

יהוה
h w h y

- 4 letters: Y-H-W-H
- Probable pronunciation: **Yahweh**
- Probable meaning: “**he causes to be**”
 - (from HYH/HWH = “to be”)
- Substituted with **Adonay** or **LORD**

Names and images for God

YHWH	Hear, O Israel, the LORD [YHWH] your God, the LORD [YHWH] is one (Deu 6:1)
El Shaddai	I am God Almighty [El Shaddai] : be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall come from you... (Gen 35:11)
Father	“Our Father in heaven...” (Matt 6:9) / When we cry, “Abba! Father!” it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God (Rom 8:15-16)
Maternal imagery	As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you (Isa 66:13) ...now I will cry out like a woman in labor, I will gasp and pant. (Is 42:14).
Everlasting God Creator	...The LORD is the everlasting God [El Olam] , the Creator of the ends of the earth. (Isaiah 40:28)

“The divine power... though exalted far above our nature and inaccessible to all approach, like a tender mother who joins in the inarticulate utterances of her babe, gives to our human nature what it is capable of receiving... God both adapts to humanity and speaks in human language.”

-- Gregory of Nyssa (335-394 AD)

More names and images for God

Most High Refuge	You who live in the shelter of the Most High [Elyon] , who abide in the shadow of the Almighty [Shaddai] , will say to the LORD [YHWH] , “My refuge and my fortress... (Psa 91:1)
God who sees	“You are El-roi [God who sees] ”; for [Hagar] said, “Have I really seen God and remained alive after seeing him?”
Rock	“You were unmindful of the Rock that bore you; you forgot the God who gave you birth.” (Deut 32:18)
Fire	“...for indeed our God is a consuming fire” (Heb 12:29)
Love	God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. (1 Jn 4:16)

Questions

- What names and images for God have shaped you?
- How have these names and images affected your relationship with God?
- Who taught you your primary images?
- Can you allow God to be mystery?