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The Meaning of the Word Elohim Part B

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Read the accompanying "**November 2026 Newsletter**"

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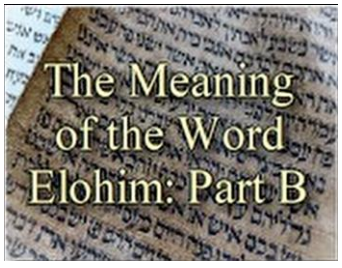
"The Meaning of the Word Elohim Part B"



This is the "B" side of the lecture, *"The Meaning of the word Elohim."*

As I explained in Part A, the word Elohim actually means a "corporation." It is plural in form, but it can take singular verbs. We will see that demonstrated by the apostle Paul even more.

If we start with First Corinthians chapter 12 that I have been going through (in Part A) to show that by the same Spirit there are gifts of the Spirit, there are different administrations and different operations.

Then the apostle Paul begins to delineate those. All of a sudden you can begin to conceive what he means by this "corporation" working together in unity and in harmony. It is a corporation which Paul calls **"the body of Christ"** or the "corporation of Christ." Let me tell you, though Christ is the head of it, the real head is God the Father, the Father Who gave this corporation to Christ, of which you are a part.

Now you may be an inner part, you may be an outer part. You may be one which is visible, you may be one which is not visible to the outer world. That does not make any difference, you are all in particular most important because every little function is necessary.

I am told even by medical doctors that if you can keep your adenoids in there, and your tonsils, you are probably better off. Some people say, well you don't need things like that. Well, I beg your pardon, God put them there, didn't He? In other words, let that be an illustration to you. Every little part of the body is essential. YOU FIT IN SOMEWHERE! I will tell you most of you should fit.

Everyone of you should be a heart, right in the middle. You don't see it so much but you cannot function without a heart. Well, that is what the apostle Paul is talking about here. He continues this theme in Romans 12:4–8. Let us look at this quickly because we have already established the principles of the apostle Paul. It is not necessary to linger long on this teaching, but it is identical to what we covered in First Corinthians.

Romans 12:4–21 CLV

4 "For even as, in one body [it means "corporation"]**, we have many members, yet all the members have not the same function** [Paul is talking about administrations, functions in a corporation]**,**

5 thus we, who are many, are one body [corporation] **in Christ, yet individually members of one another.**

6 Now, having graces excelling, in accord with the grace which is given to us, whether prophecy, exercise it in accord with the analogy of the faith;

[Some people have more knowledge and understanding of such things, through the wisdom God can give through Christ. Paul says, if we have that we still have to do it through **"the analogy of faith …,"** or "confidence" that we have in the efficacy of Christ and the Holy Spirit. Paul continues … speaking about the ministry. *ELM*]

7 or dispensing [a particular office of service]**, in the dispensation; or the teacher, in teaching** [if you are a teacher, be about your Father's business, because that is an occupation than is different than ministering or prophecy, *ELM*]**;**

8 or the entreater, in entreaty [exhortation, encouragement]**; the sharer, with generosity**[1]**; the presider** [one who rules and makes decisions]**, with diligence**[2]**; the merciful one, with glee.**

9 Let love be unfeigned [and with sincerity]**. Abhorring that which is wicked, clinging to good,**

10 let us have fond affection for one another with brotherly fondness [we are all in the same corporation"]**,**[3] **in honor deeming one another first,**

11 in diligence not slothful, fervent in spirit, slaving for the Lord,

12 rejoicing in expectation [hope]**, enduring affliction, persevering in prayer,**

13 contributing to the needs of the saints, pursuing hospitality.

14 Bless those who are persecuting you: bless, and do not curse,

15 so as to be rejoicing with those rejoicing, lamenting with those lamenting,

16 being mutually disposed to one another, not being disposed to that which is high, but being led away to the humble. Do not come to pass for prudent with yourselves.

17 To no one render evil for evil, making ideal provision in the sight of all men,

18 if possible that which comes out from yourselves. Being at peace with all mankind,

19 you are not avenging yourselves, beloved, but be giving place to His indignation, for it is written, 'Mine is vengeance! I will repay!' the Lord is saying.

20 But 'If your enemy should be hungering, give him the morsel; if he should be thirsting, give him to drink, for in doing this you will be heaping embers of fire on his head.'

21 Be not conquered by evil; but conquer evil with good."

- ***Romans 12:4–21 CLV***

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[1] Perhaps you are on the "giving" side. That is about all you can do. That is very important. *ELM*

[2] There are offices of "ruling" in a corporation. You must have rules, regulations, to go by what the book says, so that the body (corporation) will work in harmony with one another. If you are there and God gives you the opportunity to show mercy. Well, if you do so with cheerfulness it is what Paul says. *ELM*

[3] The same admonition is found in Ephesians 1:18 CLV, turn there. The apostle Paul consistently uses this theme. What he is doing is defining in each example what the word Elohim means. He is using a word that is plural in nature, but in most cases using the singular. It is Christ's *ekklesia,* His body, His corporation of which you and I are a part. Verse 18: **"… the eyes of your heart having been enlightened, for you to perceive what is the expectation of His [God's] calling, and what the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of His allotment among the saints …"** *ELM*

What Is an Ekklesia [a "church"]**?**

We are all of the same corporation, the same one. The same thing is found in Ephesians 1:18. The apostle Paul consistently uses this theme and really what he is doing is defining in all of these instances, what the word Elohim means. He is using a word which is plural in nature but in most cases using the singular of it. It is Christ's *ekklesia,* His body, His corporation, of which YOU are a part, and that means many of you out there are, along with us here in ASK. Ephesians 1:18–20 CLV:

> **"… the eyes of your heart having been enlightened, for YOU to perceive what is the expectation of HIS calling, and what the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of HIS allotment among the saints, and what the transcendent greatness of HIS power for us who are believing, in accord with the operation of the might of HIS strength, which is operative in the Christ** [Messiah]**, rousing HIM from among the dead and seating HIM at HIS right hand among the celestials,"**

That is where Christ is NOW. When Christ went up to heaven as it said in Colossians, **"in heavenly places,"** and sat down on the right hand of God:

- something happened to His **stature** in God's creation;
- something happened to His **power**;
- something happened to His **rank**.

Notice what rank Christ Jesus now has with the mighty power He possesses by being resurrected from the dead. Look at Ephesians 1:21: Christ is now **"UP OVER all principality and power and might and dominion."**

That means not only powers, principalities, mights, and dominions here on earth, but also the angelic powers, including Satan the devil, and every power there is. Christ is not just above, but **"FAR ABOVE ALL principalities, powers, mights, and dominions"** (CLV). I will tell you Who it is, it is our elder brother, the Head of the *ekklesia,* the head of this body called the corporation of which you are a part.

And every name that is named, not only in this world, or this age, and also the age which is to come. Going on: **"And has put ALL THINGS under his feet…"** Notice that this means authority. See the point there? All things, all power, all authority are under his feet. **"… and subjects all under His feet, and gives Him, as Head over all, to the ecclesia"** (Ephesians 1:22). Now what is this *ekklesia?* He defines it in Ephesians 1:23 CLV: **"… which is His body** [corporation]**, the complement** [fullness] **of the One completing the all in all."**

His body, His corporation**, is the *ekklesia*.** That is what the church is. Now leave that word "church" but *ekklesia* means a congregation of people. It means more than one person. We use the term "church" but *ekklesia* means a congregation of people — more than one. Some people use the word "church" for a building. It has become so common nowadays that everyone knows what we mean when we say "the church on the corner" or something similar.

The Meaning of "Ekklesia"

Do you know that in the New Testament the word "church" or *ekklesia* is never used [to describe] a physical building made of stone, wood, brick or something like that? No. It always means a corporate body of people. It means a congregation. It means an assembly of people who are united together in one determinate purpose for doing something.

That is what it means. It always means a corporate body of people. It means an assembly of people who are united together in one determinant purpose for doing something. It means a congregation of people. Actually the church or the *ekklesia,* if you go to the so-called "church on the corner" it is the *ekklesia* that goes to the building and then leaves the building. The church goes to it and leaves when it comes out of the building. That building is not a church at all.

It is not a church. None of these churches, none that you find anywhere on the corners of the streets in the United States or anywhere in the world. Not one of them is a "church" in the biblical sense.

The church goes to that building. When that building is going to be vacated, it is vacated by the "church"

and the "church" goes on home. We have to understand these differences. Yes, the *ekklesia,* the congregation is His [Christ's] corporation, His body. So you have plurality in there, but you have a single body. You have a single corporation.

Colossians 1:13, 18 will suffice in giving some verses to show the apostle Paul's basic teaching on these matters. He starts out with the pronoun "Who":

> **"Who** [God] **rescues us out of the jurisdiction of Darkness, and transports us into the KINGDOM OF THE SON of His love, in Whom we are having the deliverance, the pardon of sins, Who** [God's dear Son] **is the Image of the invisible God, FIRSTBORN of EVERY creature."**
>
> • ***Colossians 1:13–15 CLV***

I want you to notice the rank that Jesus has as the firstborn. Now notice this,

> **"… for in Him** [God's Dear Son] **is ALL CREATED, that**
>
> **in the heavens and that on the earth,**
>
> **the visible and the invisible,**
>
> **whether thrones, or lordships, or sovereignties, or authorities,**
>
> **all is created THROUGH Him and FOR Him,**
>
> **and He is BEFORE all, and all has its cohesion IN HIM."**
>
> • ***Colossians 1:16–17 CLV***

This includes angelic beings and humans too for that matter, but it means mainly angelic beings here. It means Christ is head of, and above, all of them. Why? Because He created them all.

There are some people that believe that Jesus did not do the creating. It is amazing how they do not even listen to what the apostle Paul says. They just deny absolutely what Paul is saying. He is saying Jesus did this before His incarnation, before you and I were ever born, before Adam and Eve were created.

He is preeminent above all these angelic powers because He created them all. But notice the powers that are given here, the offices, these are offices of ranks that these angelic powers possess. They are very powerful because God has given them the offices that they have.

Now notice Colossians 1:16–18 (CLV):

> **"… all is created THROUGH Him and FOR Him,**
>
> **and He is BEFORE all, and all has its cohesion IN HIM."**
>
> **And He** [God's Dear Son] **is the head of the body** [corporation]**."**

Christ is the Chairman of the Board, folks. He is the President also. He also is the Treasurer. He also is the Secretary of the Board, He is the top accountant. He has given powers to you and to me to fulfill some of these things down here, and angels as well, but I will tell you Who is the Chairman of the Board, Who really is everything in one, it is the head, it is Christ Jesus. That is what Paul is trying to say. But Christ is the head of the corporation, the *ekklesia*]**,**

> **"… And He is the Head of the body, the *ecclesia*, Who is Sovereign, Firstborn from among the dead, that in all He may be becoming first, for in Him the entire complement delights to dwell …"**
>
> • ***Colossians 1:18–19 CLV***

That is enough on this subject because Paul is talking about a plurality of people with someone Who is the head of this corporation. The head is Jesus Christ. He is our elder brother. But you are a part of the corporation also. Some of you are a part on the external side, and some of you are a part on the internal side. And every little part, Paul says, is important.

I assure you I have gotten on occasion stubbed my toe playing basketball or something similar, and I tell you my whole body for several weeks was absolutely governed by that little injury down on my toe. All of us have experienced the same thing. So you see, the apostle Paul is using a perfect example of our own body to

explain about the corporation.

Not every part of your body has the same function. The feet do not have the function of the hands. You do not type on a computer or typewriter with the 10 toes, although there are some people who can do that, but they have learned how to do it if they do not have hands. That is wonderful for them.

The toes of the feet are not intended to be on the computer; but the hands are, the fingers are. Your ears are not supposed to be there either and neither are your eyes; but all these things require coordination with one another, working in harmony to make the body function properly.

The corporation needs to function properly. That is the *ekklesia* and it is the corporation of Christ.

Elohim

This is what "Elohim" really is, when you get down to it: "Corporation" means "body." Just remember that. You can use a singular verb with it: **"The corporation IS doing this and that."** Or you can say, **"The Corporation ARE doing this and that.** It is perfectly fine to do it that way if you are looking on the corporation united under the head, doing one thing. But if He gives orders for various groups to do these things altogether (you can say: the **family**), that is another word like it, so is **army**, or **corporation**; all are doing these things together.

This is perfectly good English. It is also perfectly good Hebrew. There is the point we are after. This is where so many people get mixed up in our Western world. This is because we have put theological meanings onto these things rather than the plain old secular business understanding.

If we just had the plain business way of looking at things, we would all comprehend the Scriptures much better, than going around holding our hands together with some kind of mitre on our head and some kind of a robe that we put on, carrying some kind of a chalace with smoke coming out of it and walking around an altar (or something like that), and walking backward five times.

Ritual is what we like. That is what church is to us. Those things are religions. But we ought to approach it just like a businessman. Use the language of the secular world, and you will understand what the apostle Paul is talking about much more.

The Body of Christ Is the Corporation Led and Governed by Christ

That corporation has a Chairman of the Board, He also has everything else underneath. I will tell you He runs it: Jesus Christ does so under the rule of the Father. You are part of that corporation.

You are a part, really, of Elohim, because Elohim actully is plural and it really means "plural of rank." Now I will show you this as we go along. It means a plurality of powers resting in one corporate body. That corporate body is Elohim. That corporate body can be called "the *ekklesia*" as well. That corporate body can be called various things in Scripture. But the corporate body is really a group of people under a single head or a single purpose doing things. That is really what the word Elohim means.

All of you scholars out there, and I hope every one of you is a scholar, I am going to quote to you from a lexicon that will show you what the meaning of Elohim is, but I am going to do it through another Hebrew word which in some cases is tantamount to equal the word Elohim. This word is *"**Adonai**,"* which means "master" or someone who is the ruler. I hate to use the word Lord because it is alright, but the word "Lord" normally in the Old Testament is the translation of the tetragrammaton, which is the four letter word designating, as we say **YHWH**.

Traditionally it is supposed to be **YHWH**, the four letters:

- the first letter **"Y"** is the first letter of the word **"to be"** in the past tense.
- The middle two letters **"HW"** happen to be the verb or the initial part of the verb for the present tense, and
- the last letter **"H"** is the verb for the future tense.

So, you get past, present, and future without defined limits to it, you get the idea of everlasting or eternal,

someone who is ever living: **YHWH.**

In the King James Version and in many versions that word, that tetragrammaton is translated as Lord. I am not talking about that Lord, I am talking about another one, called ***Adonai,*** which in the Bible, in the King James Vesion quite often is translated by the English word "Master." That is fine. It gives you the idea of someone ruling over someone or some company, or whatever it might be — a Master. This word ***Adonai,*** I want to give you a definition of it.

You might say, wait a minute Ernest, ***Adonai*** is not Elohim. That is right. I understand that. But you know this ***Adonai***, many times in the Old Testament is used in the plural (and I will show some examples), with a singular verb. That is right, a singular verb. The same type of structure grammatically is associated with ***Adonai*** in the plural with a singular verb — as you find with Elohim in the plural with a singular verb.

In the *Brown, Driver and Briggs Lexicon*, which is one of the most authoritative that we have, it speaks about ***Adonai***. In fact, in my copy it is on page 10 and it speaks about ***Adon*** [singular] and then the plural. It says that the plural is sometimes given to mean an intensive *plural of rank*. Where it is actually (I am not quoting) governed by singular verbs and adjectives. I will give some examples in a moment.

The scholars here were able in analyzing the word ***Adonai*** in its plural form with a singular verb, to denote plurality, but a plurality of rank. This means that the individual who possesses what this word describes has various ranks on Him, more than one. But He is a single person. It means a plurality of rank.

As far as Elohim is concerned (I will give you some examples on ***Adonai*** in a moment), some Jewish scholars have suggested it means "plurality of majesty." If you look in the Hebrew grammar references to find out, well, what do you mean by *"plurality of majesty"*? No one knows, they just made it up. It is some kind of a nice idea but it does not tell you anything. You will not find that in any grammatical book that really is describing the Hebrew of the Old Testament. It is a made-up term.

It sounds good because many Jews had difficulty understanding the plurality of these words. They have difficulty because they have come to the conclusion there is One God and that plural [concept], they must put it off in the corner though we don't understand it, but we will just call it "the plural of majesty." It sounds beautiful. It is not the plural of majesty.

When you analyze ***Adonai***, and when you analyze Elohim, and most particularly, if you will look at one of the greatest rabbis (if you want to call him that) who ever lived — and he was trained at the feet of Gamaliel — his name was the apostle Paul. He knew what was going on in the "academy" back in the 1st century AD. He was reared in Judaism. He knew and used the Hebrew consistently. If there was anybody who knew what it meant, he did. He also knew the Greek.

He gave these illustrations about the *ekklesia,* about the corporation, because he understood what ***Adonai*** in the plural meant with singular verbs. He understood what ***Elohim*** meant, plural with singular verbs and adjectives. He understood these things and he is trying to let us see in plain and simple language what it means to be a corporation with rank: from the chairman of the board, down through the presidents and vice-presidents, and all down to the worker on the floor of the corporation. All of it together, both the external and the internal, function together as one unit of power.

It is a power structure where we find administrations, operations, gifts, talents, and governments. You do this, I do that. You have the physical side over here with the medical people, you have people over here who are good in accounting. You have people that are good at speaking over here. You have the good psychologist who wants to help people to understand themselves, to build up the Body of Christ.

You have the men and the women. You have everybody in this corporation who are working in harmony to be able to produce that single purpose. That single purpose, of course, is that designated by Christ Jesus.

So, if ***Adonai*** in the plural, read it here in *, Brown, Driver and Briggs Lexicon,* they said it correctly. It means a plural of rank, that means that one person can have more than one rank and at the same time be a single person.

Let me show you something quite interesting. Turn to Genesis 42:30. In the King James Bible, they did not pluralize the word ***Adonai*** there. In fact it is in the plural, and you can check this. If you have a *Newberry Bible* which has diacritical marks, or grammatical marks alongside of the *King James* words. You

will find there are three little marks near this word **"Lord."** Those three marks indicate it is plural. It is plural in the Hebrew.

In the regular King James that most of you have, or I would daresay in any translation you have, modern or not, you will find the word "Lord" or "Master" or something similar to that, but you will not find it in the plural. Maybe you will, but I doubt it, because people just don't understand how you can use a plural form with a singular verb. You and I know how to use it, just listen to the apostle Paul. We know what a "corporation" is.

Here is the *Brown, Driver and Briggs Lexicon.* They understand about ***Adonai***. The plural is a **"plural of rank."** Go to Genesis 42:29–30.

> **"When they came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan, they told him all that had befallen them, saying: 'The man who is LORD** [***Adonai***] **of the land spoke harshly with us and put us under guard as spies against the land.'"**
>
> • ***Genesis 42:29–30 CLV***

This is a story told to Jacob by his own children who went down to Egypt because there was a famine in their land. They found this great man in Egypt, next to Pharaoh. It was Joseph, their own brother whom they did not recognize. They knew he had great authority. They come back and report to their father Jacob.

Joseph, **"the Lord of the land,"** he knew who they were. That word "LORD," ***Adonai***, is in the plural. They knew what it meant. He was top man. He was not only next to Pharaoh (or Vizier as they are sometimes called in that part of the world), but

- Joseph was head of agriculture.
- He was head of economics.
- He was head of all commerce and engineering.
- Joseph occupied many seats of authority.

He had many caps on his head. They recognized that, that is what "***Adonai***" means. It is perfectly proper to translate that as "Lord" in the sense that it is one person, but this one person had many offices — plurality of rank. Go to verse 33:

> **"Then the man who is LORD** ["lords" plural in Hebrew] **of the land said to us: 'By this I shall know that you are forthright men. Leave one of your brothers with me; take the grain rations for the famine of your households and go …'"**
>
> • ***Genesis 42:33 CLV***

They left Benjamin with Joseph; he was Joseph's own brother. But Benjamin did not understand who the "Lord" was. None of them knew it was Joseph. But they knew one thing, here was a mighty "Lord." But what they said was **"Lords"** because Joseph controlled many agencies and departments in the Egyptian government. He was the right hand to Pharaoh himself. This is a typical example there of the Father and Christ. Christ as "Lords" having many, many things. Remember who Christ is. He is over all principalities, powers, dominions, and thrones — He has many offices.

I can go on and on. I have several of them about 20 or 25 words where the plural is used in the Hebrew, but the *King James Version,* normally you just have the singular.

Let me give you one more: Malachi 1:6. It is the last book of the Old Testament in our wrong type of order here because we need to go back to the Hebrew order. Go to Malachi 1:6–7 CLV:

> **"A son, He is glorifying his father, and a servant his Lord** ["Master," KJV]**. Yet**
>
> **if I am a Father, where is My glory? And**
>
> **if I am a LORD** ["Master"]**, where is the fear of Me?**
>
> **says YAHWEH of hosts to you, the priests who are despising My Name.**

Yet you say, 'In what way do we DESPISE Your Name?'
[1] **You are bringing close on My altar sullied bread,**

and you say, 'In what way do we sully You?'
[2] **When you say, "The table of Yahweh, it is DESPISED."'**

- ***Malachi 1*:6–7, CLV**

Now, who is saying this? It is **"YAHWEH of hosts."** But He is called a what? A "Master." Look at that carefully and you will find in the Hebrew the word "Adonai" is translated "MASTERS" in the plural. It means I am Masters of you because the Lord, you see, has many ranks. Every rank that you can imagine, He has. Isn't that true? Well, that is the way it goes.

What we find here is that this "Adonai" in the plural with singular verb means a plurality of rank. The same thing goes with Elohim. It is not a plurality of "majesty," which is an invented term out of a clear blue sky that has no relative basis to it whatsoever from the scripture, to something that makes sense.

You can understand how Joseph next to Pharaoh, would hold many offices, would he not?

Bill Clinton is the President of the United States [in April 1994, *DWS*]. How many cabinet officers are there? Now, I'm not sure how many: 12, 15, 20. But the point is, who is secretary or head of defense? It's Mr. Perry. But who is commander in chief of defense? It's President Clinton. We find the secretary of state. Who is that? Well, secretary of state may be someone. Secretary of commerce may be someone. Secretary of agriculture may be someone. Secretary of interior may be someone. The secretary of health and welfare may be someone.

Who is commander in chief who has all of those offices associated with him? Bill Clinton. Whether you like him or not, whether you voted for him or not, he is still our president and should be respected. He is in charge of everything. You know, he is a plural power.

But President Clinton does things singularly. You see? But he has all that power associated with him. When you come to Christ, it's different. Not only does He control President Clinton, He controls Prime Minister Major. He controls the authorities in Beijing, the authorities in Tokyo, the authorities in Johannesburg, the authorities everywhere on earth, including the angelic authorities.

Look at the hats He has on. Do you see why He is called Elohim, with many powers, but a singular purpose. That is what it really means. Now, it is a corporation. The apostle Paul said that; and we are part of that corporation.

But at the same time, it acts as a singular unit, and we are all a part of it. Let's look at Christ for a minute. I think you will find this very interesting here because Christ has many offices in the Bible. I'm opening up Harold E. Monser's ***Topical Index and Digest of the Bible*.** Here are some interesting names and titles of Jesus. And by the way, I'm only giving a minority of them.

- ✓ He is called **"an advocate"** (KJV). It means He is like a lawyer. The chief advocate, as a matter of fact (1 John 2:1).
- ✓ He is called **"the anointed one,"** which means the Messiah in Psalm 2:2 CLV.
- ✓ He is called **"the apostle and Chief Priest,"** believe it or not. I thought we only had 12 apostles; though with Paul, 13 apostles. No, He is the chief apostle above all (Hebrews 3:1):

  "Whence, holy brethren, partners of a celestial calling, consider the APOSTLE and Chief PRIEST of our avowal, Jesus,"

- ✓ He is also a **"the Shepherd and Supervisor** ["Bishop" *KJV*] **of your souls"** in 1 Peter 2:25 *CLV*.
- ✓ He is the **"bridegroom"** in parable (Matthew 9:15; Mark 2:19–20; Luke 5:34–35).
- ✓ Also He has astronomical powers. He Himself says:

  "I, Jesus, send My messenger to testify these things to you in the ecclesias. I AM the root [offspring] **and the race of David,** [I am] **the resplendent morning star**" (Revelation 22:16 CLV).

- ✓ In Isaiah 55:4 KJV, He is called: **"a "witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people."**
- ✓ Isaiah 9:6 KJV says about Him: **"… His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor,The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."** The term **"Counselor"** is a legal term.
- ✓ And believe it or not, in Isaiah 9:6 He is actually called **"the everlasting"** or the long-lasting **"Father."**

Wait a minute. I thought that Christ was not the Father. I thought the Father was the Father. In Isaiah 9:6 Christ is called **"Father."** He is the **"Father,"** and I will tell you why. If He created the heavens and the earth, if He created all of the angelic powers, He is in that sense the Father of them. But He is not the Father of Who begat Him.

People Have Many Roles in Life

Look at me, Ernest L. Martin. Look at yourself. If you are a man, I am a father, at the same time I am a son, the son of my father. And I have a son. Soon he will be a father.

For you mothers, you understand the same thing applies there if you are a mother, but you may be a daughter at the same time. Now, I am a father, but I'm also president of ASK. I have two hats on there. Not only that, I have been a professor in the past, and some people call me that to this very day. So I have that rank. I have quite a number of ranks, as a matter of fact.

And look at your own life. You know, you people who are in business, you may be the president of the corporation. You may be. You may be vice president. But you know, when you go home, you're the husband. And you now take on a different role. You already have that different role. And not only that, not a husband, you're a father, perhaps.

Look at the various ranks that we all have, you see? When it comes to administration, operations, and in a corporation, you have quite a number of them. Now, the Apostle Paul said you can have several of these as God gives them to you, and some you don't have. But we can have these various ranks. Let me tell you, Jesus Christ has them all.

He has them all. Yes, He is a father to us. He created us, Isaiah 9:6 KJV. He is also called the firstborn. He is called a governor, a **"ruler"** in Micah 5:2.

And you know something? He is called a great shepherd. Why? How in the world can you be a shepherd and be a counselor, and an advocate at the same time? Well, it's kind of hard for us, getting out there on the fields like the people from the Basque country [in northern Spain, *DWS*], with their sheep out there. It takes a person who really knows his or her business to keep those sheep in order. How many of you are shepherds? God is. Christ is a shepherd. He is also a counselor. He is also a great king. He is Emmanuel, **"God with us."**

> **"His scent will be in the fear of Yahweh, And not by the sight of His eyes shall He JUDGE, Nor by the hearing of His ears shall He ARBITRATE. He will JUDGE the poor with righteousness And ARBITRATE for the humble of the land with equity; He will smite the earth with the club of His mouth, And with the spirit of His lips shall He put the wicked to death."**
>
> • ***Isaiah 11:3–4 CLV***

- ✓ He actually bears the name **"Yahweh"** on some occasions. He is called **"Yahweh"** in Zechariah chapter 14 [16 times *DWS*].
- ✓ In Acts 10:42 He is called the judge. Isn't that interesting? He has the rank of judge too. This is Jesus I'm talking about. [This verse differs from the audio, *DWS*]

> **"And He charges us to herald to the people and to certify that this One is He Who is specified by God to be JUDGE of the living and the dead."**
>
> • ***Acts 10:42 CLV***

- ✓ Many times, He is called **"King"** and **"the King of Kings"** as He is actually called (1 Timothy 6:15

and in Revelation 17:14, 19:16).

- ✓ And He is called the **"Lamb of God"** by God the Father Himself in a crowd of witnesses (John 1:29, 36). Now, that's another title altogether. You know, a **lamb** operates very differently than a **king**. You know that. But He is called a "leader" and "commander" in Isaiah 55:4 (KJV).
- ✓ He is called **"the lion out of the tribe of Judah"** in Revelation 5:5 *CLV*.
- ✓ He is also a mediator, in Galatians 3:19–20 *CLV*.
- ✓ In Isaiah 9:6 [KJV], He is called **"the mighty God."** That is what He is called. And even … **"Emmanuel"** means **"God is with us."** That is his name. Well, He has the name God on Him, which means **"power."** Does He not have power? That's all that **El** means, **Eloah**, **Elohim**. And **Elohim** is the plurality of powers, ranks, you see, and things like that.
- ✓ He is called the precious cornerstone in Isaiah 28:16.
- ✓ He is called a priest.
- ✓ He is called a prince.
- ✓ He is called a prophet.
- ✓ He is called a redeemer.
- ✓ He is called the ruler of the kings of the earth.
- ✓ He is called a Savior.
- ✓ He is called a scepter out of Israel (Hebrews 1:8 CLV).
- ✓ He is called a servant even. Isn't that interesting? How can He be king and servant at the same time? Well, He is. He has that cap on Him.
- ✓ He is called shepherd again, and the shepherd and bishop of your souls (1 Peter 2:25 KJV).
- ✓ He is called the son of the father.
- ✓ He is called the son of Mary.
- ✓ He is called the Son of God,
- ✓ and He is called the son of man.
- ✓ He is called "teacher."
- ✓ He is called the Word of God.

Now, look at all the titles He has. And this was not odd to people who lived in the 1st century AD or earlier.

A Secular Examples from History

I have in front of me a book by the Lobe Classical Library on selected papyri that have been found from ancient times; usually in the Greek or Roman period. And I have one [letter] here dated to 41 AD. It is a letter from Claudius, the Emperor of Rome, to his subjects. The reason I picked this writing is because it's very close to New Testament times, and the Apostle Paul would have known about Claudius. I want you to notice the rank this man has. In writing this letter, this letter has been found as a papyrus document and been translated. And here it is. He starts out by saying this. Now, listen.

> **"Tiberius, Claudius, Caesar, Augustus, *Germanicus*, Imperator, Pontifex Maximus, holder of the tribunchean power, Consul Designate. Then he says to the city of Alexandria.**

What a title that man has. You know what he was saying? *I operate under all of these authorities.*

- **"I am Claudius."** That was his name.
- He had the rank of *Germanicus* because of his being [lord] over the Germans and winning certain things there.
- He was called *Augustus,* which means "the great one," because of his great power that he had in a particular sense.
- He was called the *Imperator* because he was the emperor.
- He was called the *Pontifex Maximus,* which meant he was the "pope" [over all Roman religion]. He was head of all religion. He was a "pope" [in religious authority].
- He was the holder of the tribunchean power.

  That means Claudius had a particular power that the ordinary people wanted representation in the government. And so they established the office of a "tribune." Rome had several types of [tribunes], but this was the office of the "chief tribune." It means I'm the chief common man.
- But the letter also says, I am consul designate. (I'm also a consul.)

Now, he tells the people of Alexandria who he is. And boy, does he list the titles, doesn't he? That's not the end of it. I mean, you see this all the time in these ancient documents. This is the plurality of power in one man, like the powers held by Joseph compared to the lords of Egypt.

A Second Example from History

Here's a letter from the Roman Emperor Septimus Severus, 222 AD. Note to this one:

> **"A proclamation by the emperor Caesar, son of the deified Magnus Antonius Pius, grandson of the deified Septimus Severus, Pius, Marcus Aurelius Alexander, Pius Felix, Augustus.** [He had that title, which refers to the powerful, happy Augustus, the most powerful man in the whole country.]
>
> **Pontifex Maximus** [I am the pope. I run all religion, he says]**. I'm the holder of the tribunchean power. I'm a consul and father of the country."** [And then he carries on.]

You see, here are people with many designations [of authority, *DWS*]. You know, in Germany today or in places like that, if you get two doctor's degrees, well, they usually go around saying, **"Doctor, doctor, this."** And they say, **"Well, doctor of what?" "Well, I'm doctor of *this* and a doctor of *that*."** So it's very strange to us. But you see, that's the way they do it in that country.

In Hebrew, they just showed the various types of powers that people had by this use of the plural, which really means a type of corporation. This word Elohim itself by its very elements, means "power," but it's better to translate as "authority."

If you want to translate it in a proper way, you could say **"powers or authorities invested in one person or one corporation."** That's it. And it's really the Apostle Paul who delineated and explained clearly what God is all about. Because you see, our word **"God"** is singular. In the New Testament, the word ***theos*** is always singular. They emphasize the singularity of the thing. Most of the Jews will emphasize the singularity of the thing. You know, we call it monotheism, don't we? One, *mono*, one, *theism*, "one God"? **That is true.**

There is one God. There is one Elohim. But the Elohim, the **"I AM"** at the end, gives a plural significance to it. It's one corporation, just like the BBC, the British Broadcast Corporation.

There is none of us that could conceive of that organization as being one single individual. Isn't that right? But is there a chairman of the board? **Yes.**

Is there a president? **Yes.**

Are there vice presidents if they call them that? Well, obviously, in most big corporations. **Yes, they have them.**

And let me tell you this. The *Ekklesia* is a very big corporation with Christ at the head. Christ Himself wears all of the caps … all of the caps. You cannot refer to Him unless you refer to Him in the plural as far as ranks are concerned.

He [Christ] bears all of the credentials as top person in all of the operations, administrations, and things like that of the Ekklesia. His corporation is His body. God the Father IS in control, but it is given all to Him [Christ].

You and I are a part of that one corporation. Some of us are external members, so to speak. Others are internal members. But you know, the internal members of our body happen to be more important than the external members. Is that true? **Absolutely.**

- You don't see the heart, but it's important.
- You don't see the liver or the spleen, or any of those things, but they are very important.
- And you don't see the brain, which contains or has the mind — where the spirit is. You don't see that either. But **it is what makes you to be a personality**.

And it is the same thing with the body or the corporation called the *Ekklesia*. The mind, the head, is the chairman of the board, put it that way. That's even better. The chairman of the board of **all** divisions of this corporation, wearing **all** the caps of authority, is Jesus Christ.

That explains Elohim. Elohim is a corporation. But it's just like the lexicon graphers *Brown, Driver and Briggs* said about **Adonai**, which is used many times in the plural with singular verbs. They understood that. And they even said, well, it means his ranks that the person has.

But when it goes to Elohim, they are at a loss of what to say. Why don't they let Adonai in the plural with the singular verb, which applies to the same personage or corporation, be the rule for the Elohim in the plural with a singular verb and a singular adjective? You see the point? It's consistency we're talking about here. This is the way the Hebrew language uses its words to express what God or Elohim is all about.

But if you want it really spelled out, just go to the Apostle Paul. He has shown what the Ekklesia is, and he says that we are a *part* of that *Ekklesia*. But that *Ekklesia* of which we are a part, both external and internal, make up the one body of Christ, and He is the head under the Father.

Your Part in Elohim

You actually are a part of Elohim. We are a part of Elohim. Our destiny is to become daughters and sons of that great family, which is a great corporation, a great corporation of powers. But with the Father and with Christ being head of everything, you have your part, I have my part. But Elohim actually means a plurality of ranks. And when you get it to be understood as a corporation, you can put it with a singular verb, you can put it with a plural verb, and you know it all makes sense.

Ernest L. Martin, April 1994
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Additional Study Resources

"The Real Meaning of Biblical Words"

"The Divine Names and the New Testament"

"What is the Proper Name for the Father of Jesus?"

"How Should the Names of Deity be Properly Rendered?"

"Elohim and the Son of God Part 1"

"Christ and Messiah"

"Where Is God?"