

Compound names of Jehovah

1. Jehovah–tsabaoth to — Jehovah of Hosts

There are other compound phrases in which the name Jehovah appears. Strictly speaking these are not names of God, but are phrases that express certain truths about him.

Just as in the case of names involving El and Elohim, so also with Jehovah, the full significance of the name “Jehovah” is implied in compound names using this title. One of the most important of these compounds is Jehovah–sabaoth (*yehowah tsabaoth*), which is translated Jehovah or LORD of Hosts. This title occurs first in 1 Samuel 1:3. It is used most frequently in the prophets. It should be observed that this name is used only after the people have experienced defeat, or are threatened by defeat. Jeremiah used it some 88 times, and it occurs 14 times in Haggai, 55 in Zechariah and 25 in Malachi. It was a name of God that reminded Israel that God was sufficient and able to save, despite the failures of Israel.

The question has been raised about the exact meaning of the “hosts.” Jacob referred to the angels of God by this term (Genesis 32:2). David also referred to angels under this name (Psalms 103:21; 148:2). The armies of Israel, as his servants were also designated by this term (1 Sam. 17:45). In the sense that all of creation is his, and all the multitude of the hosts of creation serve him, they may all be included. In particular, the angels who serve him as ministering spirits to do his bidding wherever he sends them are most likely intended by the phrase. As a name suggesting the power of God, and given most frequently in times of need on the part of Israel, this is a most comforting name.

2. Jehovah–jireh — Jehovah Will Provide

After the Angel of the Lord had provided the ram to be offered in the stead of Isaac, Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah–jireh (*yehowah yir’eh*), which means Jehovah provides. It is a very suggestive title, in that it speaks of the essential character of the Gospel, namely, that God provides the Savior for sinners (Gen. 22:14).

3. Jehovah–nissi — Jehovah is my Banner

Exodus 17:15 reads, “And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah–nissi (*yehowah nissi*).” This was in celebration of the victory that the Lord had given to Israel over the Amalakites (Genesis 17:8;15). The word *nissi* means banner or standard. Though this is the only place where this title as such appears, Isaiah picks up the figure to encourage his readers with the coming of the Messiah. “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the root of Jesse, that stands for an ensign of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek; and his resting place shall be glorious” (Is. 11:10). Weak though we may be, we are “more than conquerors” in Christ (Romans 8:37).

4. Jehovah–rapha — Jehovah Your Healer

After he had healed the bitter waters in the wilderness, God announced to Israel that he is the God who heals. “If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of Jehovah thy God...I will put none of the diseases upon thee, which I have put upon the Egyptians: for I am Jehovah that heals thee (*yehowah rophe’eka*)” (Exodus 15:26). The healing power of God was celebrated throughout the Old Testament (Ps. 30:2; 103:3; 107:20; 174:3; Isaiah 30:26; 57:19; Jeremiah 6:14; 8:11; 30:17; 17:14). One of the most prominent aspects of Jesus’ ministry was that of healing (Matthew 12:15; 14:14).

5. Jehovah–shalom — Jehovah is Peace

Gideon named that altar which he erected in Ophrah Jehovah–shalom (*yehowah shalom*), which means, “Jehovah is peace” (Judges 6:24). Paul in Ephesians 2:14 speaks of Christ as our peace. It is only the Gospel of grace in Christ that can bring peace to the sinner, but that peace is a peace that passes all understanding. It is a peace that

can meet all adversity and tribulation. “The peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts through Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:7).

6. Jehovah–roi — Jehovah my Shepherd

David gave us the title for our Lord and his intimate relationship to his own, which is one of the favorite figures found in the Scripture. It is Jehovah–rohi (*yehowah roi*), “The Lord is my Shepherd.” The richness of this relation is seen in all the various phases of life coming under his gracious care. Again in Ezekiel 34:15 God claims to himself the prerogative of being the good shepherd, “I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep...” (John 10:11, 14). The tender care of God for his people, and even his sacrifice of himself is implied in this term, “the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep” (John 10:11).

7. Jehovah–tsidkenu — Jehovah our Righteousness

Jeremiah gives us this name of God in a messianic passage. “Behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch...and this is his name whereby he shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness”. (*yehowah tsidkenu*) (23:5–6). This is to be the name of the Messiah. Paul picks up this thought in 1 Corinthians 1:30, “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who was made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.” That God is righteous is the clear teaching of Scripture. This name goes further to say that he is our righteousness. That is, he is the provision for sinners to become righteous before God. This provision is made in the Gospel of Christ.

8. Jehovah–meqaddishkem — Jehovah who Sanctifies You

This is a name closely related to *Jehovahtsidkenu* . It is translated, “Jehovah who sanctifies you.” It occurs in the Pentateuch in connection with various laws that God gave his people (Exodus 31:13; Leviticus 20:3; 21:8, 15, 23; 22:9, 32). The context of Leviticus 20:7–8 teaches that what God demands in sanctification, he provides. “Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy; for I am Jehovah your God. And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am Jehovah who sanctifies you.” The New Testament throws the additional light on this name, in that it ascribes sanctification to each of the Persons of the Godhead. God the Father sanctifies (Jude 1); Christ “is made unto us . . . sanctification” (1Cor. 1:30); and we are sanctified through the Spirit (1Peter 1:2). We are responsible for our own sanctification, and yet as we seek it, it is the gracious gift of God to us.

9. Jehovah–shammah — Jehovah is There

This is the last name of God introduced in the Old Testament. It occurs in Ezekiel 48:35. It is actually used to describe the city that Ezekiel saw in his vision. “It shall be eighteen thousand reeds round about: and the name of the city from that day shall be, Jehovah is there (*yehowah shammah*). It is the glory of the final consummate state that God shall be with his people. John repeated the same idea regarding the New Jerusalem.” The glory of that city is that the Lord is there. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God the Almighty, and the Lamb are the temple thereof. And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb.” (Revelation 21:22;23). This is the essence of the Covenant promise made of old to Abraham (Genesis 17:7), and which reaches its culmination in these visions of the future.¹

¹ Morton H. Smith, *Systematic Theology, Volumes I and II*, (Simpsonville, SC: Christian Classics Foundation) 1997, [Online] Available: Logos Library System.