

Elohim and Israel

What is Your Definition of God?

[אֱלֹהִים](#) / [אֵל](#) / [אֱלֹהִים](#) eloah/el/elohim. Eloah is the singular form of this Hebrew word. El is a shortened form (similar to a nickname in English) and elohim is the plural form of the word. In the simplest form Eloah/El/Elohim means mighty one(s). It is generally translated into the English word god or gods. There are a few examples of elohim being used in reference to human men (Moses and judges) even these references allude to them serving in the place of authority, in these cases being representatives of YHWH on Earth. In most occurrences Elohim references spiritual beings. Of course, there are many instances that Elohim refers to YHWH Himself.

Who or What is Israel?

The name translated into English as Israel is the Hebrew word **'yisra'el'** (יִשְׂרָאֵל). It is generally accepted to mean to prevail with god. But it doesn't stop there. If you will recall, the first instance of Israel in the Bible is when Jacob is wrestling with a mysterious man. It is not clearly shown in the text who this man was, but we are given a clue in this verse:

Genesis 32:30 NASB

So Jacob named the place Peniel, for *he said*, "I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been spared."

PeneWho?

Penuel 'penu'el' (פְּנוּאֵל) means face of god or to be in the presence of god. While the text does not overtly state who Jacob was wrestling with, it is my personal belief [*This is my opinion, I could be wrong!!*] this was likely the messenger of YHWH. We are talking concepts here and I'm tying the whole of scripture together. It is believed by many that the messenger of YHWH (sometimes the scriptures use the Word of YHWH) is the premortal appearance of Yeshua (Jesus). You might think this is a stretch, but if you look at it from the view of an ancient TORAH observant Hebrew, I don't think I am taking too much liberty. Jacob says he had seen God face to face and he was surprised his life was spared. If you are familiar with the scriptures there is more than one occasion that says no one can see the face of God and live. The Hebrew word for face that is used here can mean face, but also presence, so one could be in someone's presence without physically seeing their face.

The Shem of Israel

What does all this have to do with the name Israel you might ask? The point is there is more going on here than simply a label (name). You can see there is a literal meaning here where Jacob wrestled with God and prevailed, but then what happened after this? Israel became the father of the people of YHWH! You could say he became the prince of YHWH's people on the earth! If he was a prince that means he had a kingdom! So, Israel just went from being the name of a man to being the name of an earthly kingdom. This all is in keeping with the Hebrew idea of shem שֵׁם (*name*) that reflects the character, reputation or essence behind the name. Later Israel becomes a great nation under David and Solomon, but later was divided. This division into the House of Israel and the Kingdom of Judah are key to understanding latter-day prophecy (*and quite frankly the gospel*). But as we will repeat frequently, we should always look first to the spiritual then to the physical or material. You will find that as you put the tapestry of the Kingdom of YHWH together you will find Israel fits very well as the Earth shadow of the Kingdom of YHWH in Heaven.