

Theology Proper — The Names of God: ELOHIM

I. SCRIPTURAL — Examining a relevant passage of Scripture.

“In the beginning **God** created the heavens and the earth... Then **God** said, ‘Let Us make man in **Our** image, according to **Our** likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So **God** created man in His own image; in the image of **God** He created him; male and female He created them.” (Gen. 1:1, 26)

A. ORIGIN / DERIVATION

B. TRANSLATION

1. GREEK

2. ENGLISH

C. USAGE / APPLICATION

1. PROPER SENSE: God

a) DIVINE ESSENCE

b) DIVINE PERSONS

2. IMPROPER SENSES

a) BY FUNCTION / PROFESSION: False gods & Satan

b) BY ANALOGY / REPRESENTATION: Angels & Authorities

D. MEANING / SIGNIFICANCE (in distinction from Jehovah)

1. PLURAL

2. RELATIONAL

a) TO HIS CREATION

b) TO HIS IMAGE-BEARERS

c) TO HIS COVENANT PEOPLE

E. RELATED NAMES

II. DOCTRINAL & POLEMICAL — Summarizing the teaching of Scripture as a whole, through the consideration of relevant questions and controversies.

A. Does the name ELOHIM reveal a plurality of Divine Persons? (We affirm.)

B. Is the name ELOHIM inconsistent with a Unitarian notion of God? (We affirm.)

C. Is the name ELOHIM properly applied to the MESSIAH? (We affirm.)

D. Does the application of ELOHIM to image-bearing creatures undermine the Creator-creature distinction? (We deny.)

E. Is the word ELOHIM in Psalm 8:5 best translated as “angels”? (We affirm.)

F. Do God-ordained human authorities bear God’s authority? (We distinguish.)

III. PRACTICAL — Applying the teaching of Scripture to our lives.

A. WORSHIP GOD ALONE! (Creator/Creature distinction)

B. HONOR GOD’S IMAGE!

1. Individual

2. Family

3. State

4. Church

C. EMBRACE GOD AS YOUR GOD!

D. KEEP YOURSELVES IN THE LOVE OF GOD, WHO IS LOVE!