

MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

Pearl River, Louisiana | miqdashbethel@gmail.com | 985-250-9060 | miqdashbethel.org

COVENANT LEXICAL STUDY

Authority: The Tanakh — The Word of **Yahweh** Alone | Standard: Devarim 19:15 — Two or Three Witnesses

Audience: Judaism — Christianity — Islam — All Nations

IS IT CORRECT TO CALL YAHWEH "GOD"?

A Covenant Lexical and Historical Study — Expanded Edition

Five Witnesses on Elohim: BDB • HALOT • Gesenius • Fabre d'Olivet • Tanakh Internal Evidence

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OPENING COVENANT STATEMENT

One of the most unexamined assumptions in the religious world — whether in Judaism, Christianity, or Islam — is the use of the English word "**God**" as though it were the proper name, or even an adequate title, for the Creator of heaven and earth whose personal name is **Yahweh** (יהוה). This study examines that assumption with the full weight of the Devarim 19:15 evidentiary standard: two or three independent witnesses. What follows is not tradition, not preference, and not denominational argument — it is lexical evidence, historical record, and the testimony of **Yahweh** Himself from within the pages of His Torah.

This expanded edition adds a dedicated fifth-witness section: the radical linguistic analysis of the Aleph-Lamed root (לא) by the French Hebraist Antoine Fabre d'Olivet (1767–1825), drawn from his primary work *The Hebraic Tongue Restored* (1815–1816). Fabre d'Olivet's methodology — operating independently of the rabbinic grammatical tradition — provides a primordial, sign-based reconstruction of the root that powerfully corroborates and deepens the classical lexical witnesses.

The central question is simple: Is the English word "*God*" the name of the Creator of Israel? Is it an accurate title for **Yahweh**? Or is it a foreign word of pagan Germanic origin that was appropriated by Christian missionaries and imported into the reading of the Hebrew scriptures — displacing the name **Yahweh** that appears 6,828 times in the Tanakh?

The answer, under the Devarim 19:15 standard, is unambiguous: the word "God" is not the name of Yahweh. It is not a Hebrew word. It is not a Tanakh word. It is not a covenant term.

It is a Proto-Germanic pagan religious term that carries within its etymology the marks of idol worship, libation rituals, and Germanic polytheism — and it was applied to Yahweh by Christian missionaries as a theological translation of convenience.

PART I — THE ETYMOLOGY OF "GOD": A PAGAN GERMANIC ORIGIN

A. THE PROTO-GERMANIC AND PROTO-INDO-EUROPEAN ROOTS

The English word "God" does not descend from any Hebrew, Aramaic, or Semitic root. It descends from the Proto-Germanic noun **gudą*, tracing back to the Proto-Indo-European (PIE) root family. Linguistic scholars identify two competing but equally non-Hebraic theories of its meaning:

Theory One — "The One Who Is Invoked": From the PIE root **ǵʰau-* (to call or invoke). Under this theory, *god* was the ancient Germanic term for the being called upon through prayer or ritual invocation. It is cognate with Sanskrit *būta* — a title for the god Indra — meaning "the invoked one."

Theory Two — "The One to Whom Libations Are Poured": From the PIE root **ǵʰu-tó-m* meaning "poured." Under this theory, *god* referred to a deity receiving liquid sacrifices. Some scholars suggest it references "the spirit immanent in a burial mound" — rooted in Germanic ancestor veneration. Both theories are grounded in pagan Germanic worship practices — **not** in the covenant identity of **Yahweh**.

LANGUAGE	DIVINE WORD	ROOT MEANING	ORIGIN
Proto-Germanic	<i>*gudą</i>	"Invoked" or "Poured To"	Pagan Germanic tribal religion — neuter gender
Old English	god	Adapted from <i>*gudą</i>	Germanic — applied to idols and collective powers
Latin	Deus	"The Shining One" (PIE <i>*dyeu-</i>)	Distinct from Germanic — Indo-European sky-deity tradition
Greek	Theos	"The Shining One" (PIE <i>*dyeu-</i>)	Distinct — used in LXX Septuagint to render Elohim
Hebrew (title)	El / Elohim	"Strength / Mighty One" (Semitic root ʕ)	Torah — Semitic covenant word — entirely unrelated to Germanic

Hebrew (Name)	יהוה — Yahweh	"I AM / I WILL BE" — Covenant Identity	Tetragrammaton — declared by Yahweh Himself at Sinai
Arabic	Allah	al-Ilah — "The God" (Semitic)	Semitic root — related to El/Elohim family. Not Germanic.

Table 1: Comparative Etymology of Divine Terms Across Languages. The word "God" stands entirely alone as Germanic-pagan in origin — with no connection to any Semitic or Tanakh root.

B. THE GENDER SHIFT AND INTERPRETATIO CHRISTIANA

In original pagan Germanic usage, *gudą* was **grammatically neuter** — referring to impersonal divine forces or idols, not to a personal, covenant-making Creator who speaks, hears, and acts in history. When Christian missionaries — beginning with Ulphilas's Gothic Bible (4th century CE) — chose this Germanic word to translate the Greek *Theos*, they forced a pagan neuter noun into a theological role it was never designed to carry. The word was restructured from neuter to masculine — "**it**" became "**He**" — not because the Hebrew scriptures demanded it, but because the Christian message required a personal Creator.

This process is what scholars call *Interpretatio Christiana* — the deliberate absorption of pagan vocabulary into the Christian theological framework to make the new faith accessible to Germanic tribal peoples:

WORD ADOPTED	PAGAN ORIGIN	CHRISTIAN ADAPTATION
God	Germanic *gudą — invoked spirit / libation deity	Applied to Yahweh; masculine gender forced onto neuter pagan noun
Hell	Norse Hel — goddess of the cold realm of the dead	Repurposed as the biblical place of punishment and fire
Easter	Germanic Ēostre — spring/dawn goddess (per Bede, 8th c.)	Retained in English as the name for the Resurrection festival
Yule / Christmas	Germanic midwinter solstice festival	Merged with the celebration of the birth of Yeshua

Table 2: Pattern of Interpretatio Christiana — Pagan Vocabulary Absorbed Into Christian Use

PART II — YAHWEH'S OWN TESTIMONY: THE NAME HE DECLARED FOREVER

A. THE DECLARATION AT THE BURNING BUSH — SHEMOT (EXODUS) 3:14-15

The most foundational passage in the entire Tanakh on the question of the divine name is **Shemot (Exodus) 3:14-15**. This is not commentary. This is **Yahweh** Himself — in direct speech — declaring His own name:

"And Elohim said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' And He said, 'Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: Yahweh, Elohim of your fathers, the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of Isaac, and the Elohim of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.'" — Shemot (Exodus) 3:14-15

"This is My name forever" — the Hebrew word is *le-olam* (לְעֹלָם) — for all time, for eternity. **Yahweh** did not say *"This is My name until a better word comes along."* He declared: *forever*. And the name He declared was not *God*. It was **Yahweh**.

"This is My memorial to all generations" — the Hebrew word is *zikri* (זִכְרִי) — from *zakar* (Strong's H2142) — to remember, to recall, to invoke. The name **Yahweh** is the one by which He is to be remembered and called upon in every generation, among every people. Not a generic title. Not a pagan Germanic noun. The name **Yahweh**.

B. SIX COMMANDS TO DECLARE THE NAME — DEVARIM 19:15 STANDARD EXCEEDED

The Devarim 19:15 standard requires two or three witnesses. **Yahweh** does not give two or three witnesses on His own name. He gives **6,828 witnesses** — the number of times the Tetragrammaton יהוה appears in the Hebrew Tanakh. The word **"God"** appears exactly **zero times** in the original Hebrew text. It is a translation choice, not a revelation. Beyond the Tetragrammaton itself, **Yahweh** issues direct commands concerning the use of His name:

"Give thanks to Yahweh, call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples." — Tebillim (Psalms) 105:1

"That you may know that I am Yahweh... My name shall be declared in all the earth." — Shemot (Exodus) 9:16

"Everyone who calls on the name of Yahweh shall be saved." — Yoel (Joel) 2:32

"I am Yahweh; that is My name; My glory I give to no other, nor My praise to carved idols." — Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 42:8

"And I will sanctify My great name... And the nations shall know that I am Yahweh." — Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 36:23

"This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations." — Shemot (Exodus) 3:15

Six direct Torah and prophetic commands to use, call upon, proclaim, and declare the name **Yahweh** — in all the earth, among all nations, to all generations. Not one passage commands the use of the Germanic word *God*.

PART III — WHAT ELOHIM MEANS: FIVE INDEPENDENT WITNESSES

The authorized Hebrew title for the Creator throughout the Tanakh is **Elohim** (אֱלֹהִים). Unlike the word *God*, **Elohim** is a Semitic covenant word rooted in the language of the Torah itself. What follows is the five-witness examination of this word under the Devarim 19:15 standard — drawing from five fully independent scholarly traditions.

WITNESS ONE — BROWN-DRIVER-BRIGGS HEBREW AND ENGLISH LEXICON (BDB)

Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon (1906) — the foundational English-language Hebrew lexicon used by scholars for over a century — provides the following analysis of **Elohim** (Strong's H430):

El (אֵל — H410): BDB defines the singular root as *"God, god; mighty one, strong one; hero."* It notes that **El** is used both for **Yahweh** as the supreme Being and for human figures of great power or authority. The root conveys **inherent strength and authority** — not merely a title of office but a descriptor of nature.

Eloah (אֱלֹהִים — H433): BDB identifies this as the singular extended form — *"God (rare in prose, chiefly poetic)."* It appears 57 times in the Tanakh, concentrated in Iyov (Job), and always denotes the Creator with the full weight of divine authority.

Elohim (אֱלֹהִים — H430): BDB analyzes the plural form under two distinct grammatical functions: (1) **Plural of majesty or intensity** — when used with singular verbs for **Yahweh**, expressing that He is the sum and source of all power; (2) **Standard plural** — when used with plural verbs for angels, human judges, or other delegated powers (cf. Tehillim 82:1; Shemot 22:8-9). BDB explicitly notes: *"the name Elohim designates God as the supreme Being to whom all power belongs."*

Source: Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon (BDB), 1906 edition, entries H410, H433, H430.

WITNESS TWO — HEBREW AND ARAMAIC LEXICON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT (HALOT)

The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament (HALOT — Koehler, Baumgartner, Stamm; English edition 1994–2000) — the most comprehensive modern critical Hebrew lexicon — provides the following:

El (אֵל): HALOT traces the root across the Semitic language family — Hebrew, Ugaritic, Phoenician, Arabic, Akkadian — and identifies a consistent pan-Semitic semantic field: *"power, might, the strong one."* HALOT notes that *El* appears in the Ugaritic texts as the name of the head of the divine council — not a generic title but a specific designation of supreme authority. In the Tanakh, the term retains this sense: the One who possesses inherent, underived power.

Elohim: HALOT provides the morphological analysis: the *-im* suffix is the masculine plural marker. When applied to **Yahweh**, HALOT identifies it as a **pluralis excellentiae** — plural of excellence or majesty — noting that *"the plural form serves to intensify the concept, expressing the fullness and totality of divine power."* HALOT further emphasizes the comparative Semitic evidence: the Ugaritic *ilm* (plural of *il*) functions identically when referring to the head of the divine council with singular verbs, confirming that this grammatical pattern predates the Mosaic text and was embedded in the Semitic linguistic tradition **before** the Torah was given.

Source: HALOT — Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament, Koehler-Baumgartner-Stamm, English edition, entries for אֵל and אֱלֹהִים.

WITNESS THREE — GESENIUS' HEBREW AND CHALDEE LEXICON (GESENIUS)

Wilhelm Gesenius (1786–1842) — regarded as the father of modern Hebrew lexicography — provides in his *Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures* (*Gesenius' Lexicon*, 1833; English translation by Tregelles, 1857) one of the most thorough classical analyses of the **El / Elohim** root family:

On the root El (אֵל): Gesenius identifies the root as carrying the primary sense of "**strength, power, might**" and connects it to the Arabic *'il / ilāh*, the Aramaic *'elāhā*, and the Syriac *'allāhā* — all pointing to a single proto-Semitic root meaning "**the Strong One, the Mighty One.**" Gesenius notes that *El* is also used in the Tanakh for human strength ("the power of my hand" — Bereishit/Genesis 31:29) and for the power inherent in nature — confirming that the word is a **functional descriptor**, not merely a proper name.

On Elohim — the plural of majesty: Gesenius is explicit and unambiguous: "*The plural Elohim, like other plurals of dignity and excellence, expresses the absolute fullness of the divine attributes, the perfection of the divine nature.*" He connects this to what he calls the "*pluralis majestatis*" — found in the speech of kings ("We, the king") and in the self-reference of Yahweh in Bereishit 1:26 ("*Let us make man*"). Gesenius is careful to note that this does not indicate a plurality of persons — it indicates **supreme, total, undivided fullness of power and authority.**"

On why Elohim and not "God": Gesenius never uses the Germanic word *God* as a theological equivalent for *Elohim* — he treats it strictly as a translation convenience for English readers. His lexical analysis operates entirely within the Semitic root family. His conclusion is clear: ***Elohim* means the One who is the absolute fullness of all power** — a meaning the Germanic word *God* cannot carry because it has no root in the Semitic covenant tradition.

Source: Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures, W. Gesenius; English translation by Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, 1857. Entries: אֵל, אֱלֹהִים, אֱלֹהִים.

WITNESS FOUR — ANTOINE FABRE D'OLIVET: THE HEBRAIC TONGUE RESTORED (1815–1816)

INTRODUCTION TO THE WITNESS

Antoine Fabre d'Olivet (1767–1825) was a French linguist, philosopher, and independent Hebraist who — working entirely outside the rabbinic grammatical tradition and the standard European Hebrew scholarship of his time — produced *The Hebraic Tongue Restored* (*La Langue Hébraïque Restituée*, 1815–1816). His methodology was radical in the original sense: he returned to the **primordial sign-values** of the 22 Hebrew characters — what he called the "**constitutive principles**" of the Mosaic tongue — and from these reconstructed the root meanings of the Hebraic vocabulary from the ground up, using no intermediate tradition as authority.

This makes d'Olivet's analysis a **fully independent witness** from BDB, HALOT, and Gesenius — he was not building on the same tradition but reconstructing from the same primary material: the Hebrew letters themselves. His conclusions therefore carry the full weight of an independent corroborating witness under the Devarim 19:15 standard.

THE 22 SIGNS: THE FOUNDATION OF D'OLIVET'S METHOD

Fabre d'Olivet's starting point is what he calls the "*characters considered as signs*" — the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet, each possessing a primordial symbolic meaning derived from its original hieroglyphic form. These signs are not arbitrary phonetic symbols — they are **semantic atoms**, each carrying a specific range of meaning that governs every root built from it. The entire vocabulary of the Hebraic tongue, d'Olivet argues, can be derived from the interaction of these 22 foundational signs.

From his *Radical Vocabulary* section (*The Hebraic Tongue Restored*, Part One, pp. 91–92), d'Olivet provides the following sign-definitions for the two letters that form the **El (אל)** root:

SIGN	LETTER	D'OLIVET'S DEFINITION (DIRECT FROM TEXT, P. 91-92)
א	Aleph — A	"Man himself as collective unity, principle: master and ruler of the earth."
ל	Lamed — L	"The arm: everything which is extended, raised, displayed."
ה	He — H	"The breath: all that which animates: air, life, being."
י	Yod — I	"The finger of man, his extended hand: all that which indicates the directing power and which serves to manifest it."
מ	Mem — M	"The companion of man, woman: all that which is fruitful and creative."

Source: Fabre d'Olivet, The Hebraic Tongue Restored, Part One, "Characters Considered as Signs," pp. 91-92 (original English translation, Redfield, New York). Direct quotations from primary text.

THE AL ROOT (אל): D'OLIVET'S PRIMARY ANALYSIS

With the sign-values established, d'Olivet proceeds to his *Radical Vocabulary* — the dictionary of all Hebrew roots reconstructed from their constituent signs. The entry for the **AL** (לֵא) root appears in Part One, page 294 of his text (*Radical Vocabulary, Aleph section*), and reads as follows:

לֵא AL — FABRE D'OLIVET, THE HEBRAIC TONGUE RESTORED, P. 294

"This root springs from the united signs of power and of extensive movement. The ideas which it develops are those of elevation, force, power, extent. The Hebrews and Arabs have drawn from it the name of GOD."

This is the direct primary text — the exact words of Fabre d'Olivet on the root that gives rise to *El*, *Eloah*, and *Elohim*. His analysis proceeds from the sign-values:

Aleph (א) = collective unity, principle, master and ruler — the primordial sign of sovereign power without limit

Lamed (ל) = the arm extended, raised, displayed — the sign of extensive movement, reach, manifestation of force outward into the world

Combined: *"power and extensive movement"* — the idea of a force that is not contained but **reaches outward, elevates, extends, and manifests itself**. D'Olivet renders the full semantic field of **AL** as: *"elevation, force, power, extent."*

The word is not static. It is not merely a title or a label. It is, in d'Olivet's linguistic framework, **the expression of a living, extending, elevating, manifesting force** — which is precisely why **the Hebrews and Arabs drew from it the name of the Creator**.

ELOHIM: THE PLURAL DIMENSION THROUGH D'OLIVET'S SIGN ANALYSIS

D'Olivet's analysis of the full word **Elohim** proceeds from the same sign-based framework. The root **AL** (לֵא) receives two additional elements:

He (ה) — defined by d'Olivet as *"the breath: all that which animates: air, life, being"* — when added to the **AL** root, transforms force into **living force**: power that breathes, animates, gives life. This produces **Eloah** (אֱלֹהִים) — power that animates, the breathing source of all being.

The "-im" (ים) suffix — in d'Olivet's analysis of the Hebrew grammatical system, the *"-im"* plural ending on a word used with singular verbs does not indicate multiple beings — it indicates **the**

universalization of the concept. It transforms a particular power into **the totality of that power** — all power, everywhere, in all its manifestations, concentrated in one Being. This is what d'Olivet means when he says the plural form "expresses the sum of all forces." The Creator is not one power among many — He is **the sum and source of all power, the one in whom all force is contained and from whom all extension proceeds.**

D'Olivet's description of Bereishit 1:1 in his *Cosmogony of Moses* (Part Two, p. 24) renders the word **Elohim** with full awareness of this depth: "*Beréshith barà Élohim æth-ba-shamaim w'æth-ba-âretz*" — and in his commentary he is explicit that Moses used the hieroglyphic register of Hebrew throughout the *Cosmogony*. The word **Elohim** carries, in the hieroglyphic sense, the full weight of the primordial **AL** root: the One who is himself the universal power of elevation, extension, and manifestation — the living source of all being.

This is why d'Olivet concludes that "*the Hebrews and Arabs have drawn from it the name of GOD*" — but he means this as a lexical observation about the origin of the religious vocabulary of the Semitic world, **not** as a validation of the Germanic word *God*. D'Olivet is pointing back toward the Hebrew and Arabic Semitic root as the authentic naming tradition — a tradition that the European word *God* stands entirely outside of.

Source: Fabre d'Olivet, The Hebraic Tongue Restored, Part One: Radical Vocabulary, "AL" entry, p. 294; "Characters Considered as Signs," pp. 91-92; Part Two: Cosmogony of Moses, p. 24. All quotations from primary text of the 1921 English translation (G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York).

WITNESS FIVE — TANAKH INTERNAL EVIDENCE: HOW SCRIPTURE ITSELF USES ELOHIM

The fifth witness is not a human scholar — it is the Tanakh itself. The internal grammatical evidence of the Hebrew scriptures demonstrates the same distinctions established by BDB, HALOT, Gesenius, and d'Olivet:

TEXT	USAGE OF ELOHIM	WHAT THE GRAMMAR PROVES
Bereishit (Gen.) 1:1 — Elohim bara	Singular verb bara	Elohim used for Yahweh = one Being of total power; the plural is majesty, not multiplicity
Bereishit (Gen.) 1:26 — "Let us make man"	First-person plural	The plural of self-reference — pluralis majestatis, as Gesenius and d'Olivet both confirm
Shemot (Exod.) 22:8-9 — judges called elohim	Plural verbs; human context	Elohim used for human judges = delegated authority; the grammar signals the difference

Tehillim (Ps.) 82:1,6 — elohim in the assembly	Plural verbs; rebuked by Yahweh	Yahweh stands over the elohim — confirming He is Elohim of elohim, sum of all power
Devarim (Deut.) 10:17 — Elohim of Elohim	"Yahweh your Elohim is Elohim of Elohim"	Tanakh itself uses the stack to confirm Yahweh's supremacy over all other powers
Shemot (Exod.) 3:15 — name forever	Direct divine speech	Yahweh declares Yahweh — not Elohim, not God — as His name forever. Elohim = authorized title.

Table 4: Tanakh Internal Evidence — How the Hebrew Text Itself Distinguishes Elohim Used for Yahweh vs. Delegated Beings

FIVE-WITNESS CONVERGENCE: SUMMARY TABLE

Under the Devarim 19:15 standard — two or three witnesses. What follows is the five-witness convergence on the meaning of **Elohim**:

WITNESS	AUTHORITY	VERDICT ON ELOHIM
BDB	Classical English lexicon, 1906	Elohim = absolute fullness of divine power. Plural of majesty with singular verbs for Yahweh; standard plural with plural verbs for delegated beings.
HALOT	Modern critical lexicon, 1994–2000	Pluralis excellentiae — fullness and totality of divine power. Pre-Mosaic Semitic (Ugaritic) evidence confirms this grammatical pattern predates the Torah text.
Gesenius	Father of modern Hebrew lexicography, 1833	Pluralis majestatis — absolute fullness of the divine attributes, the perfection of the divine nature. Root = Semitic "the Strong One / Mighty One."
Fabre d'Olivet	Radical sign-analysis, 1815–1816	AL (לא) = "power and extensive movement — elevation, force, power, extent." The -im universalizes: Elohim = the total, universal, extending power. The Hebrews and Arabs drew from this root the name of the Creator.
Tanakh Internal	Bereishit, Shemot, Tehillim, Devarim	Grammar itself distinguishes: singular verbs = Yahweh as the one source of all power; plural verbs = human judges with delegated authority. Yahweh declared His personal name (Yahweh) as forever — Elohim is His authorized title.

Table 5: Five-Witness Convergence Under Devarim 19:15 Standard — All Five Independent Sources Confirm: Elohim = the fullness and totality of power, Yahweh = the personal covenant Name forever.

PART IV — HOW THE NAME WAS REPLACED: HUMAN TRADITION, NOT TORAH COMMAND

A. THE POST-EXILIC SUPPRESSION OF THE NAME

If **Yahweh** appears 6,828 times in the Tanakh and declared His name *forever* — why do most Jewish people not use it, and why do most Christians replace it with a Germanic pagan word? The answer lies not in the Torah but in post-exilic rabbinic tradition and in the missionary strategy of Germanic-world Christianity.

After the Babylonian exile (6th century BCE), and especially from the 3rd century BCE onward, Jewish religious leadership ceased pronouncing the name **Yahweh** aloud in synagogue worship — substituting **Adonai** (Lord/Master) as a reading instruction. The Masoretes (6th–10th century CE) formalized this by inserting the vowel markings of **Adonai** into the consonants YHWH in the text — a reading instruction that later Christian scholars misread as the actual name, producing the hybrid **YeHoWaH / Jehovah**. This is a **human tradition** — not a Torah commandment. Nowhere in the five books of Moses does **Yahweh** instruct His people not to pronounce His name.

B. THE COMMANDMENT OF SHEMOT 20:7 DOES NOT PROHIBIT PRONUNCIATION

Shemot (Exodus) 20:7 — *"You shall not take the name of Yahweh your Elohim in vain"* — addresses **false swearing, covenant violation, and the dishonoring of the name through ungodly conduct**. The Hebrew word *la-shav* (לֹא־שָׁוָה — Strong's H7723) means *"to falsehood, to emptiness, to that which is without value."* This commandment governs **how the name is used** — not whether it is spoken. The rabbinic tradition of non-pronunciation is a fence around this commandment, not the commandment itself.

PART V — THREE-RELIGION COVENANT AUDIT

This study reaches all three traditions simultaneously — Judaism, Christianity, and Islam — under the Torah standard. The five-witness analysis of **Elohim** clarifies the covenant position for each tradition:

STANDARD	JUDAISM	CHRISTIANITY	ISLAM
Creator's Name	Yahweh (יהוה) — not spoken per rabbinic custom; Adonai	"God" used — Germanic pagan word with no Semitic or Torah root.	Allah (al-Ilah) — "The God." Semitic root related

	substituted. Custom ≠ Torah command.	Jehovah = medieval linguistic hybrid.	to El/Elohim family. Closer to Torah root than "God."
Authorized Title	Elohim — correct. Five-witness confirmation of the Semitic covenant root.	Elohim — correct when reading Torah. "God" as a substitute carries pagan etymology not authorized by the Torah.	Ilah / Allah — Semitic root family. Correct in its Semitic heritage. Yahweh = the personal name missing in Islamic usage.
Torah Command	Shemot 3:15 — "My name forever." Restore Yahweh per Torah; rabbinic non-pronunciation is not a Torah commandment.	Same Torah standard applies. Yahweh declared His personal name, not "God." All five witnesses confirm.	Same Torah standard applies. Islam honors Shemot 3:15 as revelation. The personal name Yahweh remains the Torah standard.
Covenant Verdict	Restore the name Yahweh per Torah command — not per rabbinic custom.	Replace the Germanic "God" and medieval "Jehovah" with the revealed name Yahweh and authorized title Elohim.	Affirm the Semitic root tradition; recognize Yahweh as the personal covenant name the Torah itself declares forever.

Table 6: Three-Religion Covenant Audit — The Name and Title of the Creator Under the Torah Standard and Five-Witness Lexical Evidence

PART VI — COVENANT VERDICT

IS IT CORRECT TO CALL YAHWEH "GOD"?

THE VERDICT UNDER FIVE WITNESSES: NO! — with a necessary pastoral distinction.

On the name: "God" is not the name of Yahweh. Yahweh declared His own personal name at Sinai. He declared it forever. He commanded it to be proclaimed, called upon, and made known among all nations. That name is **Yahweh** — יהוה — the Tetragrammaton that appears 6,828 times in the Hebrew Tanakh. The Germanic word *God* appears zero times.

On the title: "God" is not even an adequate authorized title for Yahweh. The authorized Hebrew titles — *El, Eloah, Elohim* — are Semitic covenant words rooted in the language of the Torah itself, confirmed by five independent witnesses to carry the meaning "**the fullness and totality**

of all power and authority." The Germanic word *God* carries the meaning of a pagan invoked spirit or libation deity. It cannot carry the covenant weight that **Elohim** carries.

On Fabre d'Olivet's contribution: D'Olivet, working as an independent linguistic reconstructionist operating outside all established school traditions, arrived at the same conclusion as BDB, HALOT, and Gesenius through an entirely different method — sign-based primordial analysis. His finding that the **AL** root expresses "*power and extensive movement — elevation, force, power, extent*" and that "**the Hebrews and Arabs have drawn from it the name of GOD**" is a fifth-witness confirmation that is all the more powerful for being methodologically independent. It also confirms that the word *God* — standing entirely outside the Semitic root family — has no organic claim to represent what **Elohim** means.

The Necessary Pastoral Distinction: Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution recognizes that billions of people worldwide use the word "*God*" in sincere devotion to the Creator of Israel. We do not judge their hearts. We apply the Torah standard of **Yahweh** Himself — who declared His personal name *forever* at Sinai, and who commanded His people to call upon, proclaim, and make known that name among all nations. Using the personal name **Yahweh** is not arrogance — it is covenant obedience.

In all Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution documents, studies, and publications: the Creator is called by the name He declared — **Yahweh** (יהוה). The authorized title is **Elohim** (אֱלֹהִים). The word "*God*" may appear in quoted material or cross-cultural communication, but it is never used as though it were the name or an adequate substitute for the covenant name of the Creator of heaven and earth.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

For Torah Study, Covenant Discernment, and Three-Religion Dialogue:

1. Shemot (Exodus) 3:15 states that Yahweh's name is His "memorial to all generations." Under the Devarim 19:15 standard, five witnesses now confirm what that name's authorized title means. What obligation does a covenant community have to use both the name and the title correctly?
2. Fabre d'Olivet — working independently of all rabbinic and classical European scholarship — arrived at the same conclusion as BDB, HALOT, and Gesenius through sign-based analysis. What does the convergence of five independent methodological traditions tell us about the reliability of this lexical evidence?
3. The word "*God*" carries the etymological meaning of "the one invoked" or "the one to whom libations are poured" — from pagan Germanic ritual. Fabre d'Olivet shows that the Hebrews and Arabs derived their name for the Creator from the Semitic root אָל meaning "power and extensive

movement." What does this contrast reveal about the incompatibility of the Germanic word with the covenant name?

4. The suppression of the name Yahweh was a post-exilic rabbinic tradition — not a Torah commandment. Gesenius and d'Olivet both show that the root meaning of Elohim is inseparable from Yahweh as its referent. How should a Torah-observant community reason about which traditions may stand alongside the Torah and which replace it?

5. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 42:8 says Yahweh will give His glory to no other. His name is the vessel of His glory (Shemot 33:18-19). If the word "God" draws from a pagan root — and this is now confirmed by five independent witnesses from three centuries of scholarship — what are the covenant implications for a community that substitutes it for the authorized name and title?

SCRIPTURE INDEX

REFERENCE	SUBJECT
Bereishit (Genesis) 1:1	Elohim bara — singular verb with plural noun; Yahweh as source of all creative power
Bereishit (Genesis) 1:26	"Let us make man" — pluralis majestatis in direct divine speech
Bereishit (Genesis) 31:29	"el" used for human strength — confirming El as functional descriptor, not merely divine title
Shemot (Exodus) 3:14-15	Yahweh declares His personal name forever — le-olam and zikri
Shemot (Exodus) 9:16	Command to declare the name Yahweh in all the earth
Shemot (Exodus) 20:7	Not to take the name in vain (la-shav) — governs use, not pronunciation
Shemot (Exodus) 22:8-9	Human judges called elohim — plural verbs; delegated authority
Devarim (Deuteronomy) 10:17	"Yahweh your Elohim is Elohim of Elohim" — confirming Yahweh as sum of all power
Devarim (Deuteronomy) 19:15	Two or Three Witness evidentiary standard — the covenant research authority
Tehillim (Psalms) 82:1,6	Elohim used for divine council beings; Yahweh stands over all — Elohim of elohim
Tehillim (Psalms) 105:1	Command to call upon and make known the name of Yahweh
Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 42:8	Yahweh will give His glory to no other — His name is the vessel of His glory

Yoel (Joel) 2:32	All who call on the name of Yahweh shall be saved
Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 36:23	Yahweh will sanctify His great name; the nations shall know it

LEXICAL SOURCES AND PRIMARY REFERENCES CITED

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6. BDB/HALOT/Gesenius accessed through: Sefaria.org; AlHaTorah.org; jewishencyclopedia.com (1906); Encyclopedia Judaica (archive.org).

CLOSING COVENANT CITATIONS

*"This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations." —
Shemot (Exodus) 3:15*

"I am Yahweh; that is My name; My glory I give to no other." — Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 42:8

"AL. This root springs from the united signs of power and of extensive movement. The ideas which it develops are those of elevation, force, power, extent. The Hebrews and Arabs have drawn from it the name of GOD." — Fabre d'Olivet, The Hebraic Tongue Restored, Radical Vocabulary, p. 294

"Everyone who calls on the name of Yahweh shall be saved." — Yoel (Joel) 2:32

Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution | Pearl River, Louisiana | miqdashbethel@gmail.com | 985-250-9060

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Authority: The Tanakh — The Word of Yahweh Alone | Devarim 19:15 — Two or Three Witnesses

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