

Adonai - Our Lord and Our God

Adon, Adonai (Hebrew) – Lord - Kurios (Greek) - Lord

This name of Deity appears in the Old Testament with great frequency and expresses sovereign dominion and possession.

- **Occurs**

419x in OT, 37x Gen thru Job, 53x in Psalms, 329x in Prophets (214x in Eze alone)

- **Elohim** represents God the powerful, the God who can
- **Yahweh/Jehovah** represents God the personal, the God who acts for me
- **Adonai** represents God as Authority, the God who I obey.

- **Strongs**

Heb. ‘adon, means one possessed of absolute control. It denotes a master, as of slaves #Ge 24:14,27 or a ruler of his subjects #Ge 45:8 or a husband, as lord of his wife #Ge 18:12 The old plural form of this Hebrew word is _’ adonai_. From a superstitious reverence for the name "Jehovah," the Jews, in reading their Scriptures, whenever that name occurred, always pronounced it _’ Adonai_.

Greek kurios, a supreme master, etc. In the LXX. this is invariably used for "Jehovah" and “Adonai.”

- **Dr. C. I. Scofield**

(1) The primary meaning of Adon, Adonai, is Master, and it is applied in the Old Testament Scriptures both to Deity and to man. The latter instances are distinguished in the English version by the omission of the capital. As applied to man, the word is used of two relationships: master and husband (Gen 24:9, 10, 12, ‘master,’ may illustrate the former; Gen 18:12, ‘lord,’ the latter). Both these relationships exist between Christ and the believer (John 13:13, ‘master’; 2 Cor 11:2, 3, ‘husband’).

(2) Two principles inhere in the relation of master and servant: (a) the Master’s right to implicit obedience (John 13:13; Matt 23:10; Luke 6:46); (b) the servant’s right to direction in service (Isa 6:8–11). Clear distinction in the use of the divine names is illustrated in Exod 4:10–12. Moses feels his weakness and incompetency, and ‘Moses said unto the LORD [Jehovah], O my Lord [Adonai], I am not eloquent,’ etc. Since service is in question, Moses (appropriately) addresses Jehovah as Lord. But now power is in question, and it is not the Lord (Adonai) but Jehovah (LORD) who answers (referring to creation power)-’ and Jehovah said unto him, Who hath made man’s mouth?... Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth.’ The same distinction appears in Josh 7:8-11.”⁷

- **Authority** - Legal power, or a right to command or to act; as the authority of a prince over subjects, and of parents over children.
- **A servant submits to authority and can be defined as one who promotes the interests of another and seeks to be of service or use, not for his own benefit, but for the benefit of those he serves.**
- **“Lord...”**
When we address God the Father or Jesus as “Lord” we imply that He is our “master” to whom we willingly submit and serve.

- **We submit to Jesus** as an act of our will and expression of our belief that He is worthy to be worshipped and obeyed. Those who will not submit their will to Christ do not believe He is good and gracious or worthy of trust. Those who do willingly submit to Christ do so because they believe He is what He has said He is. Ps 34:8 - O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.
- **We “obey the Gospel”** and acknowledge God’s authority when we trust the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior. The very act of responding to the Gospel involves recognition of and submission to God’s absolute authority. Believers are referred to as those who have obeyed the gospel while unbelievers are referred to as those who “obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.”(2 *Thessalonians 1:8*; 1 *Peter 4:16*). Because God has absolute authority to do so, “He commandeth all men everywhere to repent.” (*Acts 17:30*).
- **Jesus is Lord**, whether we acknowledge him to be *our* Lord or not! We *will* bow to His authority and confess He is God and Lord of all either in this life, or in the life to come. But one day, *every* knee shall bow... (Isaiah 45:21-23)
- **Jesus has been given all authority**, regardless whether we submit to His authority or not. Jesus said of Himself, “All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth.” (*Matthew 28:18*).
- **Calling Jesus “Lord” implies submission to Him.** We can believe He is God without confessing Him to be *our* God and *our* personal Lord. Thomas confessed Jesus to be his Lord and his God when he saw him after the crucifixion. Jesus calls us “blessed” who confess him to be our Lord and our God without having seen him with our eyes. John 20:26-29 - Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, **My Lord and my God.** Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.
- **We should refrain from calling Christ “Lord”** if we are not serious about doing what He commands. Luke 6:46 - And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?
- **Jesus is our example of submission as a servant of God**
Php 2:7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

John 13:12-17 - So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

2 Corinthians 5:14-15 - For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

- **Servant of the Lord**
Exodus 4:10-13 - Moses servant of the LORD
Psalm 18:1 - David, the servant of the LORD
Romans 1:1 - Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ
Romans 16:1 - Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenckrea:
James 1:1 - James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,
2 Peter 1:1 - Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ,

Jude 1:1 - Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ,

- **God's authority is:**
 - **Absolute** – Matthew 7:21; Matthew 23:27-28, 38-29; Luke 8:24; Luke 4:33-36; Matthew 10:32; Mark 2:10. See also Isaiah 45:7
 - **Unlimited** - Matthew 28:18 See also 1 Samuel 2:6-8; Psalm 75:6-7; Psalm 33:11
 - **Unquestioned** - Romans 9:20-21. See also Job 9:12; Daniel 4:36
 - **Perfect, just and righteous** - Psalm 67:4. See also Psalm 47:7; Psalm 18:30; Psalm 33:4; Psalm 145:17; Psalm 33:11; Revelation 15:4;
 - **Self-Existent**- John 19:11. See also Daniel 4:3,17,25,37
- **Man's authority is:**
 - **Delegated** - *Matthew 10:1; John 19:10-11; Romans 13:1; 2 Corinthians 13:10; Genesis 45:8*
 - **Temporary** - Romans 7:2; Genesis 2:24; Matthew 10:1
 - **Limited** - Leviticus 25:43; Daniel 4:31; Romans 13:1-5; 1 Corinthians 7:4; 2 Corinthians 10:8; 1 Timothy 2:12
 - **Imperfect** - *Esther 3:1; Daniel 4:31; Proverbs 29:2;*
 - **Subject to a higher authority** - John 19:10-11; Acts 15:2; Colossians 1:16; Colossians 2:10; 2 Samuel 23:3
 - **Subject to scrutiny** - 2 Corinthians 10:8; Deuteronomy 1:15; 2 John 1:10; 2 Samuel 23:3; 3 John 1:11; 1 Corinthians 14:29
- **Only God is worthy** of our *absolute* implicit trust and obedience.
Matthew 23:8-12 - But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.
- **We obey legitimate human authority** to the degree it does not require us to disobey God's authority because God has ordained authority and commanded us to do so. Our submissive (not passive) response to authority is an act of our will and is an opportunity to demonstrate our love, trust, and obedience to our God. Husbands are never commanded to *make* a wife obey him—so Jesus does not *make* us obey Him. We are to willingly, out of love and trust, obey both Christ and those God has placed over us in leadership authority.
1 Peter 3:5-6 For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him **lord** [small "l"]: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.
- **We submit to Christ and call him "Lord"** as an acknowledgement of his position of authority.