Yahweh – the Proper Name of the One and Only God-Almighty

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Jehovah, Allah, Elohim, Adonai — the world offers many names for the Creator. This article makes the case that only one of them is actually a name, rather than a title, and traces it back to its Hebrew original.

- A survey of the many names different religions and denominations give the Creator.
- The distinction between a title and a name: a name uniquely and personally identifies who is meant.
- The Hebrew name behind the English "God" and "Lord," properly rendered "Yahweh."
- John the Baptist's naming as an example of a name given by direct revelation.
- "Jehovah" identified as a comparatively recent hybrid coinage, not an authentic rendering of the original Hebrew.

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Yahweh – the Proper Name of the One and Only God-Almighty

and only God-Almighty

Hebrew "YHWH" = English "Yahweh":

Most people today would probably regard the Name of our Creator God as something irrelevant and tell you that it was sufficient to simply call Him "God" or "Lord". A typical retort might be: "We all worship the same God but call Him *(or Her)* by different names." Others would reply: "Knowing the Name is not important but knowing who He is, is important."

If you were to ask people who believed in the existence of our Creator God, what His Name was, the vast majority would likely shake their head and tell you they did not know. If you asked the Jehovah's Witnesses they would instantly reply "Jehovah". Many Mormons would tell you that His Name is "Elohim"; the United Pentecostals would reply, "Jesus" and others would probably say "Father" or "Heavenly Father". Jews call Him "Adonai". Ask a Muslim and he will tell you that his our God's Name is "Allah"; a Hindu and he would offer one of many names such as "Brahma", "Vishnu" or "Kali". A Free Mason would *(if you were a suitably ranked fellow free mason)* tell you that our God was called "Jabulon" or (if you were not so ranked), "the Great Architect". Many occultist groups would say it was "Lucifer", "Maitrea", "Gaia", Satan, or many others. Take a survey of every religious group in the world and you would end up with hundreds of totally different names.

Your name is important. If your name was John Smith, would you object if someone called you "man" or "him" or "that guy" or "the man"? Equally, if your name was Mary Jones, you would not wish to be called Florence Nightingale. As individuals, Mary and Florence are unique.

Many have had experiences with various "nicknames". I knew a young teenager that had several unfortunate car accidents in a short period of time, and his friends "nick-named" him "crash". But only

"Jonathon" *(or its abbreviation "Jon")* was his true temporal, or earthly name, and it is the only one by which he can be positively identified. He could not for example, sign anything as "crash", nor be held accountable for anything as "crash", or even "John", for that matter.

We read in the Gospels how John the Baptist received his name directly through revelation from an angel of Yahweh *(Lk.1:11ff)* "John" *(or more properly in the English equivalent of the original Hebrew, Yochanan)* was not a name used by their relatives *(v.61)* and thus Elizabeth was breaking with tradition when she named him John. When John's father, Zechariah, who had been struck dumb earlier, confirmed that his son's name was John, his power of speech was instantly restored to him and he praised Yahweh *(vv.62ff).* Thus in the eyes of Yahweh the name "John" was very IMPORTANT. Any other name would have been contrary to the will of Yahweh.

There are numerous accounts in the Scriptures of Yahweh giving His servants new names -- Abram was renamed Abraham, Sarai was renamed Sarah, Jacob was renamed Israel, and so on. Within each Divinely appointed name was a revelation and commission from Yahweh. It was therefore sacred. Had Zechariah refused to name his son John and given him another name like Eli, for example, not only would he have remained dumb, but it is likely that a far worse fate would have befallen him. WE ARE NOT TO TAMPER WITH DIVINELY-ORDAINED NAMES.

For centuries, Jewish superstition did not allow the word "Yahweh" to be spoken aloud! The early Romans took great advantage of this by using it as their excuse to change His name in their translation of the Vulgate, to the generic titles of LORD, Lord, GOD and God. They have never provided any genuine rationale for this change, nor for the variations of the form these titles are expressed in, aside from it was done by "the Divine authority of God" - which God, we may never know!

Thus the true Name of our God became concealed and subsequently lost to many. Unlike modern languages such as English, French, or German, the original written form of the Hebrew language did not contain vowels. The words consisted of only consonants, and were joined together into one long string. Thus the English equivalent to the sentence, "My name is John Smith" would have appeared as: M NM S JHN SMTH or MNMSJHNSMTH. Familiarity with the ancient Hebrew language allows one to mentally insert what others would tend to think of as the "missing" vowels in the written or spoken form. This also contributed to the Romans erroneous excuses for the otherwise deliberate tampering with Yahweh's word.

Later Hebrew scholars added the vowels into the Hebrew text (called "pointing") so that it would be more readable for non-Hebrews. However, the missing vowels of the Divine Name Yahweh were not re-inserted -- instead, the vowels from the Hebrew ADONAI *(meaning "Lord")* were inserted in their place by 15th century translators, which led to the false transliteration, JEHOVAH. Unfortunately and despite the fact that most scholars recognize this erroneous propagation of the Divine Name, many Bibles acknowledge or use it.

Most others either substitute "LORD" or "Lord" or "GOD" or "God" for Yahweh's name if they don't erroneously insert "JEHOVAH". "Lord" is not proper a name at all, rather it is merely a title used historically by many humans in the stead of "master". "God" is also not a name, but a title, which could be compared with the military examples of titles like, sergeant, private, general, etc. "LORD" or "GOD" are not only not proper names, they are not even proper words to represent titles in English. English form and style reserves Capital letters solely and strictly by definition, for the first letter of a proper name, or for abbreviations. Thus "GOD" by proper definition, must stand for some unknown, three abbreviated words.

Most uses of the fabricated name "JEHOVAH", are of the all capital version, making it purely nonsense from a proper English language perspective. Even "Jehovah" spelled in proper upper and lower case letters is not only an erroneous transliteration, but it is blasphemous, for literally translated, it means "Y-H is mischievous". The Hebrew, "hovah" is the transliteral equivalent to, "mischievous", or "ruin", or "disaster", or "perverse", which fairly well explains why we are not surprised that one of the most infamous pseudo-Christian cults in the history of Christianity, uses this false name. Does it matter whether we get the Name of the Holy One wrong? If we use a wrong name in ignorance then are we, not guilty? Perhaps this could be admirably argued, but once we do come to the true knowledge, we not only become accountable, we come obligated to be respectful. If you were introduced to someone as Bruce, would you then proceed to address him as "man", or "him" or "the man" or "that man", "guy" or some other form of title as opposed to his proper name? This is precisely what virtually all copy-righted Bibles have done with Yahweh's name, and by extension what these Bibles have been teaching us to do as well!

We should understand that the legalities of copy-rights are very specific. Unless a written work can be proven to be significantly different than the original writing, it does not qualify to be copy-written! There are some several thousand incidents of Yahweh's name in the original writings, and equally as many erroneous changes to the copy-written Bibles, to make them sufficiently significantly different than the original writing, simply by removing Yahweh's name and substituting the various titles or other spurious names in each case. This contempt changes the content to qualify for copy-rights, but it also changes the meaning very significantly in many instances. For example, much confusion exists within traditional Christian organizations over the words "LORD" and "Lord", which most Bibles use interchangeably in place of both Yahweh's name and the Messiah's name, Yah'shua, without ever providing any rationale for such obvious contempt!

Thus ALL of these copy-written Bibles are by definition, significantly different than Yahweh's originally inspired, written word, and the most significant qualifying difference, is the blasphemous removal of Yahweh's name! Other variations in grammar and style have also been used to aid in attaining variations of copy-rights, all of which are quite ridiculous when properly studied, but the worst, and most inexcusable example of man's arrogance, cannot be anything but this issue of Yahweh's name.

More importantly than our own human understanding, this matters a great deal because Yahweh says it matters to Him! Read carefully through the Bible and you will discover hundreds of references which not only say that Yahweh as our God should be reverenced, but also His Name.

Yahweh is all knowing. He is the Divine Being with whom we may converse and get to know personally. But how are we to distinguish the True God from all of the other gods masquerading as Him? How would your little daughter who, for the sake of argument, got lost and was picked up by the police, identify her parents orally? She could describe their appearance which might help. She could describe their characteristics -- "my Dad is kind and my Mom loves me", she could even correctly identify them as "a man and a woman", but that wouldn't be too helpful to the police. So what would she do? She would give their names -- Joe and Shirley Smith. Simply calling them mom and dad, or man and woman, or him and her, all of which are accurate titles, would not be helpful.

We are commanded in Scripture to call upon Yahweh by His Name! Yahweh is merciful when, in our ignorance, we address Him in the wrong manner. I don't much like being called "man", but I am a man, just like Yahweh is a God. But because I am a man, my name is not automatically, "man", no more than Yahweh's name is automatically "God", simply because He is a God!

If your pet cow was named Daisy, would you say, "there is cow" or would you say properly, "there is Daisy, *my* cow", or, "there is *my* cow, Daisy" . If you pretend your cow could speak, would you say; "and cow said, 'mooo'"? If this sounds silly, then realize it is no sillier than saying, "and God said, 'listen to Me'". Would you say, "I must do this because cow said so"? No, of course not. You would say many things such as "I must do this because *my* cow said so", or because "*my* cow, Daisy said so", or "*our* cow, Daisy said so", or because "*the* cow said so", or "Daisy *the* cow, said so", or "Daisy, *our* cow said so"", etc.

Yahweh deserves at least as much respect as your fictional cow! Thus "Yahweh, *my* God said so", or "*my* God Yahweh, said so", or "Yahweh, *our* God said so", or "*our* God Yahweh, said so", etc., would afford this same courtesy and respect. Thus if we know our God's Name is Yahweh, yet we persistently call Him "Jehovah" *(a fabricated name never used before 1518),* or just call Him by His title of God, which is "what" He is, not "who" He is, are we not, in fact, mocking Him, or at least minimizing our respect for His name and His commandments? Think of calling your high school teacher, "man" simply because he was a man, does it make sense?

The third commandment says that we are not to misuse the Name of our God, Yahweh. His Name is not "Jehovah" or "Allah" or "God" or "LORD" or any of the other man-made names, some of which are undoubtedly of demonic origin. Though "Lord" *(Adonai)* and "God" *(Elohim, El)* are by no means disrespectful as titles, they are only generic titles, they are not names.

It is important that we get the Name of our Heavenly Father correct in our thinking. Salvation, according to Scripture, is in the Name of Yahweh only *(Ac.4:12; Joel 2:32; Prov.18:10).* We are commanded to address Him as "Father" *(Mt.6:9)* and "Yahweh" *(Ps.113:3).* Knowing the Name of Yahweh is considered important

(*Ps.91:14; Mal.3:16-17)* and gathering in His Name will bring about special blessings *(Zec.10:12; 13:9).* Yahweh's people do not deny His true Name *(by insisting on "Jehovah", for example -- Rev.3:8; 2:13)* and indeed will, as a sign that they are on the true Path, know that Name *(Is.52:6; 43:7; Dan.9:19; 2 Chr.7:14; Amos 9:12; Jer.15:16)* and will be sealed in that Name *(Rev.22:4)*. And once we know that true Name, our use of it will be evidence of our obedience to His commandments and respect of His will *(Jer.10:25; Rev.13:17 & 14:1),* and the Name will be the focus of those who rebel against Yahweh *(Mal.1:6; Rev.13:6; Rev.16:9)*. Indeed, those who refuse to acknowledge His Name will be punished *(Mal.1:14; Ps.79:6; Jer.10:25; Jn.3:18; Rev.11:18).*

Many people have some misconceptions about "names" and "titles." Names are generally seen in the western mind as simply identifiers, whereas titles are seen as what the person does or a character trait. In Hebrew there is no such distinction. "Names" and "titles" are all the same, and are attributes of a person.

Let's use "King David" for an example. Many see King as a title and David as an identifier. However in Hebrew, David is "beloved" or "one who is loved," and king *(melek)* is "one who rules." So "King David" would be "the one who rules is beloved" or "the beloved one who rules." The same is true with the Creator's name! In fact, the word translated as "name" is "shem." Which literally means character, authority, fame, or renown; akin to “title”!

Consider our Creator. The origin of His Holy name - a name so sacred that superstitions were such that it could not even be spoken out loud by the people of ancient Israel. In the Hebrew scriptures it was represented by four letters called the "Tetragrammaton". In its earlier written form, Hebrew didn't contain vowels, so this sacred name would be represented in English by the four letters - YHWH.

Many may debate over the true pronunciation of Yahweh’s Holy Name. Some, pronounce it Yahweh - others say Yehovah, some even say Jehovah. Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible erroneously informs us that “Yehovah” - pronounced *{yeh-ho-vaw'}* - is the correct Hebrew rendering.

The Encyclopedia Judaica, Volume 7, pages 680-682, correctly sums it all this way: “YHWH” – *(not “YHVH”)*. The personal name of the God of Israel is written in the Hebrew Bible with the four consonants YHWH and is referred to as the "Tetragrammaton". At least until the destruction of the First Temple in 586 B.C.E., this name was regularly pronounced with its proper vowels, as is clear from the Lachish Letters, written shortly before that date. But at least by the third century B.C.E., the pronunciation of the name YHWH was avoided, and Adonai, "the Lord", was substituted for it, as evidenced by the use of the Greek word *Kyrios*, "Lord", for YHWH in the Septuagint, the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures that was begun by Greek speaking Jews in that century. Where the combined form Adonai YHWH occurs in the Bible, this was read as Adonai Elohim, "Lord God".

In the early Middle Ages, when the consonantal text of the Bible was supplied with vowel points to facilitate its correct traditional reading, the vowel points for 'Adonai with one variation - a *sheva* with the first *yod* of YHWH instead of the *hataf-patah* under the *aleph* of *'Adonai*7 were used for YHWH. When

Christian scholars of Europe first began to study Hebrew, they did not understand what this really meant, and they mistakenly introduced the hybrid names “Yehovah”, later followed by "Jehovah".

In order to avoid pronouncing even the sacred name *Adonai for YHWH, the custom was later introduced of saying simply in Hebrew *ha-Shem (or Aramaic Shemc, "the Name")* even in such an expression as "Blessed be he that cometh in the name of YHWH" *(Ps. 118:26).*

THE PROHIBITION OF USE OF THE NAMES OF Yahweh.

The prohibition applied both to the pronunciation of the name of our God and its committal to writing, apart from its use in sacred writings. The prohibition against the pronunciation of the name of our God applied only to the Tetragrammaton, which could be pronounced by the high priest only once a year on the Day of Atonement in the Holy of Holies *(cf. Mishnah Yoma 6:2)*, and in the Temple by the priests when they recited the Priestly Blessings *(Sot. 7:6; see also Ch. Albeck (ed.), Seder Nashim (1954), 387).*

As the Talmud expresses it: "Not as I am written am I pronounced. I am written *yod he waw he*, and I am pronounced *alef dalet*" *(nun yod, i.e., Adonai; Kid. 71a). [Yahweh].*

Authoritative scholars, such as the one shown above, point out that the original, personal name of our Creator, written YHWH in the Hebrew tongue spoken by all the patriarchs and prophets, is correctly written and pronounced Yahweh in English.

In ancient times, the Hebrew words were written without vowels in what is called the unpointed script, so that each word consisted of a group of consonants whose vowel sounds were supplied from memory by the reader. In other words, Hebrew words were pronounced with vowel sounds even though the vowels themselves were not written. The Hebrews knew, from oral teaching and practice, which vowels were associated with the different words. Yahweh's Name is written *yod-heh-waw-heh* hwhy in Hebrew, transliterated YHWH in English, but is written and pronounced with the proper vowels YAHWEH as these sources show.

Notice what ***The Jewish Encyclopedia*** of 1901, Volume 12, page 119, states: It thus becomes possible to determine with a fair certainty the historical pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton, the results agreeing with the statement of Ex. iii. 14, in which YHWH terms Himself hyha. "I will be", a phrase which is immediately proceeded by the fuller term "I will be that I will be," or, as in the English versions, "I am" and "I am that I am." The name hwhy is accordingly derived from the root hwh(=hyh), and is regarded as an imperfect. This passage is decisive for the pronunciation "Yahweh"; for the etymology was undoubtedly based on the known word.

The Encyclopedia Judaica, Volume 7, page 680, further states this fact: The true pronunciation of the name YHWH was never lost. Several early Greek writers of the Christian Church testify that the name was

pronounced "Yahweh". This is confirmed, at least for the vowel of the first syllable of the name, by the shorter form Yah, which is sometimes used in poetry *(e.g., Ex. 15:2)* and the *-yahu* or *-yah* that serves as the final syllable in very many Hebrew names.

The Encyclopedia Britanica, Volume 23, page 867, confirms this fact: Yahweh, the proper name of the God of Israel; it is composed of four consonants *(YHWH)* in Hebrew and is therefore called the Tetragrammaton...

The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, Volume 9, page 160, confirms this fact: Of the names of our God in the Old Covenant, that which occurs most frequently *(6,823 times)* is the so-called Tetragrammaton, YHWH *(hwhy),* the distinctive personal name of the God of Israel.

And *The Jewish Encyclopedia* Volume 12, pages 118-119, confirms this fact also: TETRAGRAMMATON: The quadriliteral name of our God, *(hwhy)*. The Tetragrammaton is the ancient Israelitish name for our God...

The Jewish Encyclopedia, Volume 9, pages 162-163, also shows us that while the rabbis recognized only one proper name for the Creator, they also considered other names as titles for the Creator. As you read this excerpt, notice and remember the title *(Adonai*) that was used in place of the Creator's Name:

The Rabbis as well as the cabalists steadfastly maintained their belief in monotheism. Hence they recognized only one proper name for the Deity, considering the other names as appellations or titles signifying divinity, perfection, and power, or as characterizing His acts as observed and appreciated by mankind. The name YHWH is considered as the Name proper; it was known in the earliest rabbinical works simply as the Name; also as Shem ha-Meyuhad ("the Extraordinary Name"; Sifre, Num. 143): as Shem ha-Meforash *("the Distinguished Name"; Yoma vi. 2)*; as Shem ben The Name. Arba' Otiyyot *("the Tetra-grammaton" or "the Quadrilateral Name"; Kid 71a)*; and as Yod He Waw He *(spelling letters of YHWH).*

Vowel points were placed among the letters of Yahweh's Name *(hwhy)* as a code telling the reader to pronounce another name (or title) in place of the Name Yahweh *(hwhy).*

The Century Bible, by Adeney and Bennett, Volume 1, page 91, also chronicles the establishment of this doctrine: Hebrew was originally written without vowels, but when the vowel points were added, the vowels of *Adonay* or *Elohim* were written with yhwh, as a direction that these words were to be read instead of the word whose consonants were YHWH. Thus we find the combinations YeHoWaH and YeHoWiH; equally pronouncable as “Yahweh” in the English.

When the vowel points of Adonai or Elohim were placed among the letters of the Name Yahweh *(hwhy),* Yahweh's Name was changed to look like the following: *(ho*hy++)* or *(ho!hy++).* Then, when a reader saw the Name Yahweh with the vowel points, the reader would know to say Adonai when he saw the form *(ho*hy+)*, and Elohim when he saw the form *(ho!hy++).*

The ***Babylonian Talmud***, Tractate Kiddushin, page 71a, openly confirms that this became the standard practice of all Israyl, as it still is to this day.

In short, the Name Yahweh is the foundation for all truth. What shall we say then, of those who reject Yahweh, but accept "Jesus"? By accepting "Jesus", they have unwittingly rejected Yahweh also, because "Jesus" is in truth, Yah'shua -- the Salvation of, or Son of Yahweh! Indeed, Yah'shua is so closely identified with Yahweh in the Scriptures at times, as to be seemingly indistinguishable from Him, being the "mighty God", the "everlasting Father" *(Is.9:6, AV).* Thus we are justified in saying that Yahweh and Yah'shua are, of One; both of One name and One Spirit; i.e.: "Yah'weh" and "Yah''shua".

Before we get into the proper name of our Saviour, it is a point of interest that Mormons refer to the Father as "Elohim" and Yah'shua as "Jehovah", the latter blasphemous name even appearing at the end of the Book of Mormon *(Moroni 10:34)* and in a misquotation of Is.12:2 where "Lord Jehovah" erroneously translates "Yah, Yahweh" *(2 Nephi 22:2).*

"Elohim" is not a proper name and may be transliterated simply as "God-Family" and is invariably connected to Yahweh in appellations to Deity, such as "Yahweh-Elohim" *(mis-translated in most English Bibles as "LORD God" which would be akin to saying "man male" to describe someone).* "Elohim" is a uni-plural noun referring to the multiple aspects of the Divinity such as the masculine and feminine, or the Father, Creator, Sustainer, Provider, Protector, etc.

ADDENDUM:

Many people misunderstand the alleged distinction between the words "Elohim" and "God", or "elohim" and "god", *[or "El" and "el"]* as the case may be.

It is well known and even widely publicized to this day by the "Jews", that they originally used this title "El", and ultimately, "Elohim" to "replace" the name of Yahweh, which they *["Jews" - originally "Khazars"]* erroneously and superstitiously believed was "too holy to utter" and "too holy to read"! The true and original Israelites never did believe such foolishness regarding their Creator's name. You will only find evidence of this superstitious behavior in modern "Jewish", or Khazar tradition, not within any actual or implied context of the true Hebrew or Israelite faith.

These superstitions were originally brought into the Hebrew Bible by the Khazars, or as we know in modern English language, the "Jews", who were not originally of the Israelites, but rather were pagans from the lands of Edom. These pagan Jews, being self-styled followers of what they then termed "Judaism", being their newly coined title for their equally newly formed religion - being a fusion of pagan Khazar traditions with some aspects of the Israelite faith, have had devastating impact upon what content has been attributed to the Bible and how it has been translated. They are perhaps the most deceiving group of religious fanatics on the planet - and they were of pagan origins and they were the originators of the name-titles, "El" and "Elohim".

"Elohim" existed in the ancient pagan languages outside of the original Hebrew, and its original use was directly associated with the name of at least one false god *['b'el' and 'el'],* and later as a more universal title for a number of related false gods, as in "el'ohim", or "family of 'el". This was the amended name "Elohim", brought into the Hebrew language by the Khazars, now self-styled Jews, or false Hebrews, and it was their ingrained use of this word, together with their superstitions about the true name of Yahweh, that caused them to substitute their pagan name-title for that true name of Yahweh.

The original Israelites ALWAYS referred to [and always will refer to] Yahweh by His name "Yahweh" as they were instructed to do, and the only adjective they applied to His name was related to His "Almighty" or omniscient ability, or sometimes to His creative ability as in "Creator", but even then it was ALWAYS in the context that implied "the Creator of all that is", not that He was just a "creator".

In our time, it is relatively easy for us to get caught up in using improper language, or in using language of improper origins, such as by labeling certain words as "pagan". But if we objectively analyze the roots of all words in any language other than Yahweh's original Hebrew, we will soon realize that 100% of all existing words in every language except that of the original Yahweh inspired Hebrew language, are of pagan origins, and indeed remain as pagan languages to this day. Thus if we are followers of the Israelite faith, yet are bound by our limitations of being able only to speak and write in the pagan "English", then we will of necessity, find ourselves communicating with "pagan" words. This does not mean, nor should it be construed to even imply that we hold onto any pagan beliefs, merely that we are unable to adequately communicate using Yahweh's inspired Hebrew language.

Once we understand that the true Hebrew language and only the true Hebrew language - not the language of ancient or modern Khazars *[Jews],* is the only language that is NOT PAGAN, then we can fully appreciate why it is so important to do our best to ascertain what was meant by the original Hebrew writers. Further, we can also do our best to "undo" every known alteration, whether accidental or deliberate, to these original writings. Thus the "use" of the pagan word "God" is no less of a mistake as would be the use of the pagan word "Elohim". They are equally pagan, and indeed the pagan origins of "Elohim" or "El", go back much further than they do for the more recently invented pagan word "God" or "god".

These reasons are precisely why we chose when conducting our Bible translation [**NFRV**], to ALWAYS use Yahweh's actual name "Yahweh" *[English transliteral equivalent to Hebrew YHWH]*, even and especially when we replaced the erroneously translated *name-titles* such as God or Lord. We only left the *name-titles* in some few instances where they act as adjectives modifying the glory of our Father insofar as an English reader of our version would be concerned. We felt, and still feel that this is the best way for those that communicate in a pagan language such as English, to distinguish themselves from mainstream pagans; by having the best possible ability to comprehend the true meaning of the original Hebrew writing, not by attempting to discern which English/pagan words may be more or less pagan than others.

Essentially, we are of the Israelite faith, yet most of us are limited to communicating in the pagan language of English - but we are also gifted by our Creator with the ability to discern what we hope is the best possible use of this pagan language we have been born into.

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