

## Adon usage in the Tanakh

By

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I have been told by many people that Adon is from Adonis which is the name of a greek god and therefore one should not use Adonay. The people try to reason that the Greek pre-dates the Hebrew or somehow the Greek has penetrated the Hebrew text as the reasoning that it exists in Hebrew. Therefore, we look into the whole Tanakh to see how Adon is used.

First if one looks in the Tanakh we find the word Adon אֲדֹנָי (Aleph-Dalet-Vav-Nun Sofit). Reference number 113 and found on pp. 15-16 in the NEHC, pp. 10-11 BDB. It generally means master and translates as Lord. There are also 335 instances 287 verses. Clearly, we won't cover all of these. The first point is that if there was such a conspiracy to change and implant a pagan god's name into the text would be so pervasive that it was so spread throughout so that it appeared to be part of the original. If this was the case there would always be some evidence that change happened at one point.

Bereshit/Genesis 18:12

12 Sara laughed within herself, saying: After I have become worn, is there to be pleasure

for me? **And my lord (vadoniy אֲדֹנָי) is old!**

If Adon is reference to the greek god then why would Sara call Avraham as my master or my lord. This shows us that adon was an integral part of the Hebrew language from the time of Avraham. It may be used for a human being or Elohim. One who is our master or lord over us.

Bereshit/Genesis 23:6-15

6 Hear us, **my lord! (adoniy אֲדֹנָי)** You are one exalted by Elohim in our midst- in the choicest of our burial-sites you may bury your dead, no man among us will deny you his burial-site for burying your dead! 7 Avraham arose, he bowed low to the People of the Land, to the Sons of Het, 8 and spoke with them, saying: If it be then according to your wish that I bury my dead from my presence, hear me and interpose for me to Efron son of Tzohar, 9 that he may give me title to the cave of Makhpela, that is his, that is at the edge of his field, for the full silver-worth let him give me title in your midst for a burial holding. 10 Now Efron had a seat amidst the Sons of Het, and Efron the Hittite answered Avraham in the ears of the Sons of Het, of all who had entry to the council-gate of his

city, saying: 11 Not so, **my lord (adoniy אֲדֹנָי)**, hear me! The field I give to you, and the cave that is therein, to you I give it; before the eyes of the Sons of My People I give it to you-bury your dead! 12 Avraham bowed before the People of the Land 13 and spoke to Efron in the ears of the People of the Land, saying: But if you yourself would only hear me out! I will give the silver-payment for the field, accept it from me, so that I may bury my dead there. 14 Efron answered Avraham, saying to him: 15 **My lord (adoniy אֲדֹנָי)**-hear me! A piece of land worth four hundred silver weight, what is that between me and you! You may bury your dead!

Here we see Adon used in a form of respect between people in the middle-east in Avraham's time. This was not raising them to a status of an elohim but giving respect by the use of this term.

Bereshit/Genesis 24:9,12,18, 27

9 The servant put his hand under the thigh of Avraham **his lord (adonayv אֲדֹנָיו)**, and swore to him (an oath) about this matter.

12 and said:

**Yehovah, Elohey of my lord (Yehovah Elohey Adoniy אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה)**  
Avraham, pray let it happen today for me, and deal faithfully with my lord Avraham!

18 She said: Drink, **my lord! (adoniy אֲדֹנָי)** And in haste she let down her pitcher on her arm and gave him to drink.

27 and said: Blessed be

**Yehovah, God of my lord (Yehovah Elohey Adoniy אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה)**  
Avraham, who has not relinquished his faithfulness and his trustworthiness from my lord!  
While as for me, YHWH has led me on the journey to the house of my lord's brothers!

Here we see again Adon used for human beings in respect or reverence to their position. This is integrated into the mind of the people in that time. So one cannot say this is simply applying the greek word transliterated as Adon and apply it to a transliterated Hebrew Adon and say they are related to each other.

Bereshit/Genesis 15:2, 8

2 But Abram said, “**O Lord GOD (ADONAI YEHOVAH אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה)**, what can You give me, seeing that I shall die childless, and the one in charge of my household is Dammesek Eliezer!”

7 Then He said to him, “I am Yehovah who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans to assign this land to you as a possession.” 8 And he said, “**O Lord GOD (ADONAI**

**YEHOVAH אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה)**, how shall I know that I am to possess it?”

In one of the earliest accounts in Torah, we see that Avram before coming Avraham refers to him as Adonay. Yet, we know from scholarly works that the Cult of Adonis happened in the Babylonian period exile 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE and was used for the Greek not Babylon. Thus, to link the two doesn't make logical sense.

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 7:7, 14

7 thus said **my Lord GOD (ADONAI YEHOVAH אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה)**: It shall not succeed, It shall not come to pass.

14 Assuredly, **my Lord (Adonai אֲדֹנָי)** will give you a sign of His own accord! Look, the young woman is with child and about to give birth to a son. Let her name him Immanuel.

Here we see the Prophet/Navi Yeshayahu use this Adonai/Adonay to describe our Elohim as a Master of him.

Bereshit/Genesis 18:3

1 Yehovah appeared to him by the terebinths of Mamre; he was sitting at the entrance of the tent as the day grew hot. 2 Looking up, he saw three men standing near him. As soon as he saw them, he ran from the entrance of the tent to greet them and, bowing to

the ground, 3 he said, “**My lords (Adonai אֲדֹנָי)**, if it please you, do not go on past your servant.

23 Abraham came forward and said, “Will You sweep away the innocent along with the guilty? 24 What if there should be fifty innocent within the city; will You then wipe out the place and not forgive it for the sake of the innocent fifty who are in it? 25 Far be it from You to do such a thing, to bring death upon the innocent as well as the guilty, so that innocent and guilty fare alike. Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?” 26 And Yehovah answered, “If I find within the city of Sodom fifty innocent ones, I will forgive the whole place for their sake.” 27 Abraham spoke up,

saying, “Here I venture to speak to **my Lord (Adonai אֲדֹנָי)**, I who am but dust and ashes: **28** What if the fifty innocent should lack five? Will You destroy the whole city for want of the five?” And He answered, “I will not destroy if I find forty-five there.” **29** But he spoke to Him again, and said, “What if forty should be found there?” And He answered, “I will not do it, for the sake of the forty.” **30** And he said, “Let not **my Lord (la’donai אֲדֹנָי)** be angry if I go on: What if thirty should be found there?” And He answered, “I will not do it if I find thirty there.” **31** And he said, “I venture again to speak to **my Lord (adonai אֲדֹנָי)**: What if twenty should be found there?” And He answered, “I will not destroy, for the sake of the twenty.” **32** And he said, “Let not **my Lord (la’donai אֲדֹנָי)** be angry if I speak but this last time: What if ten should be found there?” And He answered, “I will not destroy, for the sake of the ten.” **33** When the LORD had finished speaking to Abraham, He departed; and Abraham returned to his place.

Here we see Avraham repeatedly refer to Yehovah as Adonai. This clearly predates any Greek usage of the potential Hebrew borrow word. In other words, it is possible that Hebrew influenced the Greek rather than the other way around.

Shemot/Exodus 4:10, 13

**10** But Moses said to Yehovah, “Please, **O Lord (Adonai אֲדֹנָי)**, I have never been a man of words, either in times past or now that You have spoken to Your servant; I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.”

**13** But he said, “Please, **O Lord (Adonai אֲדֹנָי)**, make someone else Your agent.” Yehovah became angry with Moses, and He said, “There is your brother Aaron the Levite. He, I know, speaks readily. Even now he is setting out to meet you, and he will be happy to see you.

Moshe who is known for being a righteous person using this same Hebrew Adon in reference to Yehovah.

Shemot/Exodus 5:22

**22** Then Moses returned to Yehovah and said, “**O Lord (Adonai אֲדֹנָי)**, why did You bring harm upon this people? Why did You send me?

Again he uses the term in a plea before our Elohim.

Shemot/Exodus 15:17

17 Until they crossed-your people, O Yehovah, until they crossed-the people you fashioned. You brought them, you planted them on the mount of your heritage, foundation of your (royal) seat which you prepared, O Yehovah, the Holy-shrine, O Lord

(ADONAI אֲדֹנָי), founded by your hands.

Here is spoken of Yehovah and referred to as Adonay/Adonai. The Children of Israel recognize Yehovah as being their Adonai.

Shemot/Exodus 34:9

9 and said, “If I have gained Your favor, **O Lord (adonai אֲדֹנָי)**, pray, let **the Lord**

(adonai אֲדֹנָי) go in our midst, even though this is a stiffnecked people. Pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for Your own!”

Here is the plea of Moshe in a prayer he is make to intercede for the Children of Israel. We actually have an example of a person using Adonai and not being chastised for it.

Bamidbar/Numbers 14:17

17 Therefore, I pray, let **my Lord (Adonai אֲדֹנָי)**’s forbearance be great, as You have declared, saying, **18** ‘Yehovah! slow to anger and abounding in kindness; forgiving iniquity and transgression; yet not remitting all punishment, but visiting the iniquity of fathers upon children, upon the third and fourth generations.’ **19** Pardon, I pray, the iniquity of this people according to Your great kindness, as You have forgiven this people ever since Egypt.”

**20** And Yehovah said, “I pardon, as you have asked. **21** Nevertheless, as I live and as Yehovah’s Presence fills the whole world, **22** none of the men who have seen My Presence and the signs that I have performed in Egypt and in the wilderness, and who have tried Me these many times and have disobeyed Me, **23** shall see the land that I promised on oath to their fathers; none of those who spurn Me shall see it.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 3:24

**23** I pleaded with Yehovah at that time, saying, **24** “**O Lord GOD (ADONAI**

**YEHOVAH יהוה אֲדֹנָי)**, You who let Your servant see the first works of Your greatness and Your mighty hand, You whose powerful deeds no god in heaven or on earth can equal! **25** Let me, I pray, cross over and see the good land on the other side of the Jordan, that good hill country, and the Lebanon.”

Devarim /Deuteronomy 9:26

26 I interceded to Yehovah and said: **My Lord (adonai אֲדֹנָי)**, Yehovah, do not bring-ruin on your people, your inheritance whom you redeemed in your greatness, whom you took out of Egypt with a strong hand!

What I have shown you here is a short study to show that:

1. Adon as a Hebrew word predates the very god people try to apply to it.
2. Adon as a middle-eastern term is used to denote reverence or respect to humans
3. Adonai can be used as a term in prayer to Yehovah.

Therefore, if one uses Adonai, Adonay, Adoniy, Adoni, Adonayv in prayer as long as the object of prayer is Yehovah they do not worship a foreign deity but are referring the master or lord as he truly is.