalm 115:1-13 / 1-9 Psalm 139:13-18 Jeremiah 10:1-13	All Creatures of Our God and King (Nichols) SATB Be Thou My Vision (Rutter) SATB Come, Thou Almighty King Do Not I Love Thee (Curry) SATB God of the Ages Holy, Holy, Holy How Marvelous Are the Works...(Angerman) SATB Immortal, Invisible O God Beyond All Praising O God, You Are My God (PS063) O Worship the King Sing Praise to God You Alone are God (McDonald) SATB



* Theme fits in Hebrew [Names for God] series, usually on the off-year from the Jehovah series.

† Daily preparatory readings shown in bold.

‡ Published choral and vocal music shown in bold.

PRESENTING & PROMOTING THIS THEME

ONENESS AND COMPLEXITY

The name Elohim is a plural word which is used as a singular. This conveys the idea that God is bigger than one but not more than one. He is not containable. He is complex. In Deuteronomy 6:4, God states that He is One, but this verse also uses His own personal name (Jehovah) along with the name Elohim. This is an important verse that connects God's oneness with His complexity.

ONE TRUE GOD

The term Elohim is used in different ways in Scripture. One use has the idea of "gods," the (plural) false gods of the heathen. But when it is used of the true God, it simply means "God." In fact, this name for God is used in Deuteronomy 6, the passage in which God reminds His people that "the Lord our God is one Lord." God is not whoever you think He is; He is the one and only God. Is there something that you still worship, even knowing that there is only one God?

THE SHEMA

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 | *Elohim is the primary Hebrew word for God in the Old Testament. In Hebrew, it is a plural word, but in Scripture is used for the one true Deity. "El" is singular, and "Elohim" is plural. The Hebrew Shema (Deut. 6:7) is considered the core of Judaism: "the Lord our God is One God" or "Jehovah Elohim is one Jehovah" (Hebrew people would substitute Adonai for Jehovah, not saying the name of God.) The other nations worshiped other supposed "gods," but there is only One. His identity is complex, but also exclusive.*

Our worship theme this morning is the name for God, "Elohim."

Elohim is the primary Hebrew word for God in the Old Testament. In Hebrew, it is a plural word (El is singular; Elohim is plural), but in Scripture, the word is used for the one true Deity.

Our Scripture reading this morning will be from Deuteronomy 6– a passage known to Jews as the "Shema." "Shema" is the Hebrew word for "hear." Deuteronomy 6:4 begins, "Hear, O, Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!" **The great confession at the heart of the Shema is monotheism.** There is only one God, and He is Yahweh God of Israel.

Of course, to many of us, this is very basic—but do we live as if it is true? The Shema goes on to say, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." The singleness of God demands singleness of devotion to Him. One Bible scholar

famously said that our hearts are idol factories. No sooner have we slain one idol than our heart produces a new one—something else to treasure more than the one true God of the Bible.

Monotheism demands not only worship but also devotion to God’s word. In Deuteronomy 6, Moses goes on to instruct Israel to make God’s words the centerpiece of their lives. “Think about them all the time,” he says. “Teach them to your children; talk about them constantly. Write them on the walls of your house. In fact, just go ahead and glue God’s words to your face so that you can never forget about them!” Is God’s word the centerpiece of your life?

Perhaps this morning, you need to do a heart check and ask yourself the simple question, “Am I living in light of this great confession— ‘the LORD our God, the LORD is one!’”

(Pastor Kristopher Schaal)

Promotional Post: This Sunday we begin a series in worship of the Hebrew names for God. The most common is *Elohim*, a plural word found at the heart of Jewish monotheism in Deuteronomy 6. Join us Sunday to worship Elohim!

Though this name is found throughout the Bible, these specific passages can help you and your household prepare for worship: [Insert preparatory Scripture readings.]



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