

Pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton



Why We Are Persuaded that יהוה is pronounced Yahweh

By Larry and June Acheson

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February 15, 2012
 Revised January 1, 2022
 Update added August 28, 2022



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Cover photo: Tourists examining the Tetragrammaton as it appears on the Moabite Stone.



Introduction


Although June and I had heard the name *Yahweh* long before we began referring to the Creator and calling on Him by this name, once we got started, it wasn't long before we were informed that we weren't pronouncing His name correctly. The Creator's name – the name that He gave to Himself – consists of four letters in Hebrew. This famous four-lettered name is known in scholarly circles as the *Tetragrammaton*. In the modern Hebrew, which is the form of Hebrew used in the most ancient of texts known to exist, this name is written like this: יהוה. This “square scripted” modern Hebrew is what the Jews picked up while captive in Babylon during the 6th century BCE. There is an older Hebrew (often referred to as *paleo-Hebrew*), consisting of completely different characters. In this older Hebrew, יהוה is written as 𐤅𐤄𐤅𐤄. There is no disagreement among scholars regarding how the Tetragrammaton is written in either modern or ancient Hebrew. When it comes to how those four letters are *pronounced* (or transliterated into English), however, that is a different matter.

We would like to preface this study by stating that June and I uphold scholarly inquiry with the respectful sharing of ideas and beliefs. It is regrettable that discussions on this topic often take a discourteous and occasionally even offensive turn, but we do not feel that this negative attribute should govern our decision to participate. No discourse addressing the pronunciation of our Heavenly Father's name can hope to be fruitful if both parties don't first acknowledge the primary importance of achieving a personal relationship with Him by seeking His ways and striving with all humility to walk the path that He has laid out for His people in His Word. Seeking to learn the pronunciation of His name is just one aspect of forging a relationship with the Creator of the universe, and it should be done earnestly and with prayer.

June and I first began referring to the Creator by the name *Yahweh* back in 1986. As I mentioned earlier, it didn't take long for someone to inform us that we weren't pronouncing the Tetragrammaton correctly. Back then, correspondence was strictly by US Postal mail. Within the space of a year of using the pronunciation *Yahweh*, I found myself involved in letter exchanges with individuals claiming that the Creator's name is pronounced “Yahvah” and “Yahveh.” While our exchanges remained civil, no one's mind was changed.

Over the years, we've endured thoughtless comments, unintentional derogatory slips and yes, some downright rude remarks from those who get in a tizzy just because we don't share their view that the final syllable of the Creator's name is pronounced “ah” instead of “eh.” We have usually given our standard response, which is that none of us can be 100% certain that we're pronouncing it correctly because none of us was there when the ancients called upon that name or when He revealed it to Moses at the burning bush. Our standard response has usually been sufficient to allow both sides to move on and agree to disagree agreeably. Until recently, that is.

The “anti-Yahweh-pronunciation movement” as *we* know it began in the late 1990's. A man named Brian Allen (a.k.a. B. Earl Allen) would occasionally show up at the home of some friends with whom we would meet on the day of the weekly Sabbath. We never became well acquainted with Brian, but he never came across as being rude, even though he made it clear that he believed we were mispronouncing the Tetragrammaton. In fact, it seemed that his primary motivation for




attending our meetings was to help us to understand that we weren't pronouncing the Creator's name correctly. The correct pronunciation, he maintains, is *Yahuwah*. By the time June and I finished listening to all the arguments that he presented, we gave Brian our standard response, and since he seemed willing to disagree agreeably, we didn't perceive any forthcoming animosity from him. We would have thought differently if we had taken the time to read the booklets that he produced and distributed to us and others! It wasn't until 2010 that circumstances prompted me to dig up the old booklets that he had long since given us – booklets plainly depicting those who call upon the name Yahweh as *heathen idol worshippers*.¹ So much for the polite disagreement!

It appears that Mr. Allen's booklets and other writings may serve as the catalyst for a growing and increasingly intolerant "anti-Yahweh Movement." June and I were made aware of this faction when we began to observe an increasing intolerance for the pronunciation *Yahweh*, and in many cases those who promote the pronunciation *Yahuwah* give credit for their understanding to Brian E. Allen, who was obviously very successful in disseminating his literature to others and persuading them of his position. For this reason, we will address many, if not all, of Mr. Allen's writings in this study. We also address Mr. Allen's writings as presented within a book authored by fellow Texan John Hawkins. Mr. Hawkins, in presenting his view that the Creator's name is pronounced *Yahuwah*, frequently cites Brian Allen's study *Publish the Name Yahuwah*. Another author whose writings we examine is Lew White, who upholds the pronunciation *Yahuah*. Two additional authors whose contributions to this discussion have recently surfaced are Gérard Gertoux (*The Name of God Y.eH.oW.aH which is Pronounced as it is Written I_Eh_oU_Ah: Its Story*) and Keith Johnson, who promotes the pronunciation *Yehovah* in his book יהוה: *His Hallowed Name Revealed Again*. We are well aware of the fact that there are other studies out there promoting variations of the pronunciation *Yahuwah*, but June and I primarily address the writings of the above-named authors within the scope of this study.

We need to make it clear that just because a believer promotes a certain pronunciation over and above *Yahweh*, this does not mean they regard those of the other persuasion as being idol worshippers; nevertheless, we have found that this perception is becoming more and more common. While it may initially seem odd that Bible believers such as Brian Allen would depict others as being idol worshippers for not pronouncing the Tetragrammaton precisely as they do, a closer examination reveals that this is an old trick that is often successfully employed for the purpose of persuading others to discontinue one practice in favor of another. We are persuaded that those who fall for this propaganda are those who don't take the time to do the research for themselves, and there seems to be no shortage of believers who are apparently too preoccupied with other matters to conduct a thorough examination on their own. While on the subject of

¹ For example, on page 5 of his booklet "Ioua Iona," Sacred Name author Brian Earl Allen writes, "The reason that the testimony from Iona is so important is because of a modern attack from Catholicism, which is on the move again. She is promoting through her trained scholarship, which is infiltrating encyclopedias, dictionaries etc., to bring the whole world back home to THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS. In her new updated bibles she is now promoting the counterfeit sacred name of Yahweh, and to the Spanish world the form Yave. Remember earlier we learned about 'Io' being a corruption of Yah? Ioue is the oldest form of Jovē, a pagan idol equivalent to Jupiter or Zeus. If you say the four vowels 'IOUE' fast enough as these modern promoters teach, you will say Yahwe! But Yahweh is not the sacred name of our grand Creator. The form Yahweh is supported by early Greek writers of the Christian church! I know that sounds harmless doesn't it? But these early Greek writers of the Christian church were real heretics." Although Mr. Allen does not provide his readers with a publishing date for his booklet, he gave us our copy in the late 1990's. It was published under the ministry name Promise Land Ministry, P.O. Box 426, Joshua, TX 76058. A screen shot of the booklet appears later in this study.



portraying those who are at odds with a particular doctrine as heathen idol worshippers, June and I would like to point out that we have been dubbed “Satan worshippers” on several occasions, so we have been and remain thankful that our Heavenly Father – however His name is pronounced – is the One who is in control, and it is His Son Who will be our ultimate judge, not Brian E. Allen or those who adhere to his teachings.

With this backdrop, we invite you to review our reasons for personally believing that the pronunciation “Yahweh” most closely matches the original pronunciation of our Heavenly Father’s name. As the title of this study indicates, we are *persuaded* that it’s pronounced “Yahweh.” We tend to shy away from those who tout a particular pronunciation as the “true pronunciation” or the “correct pronunciation” as though they have a direct pipeline to the Creator, Who, in their apparent line of reasoning, personally revealed it to them. June and I continue to maintain that no human alive can know *with certainty* how the Tetragrammaton is pronounced. All we can do is study to show ourselves approved, and if we can do so with a meek and humble spirit, then so much the better.

What follows is a modified form of a presentation that I originally delivered on May 1, 2010. While this study is designed to serve as an explanation of our reasons for upholding the pronunciation *Yahweh*, some folks are bound to form the impression that we are attempting to force our opinion on others. This is simply not true. Rather, in view of the stand put forth by those who support the pronunciation *Yahuwah* or other similar forms ending in *-ah*, and especially considering the fact that some of these same folks do indeed regard us as idol worshippers for not following along with their reasoning, we felt compelled to offer our reasoning for favoring the pronunciation *Yahweh*.

This study was first made available in February 2012. Since that time, the only criticism we have received involves the *length*, not the actual content. In response to that evaluation, we put together a condensed version in January 2013 for the benefit of the complainant. Interestingly, the same gentleman who criticized the length of this study later requested information that he was not able to locate in our abridged study. The reason he couldn’t find what he was searching for is it wasn’t there. I was, however, able to direct him to the information he needed in this full-length version. As you can see, condensing a study can lead to the omission of seemingly insignificant details that are later found to be important, even *critical* components necessary to validate an argument. In September 2013, a fellow believer took the time to read this study in its entirety. When he was finished, he pointed out numerous errors; thankfully, they were all either grammatical or they involved “Freudian slips” and omissions on our part, all of which were easily corrected. As for the information presented, he expressed full agreement with the content and our conclusion. My friend did not address any concerns about the length of our study. My curiosity was piqued as to why he didn’t suggest, as others have done, that we abbreviate things. I decided to ask him for feedback one day as we were “texting” each other. I wrote, “Worley’s complaint is that the study is too long. Since you have now read it in its entirety, you may also have ideas on ways of condensing it (apart from the condensed version that we’ve already done).” His reply, in my estimation, confirmed that you really should not “cut corners” when it comes to research and presenting evidence to others. Here is what he wrote:

There are so many facets to it, I think it would be tough to condense it. It is great that you made a table of contents and divided the study



into sections to make the information on the various issues easily accessible.²

Indeed, we have a table of contents offering fifteen different “facets” of this discussion, not to mention the numerous sub-sections, all designed to allow the reader to select those features that are the most relevant to his or her specific interests. If we fail to address an aspect that you feel is too important to be omitted, please let us know.

In 2022, another reader graciously offered his own editorial comments, not only identifying several additional grammatical errors and/or omissions, but he also pointed out that we overused the word “blurt,” as in “blurting out” the Creator’s name. Thanks to Roeben’s gentle corrections, we whittled the “blurts” down to only two or three. We appreciate the teamwork, Roeben! Thank you for your assistance in improving the quality of this study.

7/9/7/2

² From a text received from Chuck Henry on October 5, 2013.

1. Concessions

For any controversial discussion to be fruitful, concessions must be made from both sides, and believe me, the topic of how to pronounce the Creator's name abounds with controversy. We are accustomed to the behavior exhibited by those who believe there are no weaknesses to their arguments, and we have found that such behavior is characterized by arrogance. June and I tend to not have productive discussions with folks who are so smug about their beliefs that they refuse to acknowledge a weakness when it is presented to them. On the other hand, if both sides can meet in the middle and make a few concessions, progress can be made. Too often we find ourselves going "head to head" with individuals whose minds were already made up before the discussion began. Without even examining our reasons for believing as we do, they attempt to refute the reasoning that they *think* has influenced our decision. In essence, they answer the matter before they hear it (Proverbs 18:13).

I was recently engaged in a letter exchange with an individual who just happens to believe the Messiah's name is pronounced differently than the way June and I pronounce it. Rather than delving into the how's and why's of why we believe as we do, I simply answered that June and I have authored an extensive study outlining how we reached our conclusion, and I offered it to him as a means of examining our research to get a better handle on our reasoning. In return, I received a five-page letter explaining why the pronunciation we use cannot be correct and why the form he uses is the only possibility. He did not express any interest in reading our study, presumably because he has already made up his mind that our research must be flawed. This is a blatant example of answering a matter before hearing it. Sadly, I have observed this type of "research" all too often. If you, like the man I just described, have already made up your mind about how the Creator's name is pronounced and are not willing to consider other possibilities or make any concessions, then this study is most likely not for you. In fact, I would be amazed that you have made it this far without either setting it aside or closing out the document. On the other hand, if you are the type of person who appreciates a more eclectic approach with a desire to prove all things, then our discussion will be a productive one, even if we reach different conclusions.

We have already acknowledged that we are in the same boat as everyone else out there in that no one can know with certainty the precise original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton, not only because none of us was there to hear the Almighty reveal it to Moses at the Burning Bush, but also because none of us can travel back in time to hear how it was pronounced during any of the events described in the Bible. The best we can do, then, is study the language to the best of our abilities and rely on the testimony of those who lived during or near the time when the Bible was written.

A. Masculine proper nouns in Hebrew with a final “ה” can end with either an “ah” sound or an “eh” sound.

Several years ago, a fellow believer who agrees with the way we pronounce the Tetragrammaton informed us that, in Hebrew, masculine nouns consistently have an *-eh* sound at the end, whereas feminine nouns end with an *-ah* sound. Thus, he chided, if we want to regard the Almighty as a female, then we should pronounce His name “Yahwah” or “Yahuwah.” Since the Almighty is our Heavenly *Father* and not our Heavenly *Mother*, we felt that he had made a valid point. We later looked up Hebrew nouns, and sure enough, he was right! It seemed that in every case, if the noun was masculine it ended with an *-eh* sound and if it was feminine it ended with an *-ah* sound.

However, it appears that the rule applying to *common* nouns doesn’t necessarily apply to *proper* nouns. When it comes to proper nouns, it seems to go both ways. Let’s take a look at examples of masculine proper nouns ending with the *-ah* sound: Judah (יְהוּדָה), Nowchah (נוֹחָה), Bilgah (בִּלְגָה) and Machlah (מַחֲלָה).

We can also find examples of masculine names ending with the *-eh* sound: Manasseh (מְנַשֶּׁה), Mosheh (מֹשֶׁה), Rabshâqeh (רַב־שָׁקֵה) and Yephunneh (יֶפְנֶה). Since we can find examples of masculine proper nouns with both the *-ah* ending and the *-eh* ending, it is not really fair to make the argument that the Almighty’s name *must* end with a certain vowel sound to denote masculinity.

Some proponents of the pronunciation *Yahuah* insist that the name Judah (יְהוּדָה) is the “doorway” to understanding how the Tetragrammaton is pronounced. After all, once you remove the *daleth* (ד), all that remains are the four letters comprising the Tetragrammaton. Since we concede that proper names ending with an *-ah* sound can be masculine, we have to consider the possibility that the Creator’s name is pronounced *Yahuah* or, as some Sacred Name authors spell it, *Yahuwah*. We will address the specific argument that Judah (יְהוּדָה) is the “doorway” to understanding how the Tetragrammaton is pronounced later in our study.

B. A “ה” May or May Not Function As a Consonant in the Middle of a Word

Spelling of Tetragrammaton and connected forms in the Masoretic Hebrew text (vowel points in red).

YHWH intended to be pronounced as Adonai:

In the best Biblical manuscripts and scholarly editions:

Adonai, with its slightly different vowel points:

Note that when the prefixed prepositions וְ and בְּ are attached to יהוה the šewa vowel diacritic becomes pataḥ – , normal when preceding a consonant with ḥateph-pataḥ – (rather than becoming hireq – , normal when preceding a consonant with another šewa) – בִּיהוה

YHWH intended to be pronounced as Elohim:

In the best Biblical manuscripts and scholarly editions:

Elohim itself:

The controversy over how the Tetragrammaton (יהוה) is pronounced can be traced to the fact that the original Hebrew language has no written vowels. Vowel points weren't devised until the 7th century CE,³ and by then the ineffable name doctrine was already in effect within normative Judaism. It is common knowledge that the *Masoretes*, the name given to the Jewish scholars who vowel-pointed the Hebrew text, vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton with the vowel points from the Hebrew title *Adonai* (and occasionally the vowel points from the title *Elohim*) as a means of preventing the reader from accidentally voicing the Creator's name while reading Scripture.⁴ The image on the left demonstrates how the Masoretes vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton.⁵ The method that they used (vowel-pointing יהוה as יהוה) produces the pronunciation *Yehowah*, which led to the common rendering *Jehovah*.⁶ If you examine the chart carefully, you will notice that the vowel points used with יהוה are slightly different than the ones used with *Adonai* (אדני). This has led some believers to conclude that the vowel points inserted by the Masoretes are actually the correct vowel points after all. We will address this view in chapter 15 of our study.

Judaism expects their members to go to great pains in avoiding the vocalization of the Divine Name because they believe that if you speak it, you will not inherit eternal life. This teaching is

³ C.f., the *New Bible Dictionary*, 2nd ed., J. D. Douglas, Organizing Editor, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, IL, article “Texts and Versions,” 1982, p. 1,178, where we read, “It was not until about the 7th century of our era that the Massoretes introduced a complete system of vowel-signs.”

⁴ C.f., for example, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 6, David Noel Freedman, Editor-in-Chief, Doubleday, New York, NY, 1992. In the article “Yahweh,” authored by Henry O. Thompson, p. 1,011, we read the following: “The pronunciation of *yhwh* as Yahweh is a scholarly guess. Hebrew biblical mss were principally consonantal in spelling until well into the current era. The pronunciation of words was transmitted in a separate oral tradition. See MASORETIC TEXT. The Tetragrammaton was not pronounced at all, the word *ʾādonāy*, ‘my Lord,’ being pronounced in its place; *ʾelōhīm*, ‘God,’ was substituted in cases of the combination *ʾādonāy yhwh* (305 times; e.g., Gen 15:2). (This sort of reading in the MT is called a *qere perpetuum*.) Though the consonants remained, the original pronunciation was eventually lost. When the Jewish scholars (called Masoretes) added vowel signs to biblical mss some time before the 10th century A.D., the Tetragrammaton was punctuated with the vowels of the word ‘Adonai’ or ‘Elohim’ to indicate that the reader should read ‘Lord’ or ‘God’ instead of accidentally pronouncing the sacred name (TDOT 5: 501-02).”

⁵ This chart is taken from the *Wikipedia* article “Tetragrammaton,” which may be accessed at the following link: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tetragrammaton>.

⁶ Please note that the common vowel-pointing (יהוה) is grammatically incorrect, since the first ה *must* be pronounced and is therefore required to be vowel-pointed. Omitting the *holem* vowel point (ה) over the ה would in turn result in an unpronounceable ה, which is yet another indication that this name was intentionally vowel-pointed so as to require a substitute word to be pronounced in its place. That substitute word is *Adonai*. Some believers have found within a medieval copy of the Old Testament fifty instances where the more common (יהוה) rendering is vowel-pointed as יהוה, and they have thus concluded that יהוה *must* be the correct vowel-pointing, which in turn results in the correct pronunciation guide to the original pronunciation. This argument is addressed in chapter 15 of our study.

also found in the second century CE Talmudic document known as the Mishnah Sanhedrin, where we read:

The following have no portion in the world to come, Abba Saul says:
Also one who pronounces the divine name as it is written.⁷

The understanding that we are not to speak the Creator's Name lest we be denied eternal life continues within the ranks of normative Judaism to this day and is reflected within the writings of various Jews. For example, consider the admonition of Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan, in his early 20th century work titled *Mishnah Berurah*. The *Mishnah Berurah* is itself a commentary on the *Orach Chayim* section of the "Shulchan Aruch," which is a code of Jewish law written in 1563 by Yosef Karo. Kagan writes:

(2) As it is read, /referring/ to His Lordliness. This is because it is forbidden to read the honored and awesome Name as it is written. This accords with what the Sages, of blessed memory, said,⁸ "If one pronounces the /Divine/ Name with its /actual/ lettering, he will not have a share in the world to come."

Instead, one must read it as if the name ם-ל-ו-ה is written and also with the vowel points of /the name/ ם-ל-ו-ה, i.e., the /letter/ ם with a *chataf pasach* (ְ), but not with a *pasach* (ַ) alone or with a *sheva* (ֿ) alone, the /letter/ ו with a *cholam* (ױ) and the /letter/ ל with a *kamatz* (ֹ). One must stress the /letter/ ם so that it is clearly discernible. One should have in mind only mentally the Name /which refers to His/ external existence/, but it should not influence one's pronunciation/. The stress for its intonation is on the final syllable.⁹

Kagan expounds on the long-established practice and belief within Judaism that the Tetragrammaton should be read with the vowel points of *Adonai* (אֲדֹנָי). In spite of Judaism's plain admission that the vowel points from *Adonai* were deliberately placed within the Tetragrammaton (instead of the vowel points that would have indicated its correct pronunciation), some modern-day believers nevertheless champion the view that the *Adonai* vowel points are, in fact, the correct ones. This notion is disputed by Judaism in such references as the *Jewish Encyclopedia*:

JEHOVAH: A mispronunciation (introduced by Christian theologians, but almost entirely disregarded by the Jews) of the Hebrew "YHWH," the (ineffable) name of God (the Tetragrammaton or "Shem ha-Meforash"). This pronunciation is grammatically

⁷ C.f., Mishnah Sanhedrin 10:1.

⁸ *Sanhedrin* 90a.

⁹ From *Mishnah Berurah* by Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan, Vol. I (A), "Morning Conduct," §5:2, Pischah Foundation / Feldheim Publishers, Jerusalem, Israel, 1992 (orig. published in 1900), p. 67. Here is the portion of the "Shulchan Aruch" that Rabbi Kagan was referring to in his commentary: "When one mentions the /Divine/ Name, he should have in mind the meaning /of the Name/ (2) as it is read, /referring/ to His Lordliness, /i.e., he should have in mind /the meaning of the Name/ as it is written, with /the letters/ ם and ל /, etc., i.e./, (3) that He was, is and will /always/ be /in existence/."



impossible; it arose through pronouncing the vowels of the “kere” (marginal reading of the Masorites: אֲדֹנָי = “Adonay”) with the consonants of the “ketib” (text-reading: יהוה = “YHWH”)—“Adonay” (the Lord) being substituted with one exception wherever Yhwh occurs in the Biblical and liturgical books. “Adonay” presents the vowels “shewa” (the composite ם under the guttural א becomes simple ם under the י), “holem,” and “kamez,” and these give the reading יְהוֹה (= “Jehovah”). Sometimes, when the two names יהוה and אֲדֹנָי occur together, the former is pointed with “hatef segol” (ֿ) under the י —thus, יְהוֹה (= “Jehovah”)—to indicate that in this combination it is to be pronounced “Elohim” (אֱלֹהִים). These substitutions of “Adonay” and “Elohim” for YHWH were devised to avoid the profanation of the Ineffable Name (hence יהוה is also written ה', or even ד', and read “ha-Shem” = “the Name”).¹⁰

Since all reliable authorities agree that the vowel points that were used to punctuate the Tetragrammaton were deliberately intended to cause the reader to not pronounce the Creator’s name, they are obviously not the “correct” vowel points. The question is, “How *should* they have vowel-pointed the Creator’s name so as to have properly indicated its originally-given pronunciation?”

According to Some Sacred Name Authors, the “ה” Must Always Be Accompanied by a Vowel Sound If It’s In the Middle of a Word

In their attempt to clear up the misguided vowel-pointing confusion handed down to us by the Masorete scholars, some Sacred Name authors have turned to Hebrew grammar books. Under normal circumstances, we would commend this method of research; however, as we proceed with this study, we will see what we believe is evidence that these authors, in spite of their zeal to uncover the truth about our Heavenly Father’s name, expose a dual shortfall in terms of their expertise in Hebrew linguistics and in terms of understanding and applying the rules that they read from these grammar books. For our present concern, these Sacred Name authors point out that the Hebrew letter ה can *never* function as a vowel in the middle of a word. We concede that the ה doesn’t necessarily have to function as a vowel in the middle of a word, so for the sake of making a concession, we will at least agree that the Hebrew letter ה may or may not serve as a vowel letter in the middle of a word. Sacred name author Brian E. Allen, for his part, correctly cites the rule that the Hebrew letter ה can never be a vowel letter in the middle of a word; however, he overlooks the fact that a few pages earlier, this same grammar book presents an “exception to the rule.” Here is what Mr. Allen writes in his study *Publish the Name Yahuwah*:

¹⁰ *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, Funk & Wagnalls, New York, NY vol. 7: p. 87, 1906. This encyclopedia article is also available online at the following URL: <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/8568-jehovah>.

RULE #1 ה can never be a vowel letter in the middle of a word.
Gesenius Hebrew Grammar, p. 56.

יהוה
 ↑

This means that this letter must be a consonant, and have a vowel following it such as 'hu', 'he', 'ha', etc.¹¹

We certainly understand and appreciate the above author's conclusion that the ה must function as a Hebrew consonant when it is in the middle of a word. However, does this mean that it must *always* have a vowel sound such as "hu," "he" or "ha" following it when this letter is found in the middle of a word? The answer is no, as we will see later. Of course, if it is true that the ה must always be followed by a "hu," "he" or "ha" sound when it is in the middle of a word, this at the very least would mean that the Tetragrammaton must be pronounced something akin to a three-syllable "YaHUweh" instead of the two-syllable pronunciation "Yahweh." As we will see, the folks who raise this particular argument believe the Creator's name is most correctly vocalized "YaHUwah."¹² The question we are currently faced with is this: "Must the ה be pronounced with a 'hu,' 'he' or 'ha' sound when it is located in the middle of a word?" More succinctly, for those who prefer to get to the bottom line, the question is, "Can the pronunciation *Yahweh* (without the 'HU' sound) be correct?"

Before we proceed with examining the above author's citation from page 56 of *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, let's take a look at the actual quote as it appears in paragraph form on that page:

Mappîq, like *Dageš*, also a point *within* the consonant, serves in the letters ך ם ן ף ץ as a sign that they are to be regarded as full consonants and not as vowel letters. In most editions of the text it is only used in the consonantal ה at the end of words (since ה can never be a vowel letter in the middle of a word), e.g. גָּבְהָהּ *gābhāh* (to be high), אֶרֶץ־הָאֱרֶסֶת *'arṣāh* (her land) which has a consonantal ending (shortened from – *hā*), different from אֶרֶץ־הָאֲדָמָה *'arṣā* (to the earth) which has a vowel ending.¹³

As we mentioned previously, we can certainly understand how an individual could read the above paragraph and, without having access to any additional information, conclude that the middle "heh" (ה) in יהוה must be vocalized, which would simultaneously require it to be followed with a vowel sound, such as "oo." This is the understanding that author Brian E. Allen gleaned

¹¹ From *Publish the Name Yahuwah*, by Brian Earl Allen, ch. 7, "Next Letter: U, V or W?" This study is available on the Internet, but I obtained the information as cited from Mr. Allen's work from *The Two Greatest Names of the Universe: Yahuwah (Elohim the Father) and Yahushua (Adonai the Son Mashiach)*, by John R. Hawkins, Desoto, TX, July 2008, p. 25.

¹² We will address the –*wah* ending that some Sacred Name authors attribute to the Tetragrammaton later in our study.

¹³ From *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, Edited by E. Kautzsch, Second English Edition 1910, Revised by A. E. Cowley, Oxford at the Clarendon Press, London, England, 1956, p. 56.

from reading the above, and this is what he in turn offers to his reading audience in his study *Publish the Name Yahuwah*. We do not question the fact that Brian Allen correctly cited the grammar book; however, what Brian doesn't address in his study is whether or not there can be any exceptions to the rule. We would surmise that Mr. Allen didn't address this possibility because he didn't consider it. Nevertheless, as we will see in chapter 2 of our study, the very reference from which he quotes affirms that there *is* an exception to the rule that he quoted. Consequently, we will see, contrary to Brian E. Allen's claim, that the middle "heh" (ה) in יהוה can indeed be silent.

We have already conceded that there are Hebrew words in which the middle ה is followed by an "oo" or an "ah" sound. This can be verified by looking up such Hebrew words as בַּהַט (word #923 in *Strong's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary*). This Hebrew word is pronounced *bah'hat*, and the ה with its vowel is clearly pronounced with a "ha" sound.

Those who take the time to check out the vowel-pointing of the Hebrew word *bah'hat* will see that the vowel-pointing actually *requires* that the ה be pronounced. We deliberately omitted the vowel points in our rendering above, and keep in mind that this word was originally written without vowel points. However, when the Masorete scholars attempted to convey to readers how this word is properly pronounced, they vowel-pointed it so as to be pronounced *bah'hat*. Here is this Hebrew word, complete with vowel-pointing: בַּהַט. The vowel point used in this Hebrew word is called a *pattach*,¹⁴ which is used to create the "ah" sound. To generate an "ah" sound after a ה, you must vocalize that ה, and the result (when vowel-pointed with a *pattach*) is the "ha" sound.

The Sacred Name authors who favor the *Yahuwah* pronunciation would naturally support vowel-pointing the Tetragrammaton so as to reflect their pronunciation of choice. Instead of the "ha" sound associated with the middle ה, they would use the vowel point necessary for producing the "hu" sound. That vowel point looks like this: ךּ.¹⁵ Here, then, is how Sacred Name authors favoring the pronunciation *Yahuwah* vowel-point the Tetragrammaton: יהוהךּ.¹⁶ Please keep in mind that I am not saying this pronunciation is necessarily incorrect. I am conceding that Hebrew grammar rules would allow for such a pronunciation. The question is, "Is *Yahuwah* the most likely pronunciation, based on both Hebrew linguistics and historical understanding?"

¹⁴ The *pattach* is also referred to by various sources as a *pasach* or *patah*.

¹⁵ This vowel point is called the *qibbuts*.

¹⁶ This is the vowel-pointed Tetragrammaton as suggested by Brian Allen in chapter 7 of his study *Publish the Name of Yahuwah* (http://yahushua.net/YAHUWAH/chapter_07.htm). An alternate possibility is to substitute the vowel point *qamets* (ֿ) with a *pattach* (ֿ), thus producing יהוהךּ (also pronounced *Yahuwah*). The *pattach* (ֿ) produces virtually the same "ah" sound as the *qamets* (ֿ).

C. Just Because “Hova” Means “Ruin” or “Disaster” Does Not Mean the Creator’s Name Cannot be Pronounced “Jehovah”

We are acquainted with a man who strongly advocates the pronunciation “Yahweh,” but who also declares that the Creator’s name absolutely and positively *cannot* be pronounced *Jehovah* or *Yehovah* because “hova” means “ruin” or “mischief.” This argument, under careful examination, proves to be baseless. It reminds me of the person who joked that she has grown so weary of trying to decipher cursive writing (obviously from people with poor handwriting skills) that she has concluded that the word “cursive” must come from the word “curse.” Of course, “cursive” and “curse” are not even remotely related to each other, and most English speakers will readily acknowledge this fact, but non-Hebrew Bible students sometimes exhibit a proclivity for force-connecting Hebrew words that sound alike and then assigning them the same intrinsic meanings.

Let’s take a look at the Hebrew word “hova” as it appears in *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance*:

1943. הוֹיָה *hōvâh*, *ho-vaw'*; another form for
1942; *ruin:—mischief*.

Would you like to think of the Creator as being mischievous? Of course not, and that is why some folks who uphold the pronunciation *Yahweh* are telling others that the pronunciation *Yehovah* cannot be correct. All it should really take to stop this argument from being circulated is taking one look at the Hebrew spelling for the word *hovah* and comparing it with the Hebrew spelling of the Almighty’s name. Remember, in pre-7th century writings, there were no vowel points to guide the reader to know how to pronounce הוה. The only difference between “hovah” and the Tetragrammaton is the Hebrew *yod*, which is missing from “hovah.” Thus, we have הוה versus הויה. To my fellow “Yahweh” proponents who argue against the form *Yehovah* because of what *hovah* means, I would like to ask them why they aren’t just as concerned about how *hovah* is spelled. Shouldn’t they be alarmed about the fact that the only thing separating YHWH from “mischief” or “ruin” is a tiny *yod*?

Just as we need to be careful before reaching the premature conclusion that the English word “cursive” is related to the word “curse,” in the same way, just because the Hebrew word “hovah” means “ruin,” this does not mean that “Yehovah” means “Yah is ruin” or anything of the sort. Those who really know Hebrew understand that it is a mistake to believe that connecting the “hovah” with “Yah” would or should be construed as making the Almighty out to be “ruin” or mischievous. In the same way that it is a mistake to connect “curse” with “cursive,” associating *Yehovah* with “mischief” due to the inherent meaning of “hova” just doesn’t work.

We recently came across a website article that addresses the “hovah” argument head-on. By the way, we found that this article, even though we do not agree with all of the author’s assertions, offers one of the more unbiased commentaries about the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton that we have come across. It was refreshing to observe how the author managed to present the various arguments while somehow steering clear of outright advocating the pronunciation that he feels is “most correct.” In his study titled “What is the Proper Name of the Most High?” the anonymous

author addresses the charge that those who refer to the Almighty as “Yehovah” unwittingly associate Him with *mischievous* or *ruin*. Here is an excerpt from his commentary:

The "HoVaH" Controversy

Another common criticism of the "Y^ehovah" pronunciation is the Strong's definition implication of the Hebrew word הוה (Hovah / H1943).

H1943
הוה
hōvāh
ho-vaw'
Strong Definition:
Another form for H1942; **ruin**: - **mischievous**.

No one wants to associate the Creator with "mischievous", yet it would be prudent to re-evaluate this superstition with something more than a single, short Strong's definition. For discussion's sake, here is the [Brown-Driver-Briggs \(BDB\)](#) definition of H1943 (notice **mischievous** is not used):

H1943
הוה
hōvāh
BDB Definition:
1) **ruin, disaster**
Part of Speech: noun feminine

The Hovah controversy focuses in on H1943's related H1942 (Havah) and its use of the defining word "**mischievous**", and it is thus reasoned and deduced: The-Name cannot be pronounced as "Y^eHovah" for He never takes part in *mischievous*.

BUT... how thorough is that reasoning?

The Hebrew verb "Hey Vav Hey" (הוה), in some contexts means "falling down" as in Strong's depiction with the words "disaster" and "ruin", yet the verb's more basic and primary signification is that of "**breathing, blowing, living**" (see [Gesenius Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon](#), p. 222). In some cases, it could be surmised (as we will see shortly) that the Most High's "blowing" can bring **ruin** and **disaster** to the wicked, but the breath of His Ruach (Spirit) is where all life comes.

[Isaiah 30:27-28](#):
(27) See, the Name of יהוה is coming from afar, burning with His **wrath**, and heavy smoke. His lips shall be filled with rage, and His tongue be as a **devouring fire**;
(28) and His **breath** shall be as an overflowing stream, which reaches up to the neck, to sift the nations with a sieve of falsehood, and a misleading bridle on the jaws of the peoples.

Pronunciation-based arguments, like the "Hovah controversy", simply do not hold water when compared with other pronunciation associations, such as with the Hebrew word for "wickedness" (H7451) which sounds like "rah", which is a sound similar to the Hebrew word "To-**rah**". Yet, associating "wickedness" with "Torah" is unthinkable, but it would be an easy accusation to make for a casual observer. Yet, Hebrew words do not simply change their **meaning** based upon vowel points and pronunciation. The meanings of Hebrew words are derived from their letters, letter roots, and their context. And no matter how one slices it or pronounces it, הוה (hey vav hey) is a major part of the Divine Name. Whether or not one pronounces those three letters as "HoWaH" or "HoVaH" or "HuWaH" or "HaWaH", the three letters yet exist and yet keep their basic meaning(s). Even so, let's consider H1942 and H1943 in more detail. Both are composed of the three Hebrew letters: "hey" "vav" "hey" (HVH). H1943 appears as "mischievous" in two verses of the KJV ([Ezekiel 7:26](#) and [Isaiah 47:11](#)). In both places the word should have

been and usually is translated as "ruin" or "trouble" or "calamity" in many other translations.

[Isaiah 47:11 \(KJV\)](#) Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth: and **mischief** shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know.

[Ezekiel 7:26 \(KJV\)](#) **Mischief** shall come upon **mischief**, and rumour shall be upon rumour; then shall they seek a vision of the prophet; but the law shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the ancients.

It is unfortunate that Mr. Strong chose to include the defining word "mischief", especially because of the modern English speaker's association of "mischief" with "evil". Even so, the word "mischief" does not make sense in the above two verses where "ruin" and "calamity" make more sense (in context) as many modern English translators have confirmed, including those of the NKJV.

[Isaiah 47:11 \(NKJV\)](#) Therefore evil shall come upon you; You shall not know from where it arises. And **trouble** shall fall upon you; You will not be able to put it off. And desolation shall come upon you suddenly, which you shall not know.

[Ezekiel 7:26 \(NKJV\)](#) **Disaster** will come upon **disaster**, and rumor will be upon rumor. Then they will seek a vision from a prophet; But the law will perish from the priest, and counsel from the elders.


[Ezekiel 7:26 \(NASV\)](#) **Disaster** will come upon **disaster** and rumor will be added to rumor; then they will seek a vision from a prophet, but the law will be lost from the priest and counsel from the elders.

Most students of the Scriptures should be able to conclude: there is nothing wrong with comparing the Master יהוה with the words "ruin" or "disaster" or "destruction" or "calamity". One only needs to consider the numerous places where יהוה is equated with "Consuming Fire" ([Exodus 24:17](#); [Deuteronomy 9:3](#); [Isaiah 30:27](#); [Isaiah 33:14](#); [Hebrews 12:29](#)). Can you think of anything which brings more ruin and disaster than a **consuming fire** driven by **blowing** wind? Those who have experienced forest fires understand such calamity well. We should keep in mind that אֵשׁ simply applies His ruin and destruction to evil, things deserving of ruin and destruction, or He may use fire to test and purify His children. Remember, it is good and honorable to destroy evil, and that is exactly what the "All Existing One" has done, does, and will do in the Last Days! Ha-Satan knows this and trembles! But His children should rest in knowing He will not utterly destroy us, but desires pure vessels of gold.

Understanding the above, we can see that deriving "Y^eHovah" from the word "Hovah" is not disparaging (belittling) of the nature of Elohim (God) because "Hovah" is not truly connected to the words "mischief" or "evil", but Y'hovah does bring ruin and destruction to the wicked. Read the Song of Moses ([Exodus 15](#)) if you need more convincing on this point... for He surely brought **RUIN** to the House of Pharaoh and Egypt in general (and He will bring ruin again to the 'proverbial' Pharaoh/Anti-Messiah in the future).¹⁷

We appreciate the above author's candid response to the unreasonable argument that the Almighty's name cannot be pronounced "Yehovah" because "hovah" means "ruin" or the misleading "mischief." If we were to apply this logic to all basic words, we should indeed expect

¹⁷ From the anonymously-written study "[What is the Proper Name of the Most High?](#)" This study may be read in its entirety by accessing the following link: <http://jewsandjoes.com/yhvh-yhwh-ha-shem-the-great-name.html#hovah>. Copyright © 2012 JewsAndJoes.com. All Rights Reserved.



Hebrew speakers to have reason to be alarmed that the word “Torah” has the “rah” sound at the end, since a Hebrew word pronounced “rah” means “evil” or “wickedness.” We should add that there are also examples of how one Hebrew word can have both positive and negative connotations and meanings. The word spelled אֱלֹהִים, for example, can be vowel-pointed so as to be pronounced “Eloah,” and is used as an honorable title for the Almighty (cf., word #433 in *Strong’s*). However, please take a moment to review *Strong’s* word numbers 421 – 429, where this very same Hebrew word is vowel-pointed in different ways so as to mean such things as “lament” (#421), “curse, swear” (#422), “oak or other strong tree” (#424, 427), or the name of an Edomite named Elah (#425). This same word, vowel-pointed as אֱלֹהִים, is pronounced “Allah,” which is the name attributed to the Almighty by the Moslem community.

One could certainly take one look at this Hebrew word and reach the premature and incorrect conclusion that we should never refer to the Almighty as “Eloah” because that Hebrew word can mean “curse.” As it is with the Hebrew word אֱלֹהִים, so it is with the Hebrew word הוּהָ. If אֱלֹהִים can be honorably applied to Yahweh as a title while simultaneously meaning “curse, swear” in a different context, then why can’t הוּהָ form a part of the Almighty’s name, even though, in a different context, it can be used to mean “ruin”?

Summing things up

To summarize this chapter, we have conceded that masculine names can end with either an *–ah* ending or an *–eh* ending, so neither side of this issue is justified in claiming that a certain sound at the end of a Hebrew name can or should be used in determining whether or not it is a masculine or feminine name. We have also seen that Hebrew grammar rules allow for both the pronunciation *Yahweh* and *Yahuwah*, so neither side is justified in claiming that their pronunciation of choice is the only one that “fits the rules.” Finally, we have conceded that there is no basis for concluding that the meaning of the Hebrew word *hovah* negates the possibility that *hovah* forms a part of the Almighty’s name. Regardless of how this Hebrew word (הוּהָ) is pronounced, no one can deny that those three Hebrew characters form a part of the Almighty’s name, and we have seen how one Hebrew word’s spelling can actually convey multiple meanings, depending on context.

2. The Exception to the Rule: The *Sh^ewâ*

Having conceded that Hebrew grammar rules allow for the pronunciation *Yahuwah*, we nevertheless feel compelled to ask a question that some Sacred Name authors seem to avoid addressing in their writings. That question is, “Do Hebrew grammar rules allow for the two-syllable pronunciation *Yahweh*?” According to Sacred Name author Brian E. Allen, the answer is no. As a reminder, the form of the Tetragrammaton that June and I use (*Yahweh*) consists of two syllables, whereas the form promoted by Mr. Allen (*Yahuwah*) has three. Brian writes, “Since ה in the middle of a word is always a consonant, this means that in the sacred name there must be three syllables.”¹⁸

What is both fascinating and ironic about Brian’s conclusion is the fact that the Hebrew scholar whose grammar book he cites most frequently indicated that, indeed, the Tetragrammaton can be and *should be* vowel-pointed so as to produce the two-syllable pronunciation *Yahweh*. The scholar I am referring to is Wilhelm Gesenius, author of *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*. If the grammar book from which the Sacred Name authors quote truly validates their claim that the middle ה in יהוה *must* be pronounced as “-hu,” then why did the author of *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar* indicate that the Hebrew symbol (or “point”) associated with the ה in יהוה makes it *silent* – producing a two-syllable name? Here is a pertinent excerpt from Gesenius’ grammar book stating that *originally* the divine name was pronounced *Yahweh*:

The divine name יהוה, which has not **its original vowels (יהוה)** but those of אֱלֹהִים (see § 17 c), except that the ך has simple not compound *Š^ewâ*, takes the prefixes also, after the manner of אֱלֹהִים, thus יהוה, יהוה, יהוה, לַיהוה, לַיהוה, לַיהוה (since they are to be read אֱלֹהִים, אֱלֹהִים, אֱלֹהִים); for the ך of אֱלֹהִים, as of אֱלֹהִים, אֱלֹהִים, &c. (see below) *quiesces* after the prefixes ב, כ, ל, ך, but is *audible* after ה (for מֶה, מִי) (no instance in the O. T.), and ה (in אֱלֹהִים Dt 10¹⁷, ψ 136³, the article, not ה interrog., is intended; the only example with ה interrog., Jer 8¹⁹, is to be pointed יהוה, i.e. אֱלֹהִים, not יהוה).¹⁹

We know from our previous chapter that Wilhelm Gesenius’ first usage of the Tetragrammaton above (יהוה) reflects how the Masoretes vowel-pointed it so as to prevent the reader from accidentally blurting out the Sacred Name. However, please note how *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar* says the divine name was *originally* pronounced (if vowel-pointing had been in use): יהוה. Those who understand the Hebrew pronunciation rules know that יהוה is transliterated *Yahweh* in English. Again, for unexplained reasons, author Brian Allen does not comment on this glaring (apparent) discrepancy between the grammar book’s stated *rule* and the same grammar book’s *practice*. We call it an “apparent” discrepancy because, as we are about to see, there is no actual discrepancy. It is Brian Allen’s misunderstanding and (hence) misapplication of a rule

¹⁸ From *Publish the Name Yahuwah*, by Brian Earl Allen, ch. 7, “Next Letter: U, V or W?” This study is available on the Internet, but I obtained the information as cited from Mr. Allen’s work in *The Two Greatest Names of the Universe: Yahuwah (Elohim the Father) and Yahushua (Adonai the Son Mashiach)*, by John R. Hawkins, Desoto, TX, July 2008, p. 25.

¹⁹ From *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, Edited by E. Kautzsch, Second English Edition 1910, Revised by A. E. Cowley, Oxford at the Clarendon Press, London, England, 1956, p. 300.



without taking into consideration possible exceptions to that rule which lead to the *appearance* of a discrepancy in the Hebrew grammar book.

As displayed above, Wilhelm Gesenius, in his Hebrew grammar book, vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton so as to be pronounced *Yahweh*. Here, again, is how he vowel-pointed it: יהוה. For those of you who are unfamiliar with the Hebrew vowel points, the first one is the *pattach* (ֿ) , which produces the *yah* sound when placed under the ך. The second vowel point is the *sh^ewâ* (ֿ) , which, as indicated by the title of this chapter, is the “exception to the rule” that Sacred Name authors such as Brian Allen do not seem to know about.²⁰ The *sh^ewâ*, although it is generally known to function as a vowel point for a very short *e*, is also often said to be “invisible” and not sounded at all. In this instance involving the Tetragrammaton, its primary role is that of a syllable-divider, which in turn brings about the “exception to the rule.” Here is a brief explanation of the *sh^ewâ*:

A Sheva is a very short *e* (rapidissimum). When seen, it is two dots resembling a colon (:) placed under a letter. As it has been before said to be often invisible, and consequently not then sounded by the Masorites; so when it is seen, silence is frequently imposed on it.²¹

When this symbol is placed under the ה, no vowel sound is produced at all, even when found in the middle of a Hebrew word; hence the exception to the rule previously cited by Brian Allen from *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*. We will read Gesenius’ explanation of the *sh^ewâ* shortly; first, we will briefly cover the other vowel point that Gesenius used in his presentation of how the Tetragrammaton was originally pronounced. The final vowel point employed by Gesenius’ rendering of the Tetragrammaton is the *segol* (ֿ), which produces the *-way* sound when placed under the ו. This, then, is the combination that Wilhelm Gesenius offered as the correct pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. Sacred Name author Brian E. Allen, apparently thinking that he has a superior understanding of Hebrew grammar rules than Gesenius did, attempts to create the impression that Gesenius’ conclusion is a mistake.

Wilhelm Gesenius made his support for the pronunciation *Yahweh* even plainer in his lexicon. Here is the pertinent excerpt from Gesenius’ *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*²² demonstrating this very thing:

²⁰ The word *sh^ewâ* is spelled differently by various writers, which sometimes adds to the confusion when attempting to explain how this vowel point is used. Three other forms that we have seen are *š^ewâ*, *sheva* and *schwa*.

²¹ From *An Easy Introduction to the Knowledge of the Hebrew Language*, by James P. Wilson, Farrand, Hopkins, Zantlinger and Co., Philadelphia, PA, 1812, p. 267.

²² Wilhelm Gesenius, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Translated by Edward Robinson, edited by Francis Brown, D.D., D.LITT., S. R. Driver, D.D., LITT.D. and Charles A. Briggs, D.D., D.LITT, Oxford at the Clarendon Press, London, England, 1st ed., 1907, reprinted with corrections in 1955, pp. 217-218. NOTE: The vowel pointing of יהוה is pronounced *Yahweh*.

יְהוָה c.6823 i.e. יְהוָה n.pr.dei Yahweh, the
proper name of the God of Israel—(1. MT
יְהוָה: 6518 (Qr יְהוָה), or יְהוָה: 305 (Qr אֱלֹהִים), in

Vowel pointing the Tetragrammaton as יְהוָה (pronounced “Yahweh”): Did Gesenius not understand the Hebrew linguistics rule that he cited in his own renowned grammar book?

It is obvious that those who use their limited understanding of Hebrew grammar to insist that the Tetragrammaton “must” consist of three syllables are not familiar with the *shêwâ* and its functionality. Again, this Hebrew symbol is what causes the ה to produce *no accompanying vowel sound* within a Hebrew word. If *Yahuwah* proponents had read the Hebrew grammar book from which they quote so extensively a little more carefully, they would have noticed Wilhelm Gesenius’ explanation of how this Hebrew symbol can be used with any consonant to close a syllable without an accompanying vowel sound. Thus, instead of extending an extra syllable, *shêwâ* closes the first one. Here is the pertinent quote from Gesenius’ grammar book that Brian Allen seems to have either overlooked or ignored:

ה

The sign of the *simple Šêwâ* (ְ) serves also as a mere syllable-divider. In this case it is disregarded in pronunciation and is called *Šêwâ quiescens*. In the middle of a word it stands under every consonant which closes a syllable; at the end of words on the other hand it is omitted except in final ה (to distinguish it better from final ו, e.g. מֶלֶךְ king, and in the less frequent case where a word ends with a mute after another vowelless consonant, as in נָרַךְ (nard), אַתְּ (thou, fem. (for 'ant), קָטַלְתָּ (thou hast killed), וַיִּשְׁקָ (and he watered), וַיִּשְׁבֶּ (and he took captive), אַל־תִּשְׁתֵּ (drink thou not); but וַיִּרְאָ (and he saw).²³

Summarizing the function of the Hebrew *shêwâ*, it is used to divide a syllable and it is silent (“disregarded in pronunciation”). The 1880 edition of *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar* refers to this symbol as the “*silent shêwâ*” and further explains that the word *shêwâ* comes from the Arabic word *sukûn*, which means “rest.”²⁴ This is an apt description of what the *shêwâ* does; when it divides the syllable, it causes the first syllable to rest before the next syllable is vocalized.

For those who would like an example in layman’s terms of how the *shêwâ* (ְ) closes out a syllable without adding an additional one, let’s try an example in English: the word “dogmatic.” Someone might say that the word “dogmatic” should actually be pronounced “dogumatic” because, as he might claim, the “g” must be followed by a vowel. Of course, in English he would demonstrate how the vowel belongs in the word by simply inserting the letter “u” after the “g.” In Hebrew, it’s not that easy knowing whether or not to insert a vowel sound because there are no

²³ Ibid, p. 54.

²⁴ From *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, Translated by Benjamin Davies, LL.D, Ira Bradley & Co., Boston, MA, 1880, p. 47.

Hebrew characters that actually serve as vowels. The Hebrew alphabet consists of 22 consonants, but no vowels.

We can also illustrate how the *sh^ewâ* works with the English equivalent of the Hebrew ה, which is the letter “h.” Words such as “ploughhshare” and “doughhnut” contain a silent “h” followed by another consonant. No one teaches that “ploughshare” is more properly pronounced “ploughushare” or that “doughnut” is more correctly rendered “doughunut.” If the English language, like Hebrew, did not contain any vowels, one might wonder whether or not the “h” in “doughnut” should be followed by a vowel sound. To indicate that it is not, we would insert a *sh^ewâ* (׃) like this:


dgħnt

If the English language needed a symbol to indicate that the “h” in the word “doughnut” is not followed by a vowel, we might borrow the Hebrew sh^ewâ as shown above.

Just as the *sh^ewâ* would tell us to not insert a vowel sound after the “h” in doughnut, in the same way, this modern Hebrew symbol tells us to not insert a vowel sound after the ה in הַיְיְוָה. Since no extra vowel sound is inserted, this likewise means that no extra syllable is added, which means that the Tetragrammaton is a *two*-syllable word, not a three-syllable word as claimed by proponents of the pronunciation *Yahuwah*. We can thus see that by ignoring the “exception to the rule,” Brian Allen misapplied and misinterpreted the pronunciation rule for a ה in the middle of a Hebrew word, which has in turn brought about a major part of the current misunderstanding.

In view of what Brian E. Allen overlooked in his examination of *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, it goes without saying that we are skeptical of his knowledge of Hebrew linguistics. At the same time, June and I will readily concede that, like those authors who assert Hebrew linguistics rules in spite of their lack of expertise, we, too, are without credentials. The main difference between us and “the other guys” is that we admit to our lack of credentials while inviting the reader to check out any claims that we make. Since we are not Hebrew scholars, we don’t really expect anyone to “just accept” any claims that we make about the Hebrew language without double-checking to confirm that our explanations are correct. For those who are quick to dismiss anything we write on the basis that we are not fluent in Hebrew, we will counter that we, like Mr. Allen, make extensive use of Hebrew grammar books and we have been known to consult Hebrew professors to make certain that we’re not misrepresenting the language when we make the claims that are presented here. You will observe that we produce examples from qualified sources, including Hebrew grammar books, demonstrating that our claims are solid. A question that those who doubt our ability to make use of Hebrew linguistics might want to answer is, “Is it mere coincidence that our findings tend to square with the conclusions reached by qualified Hebrew scholars?” Unlike the authors of the “anti-Yahweh” articles we have read, we welcome input from those who can demonstrate that we are in fact misrepresenting the rules of Hebrew linguistics.

We have demonstrated that author Brian Earl Allen, in his book *Publish the Name Yahuwah*, reached a premature and incorrect conclusion about whether or not the Tetragrammaton can consist



of two vowels. Since the *sh^ewâ* under a ם *divides* and closes the syllable instead of creating a new one, Brian Allen's oversight is exposed. Not only is he mistaken in teaching that the ם in the middle of a word must be followed by a vowel, but this one mistake has led to a compounding of errors, which we will address later in our study.

As we bring this chapter to a close, we will summarize our findings in the first two chapters of our study by stating that our concessions should by no means be construed as an indication that we are conceding the argument. On the contrary, an acknowledgement that the pronunciation *Yahuwah* is a linguistic possibility is just that: an acknowledgement that it is *possible*. Would the *Yahuwah* proponents be willing to acknowledge that *Yahweh* is also a linguistic possibility? Well, to this point they have not been willing to do so, even though they freely justify their Hebrew linguistics interpretations from Wilhelm Gesenius' grammar book, a book that offers the pronunciation *Yahweh* as being "original." From the perspective of the *Yahuwah* proponents who use Gesenius' grammar book to prove their case, Gesenius must have understood the Hebrew grammar rules, yet he defied those same rules in offering his support for the pronunciation *Yahweh*. Does this make any sense?

3. Other Scholars Agree that a “ה” May or May Not Function As a Consonant in the Middle of a Word

We have just seen how Sacred Name author Brian Allen, in his insistence that the Tetragrammaton must consist of three syllables, either neglects or outright does not understand how the Hebrew vowel point called a *shēva* causes a letter to end a syllable with no accompanying vowel sound. Sadly, we have found that other Sacred Name authors have been sold on Brian’s misunderstanding of Hebrew linguistics, and they have already saturated the Internet and other resources with this same misinformation to the extent that the truth of the *shēva*’s functionality will very likely remain shrouded to many innocent, but not research-oriented, believers. The fact that this one misunderstanding has been exposed, albeit to a few scattered believers, in and of itself disproves the teaching that the pronunciation *Yahweh* cannot be correct. In fact, as renowned Hebrew scholar Wilhelm Gesenius testifies by his own preference, the pronunciation *Yahweh* may not only prove to be grammatically correct, but additional evidence from other sources serves to further corroborate his conclusion.

Not only did Wilhelm Gesenius recognize that the ה in the middle of a Hebrew word is not necessarily followed by a vowel sound, but James Strong, in his *Strong’s Concordance*, produced examples of the same. Here is his rendering of the Hebrew name *Yehday* (pronounced *yeh-dah’ee*):

3056. יְהִידַי **Yehday**, *yeh-dah’ee*; perh. from a form corresp. to 3061; *Judaistic*; *Jeh-dai*, an Isr.:—Jehdai.

Please notice that the ה in the above word is vowel-pointed with a *shēwâ* (,), which we have already learned from Gesenius himself is a vowel point that closes the syllable. Thus, the Hebrew word יְהִידַי is pronounced *yeh-dah’ee* instead of *yeh-hu-dah’ee*. Question: If the Hebrew name יְהִידַי doesn’t have a vowel sound after the ה, is it possible that the name יְהִידַי doesn’t either? By now, we hope the answer is an obvious yes. Another witness testifying to the fact that James Strong understood that the ה in the middle of a Hebrew word is not always followed by a vowel sound is Hebrew word #3096, the name *Yahtsâh*:

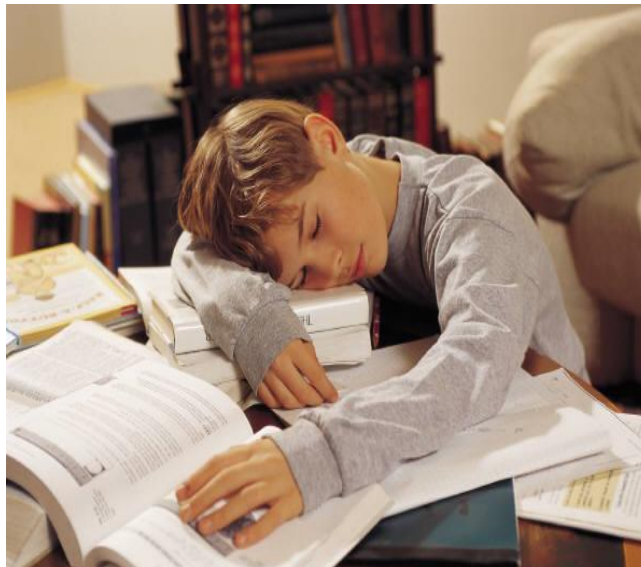
3096. יַחֲצַח **Yahats**, *yah’-hats*; or יַחֲצַח **Yahtsâh**, *yah’-tsaw*; or (fem.) יַחֲצַח **Yahtsâh**, *yah-tsaw’*; from an unused root mean. to *stamp*; perh. *thresh-ing-floor*; *Jahats* or *Jahtsah*, a place E. of the Jordan:—Jahaz, Jahazah, Jahzah.

The above word, as with the Tetragrammaton, has the “Yah” followed by a consonant, not a vowel. The *shēwâ* vowel point is what determines whether or not it is followed by a vowel sound. Supporters of the pronunciation *Yahuwah* would either omit or ignore the *shēwâ* vowel point and insist that the Hebrew word יַחֲצַח should be pronounced *Yahutsah*.

The fact that a ה in the middle of a Hebrew word is not always followed by a vowel sound is exemplified in other words found in *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance*, such as the word *mahlêk*:

4108. מַלְלֵךְ **mahlêk**, mah-lake'; from 1980; a walking (plural collect.), i.e. access:—place to walk.

Once again, those who promote the pronunciation *Yahuwah* would have us to believe that James Strong didn't understand the rules of Hebrew. According to them, word #4108 is more correctly pronounced “mahulake.” Other Hebrew words in which the ה is not followed by a vowel sound include *mahpêkâh* (word #4114), *mahpeketh* (word #4115) and *niyâh* (word #5093). If it is true that the ה cannot be silent when it's in the middle of a Hebrew word, then apparently James Strong, who compiled *Strong's Concordance*, slept during that particular Hebrew lesson.



Did James Strong sleep through his Hebrew lessons?

One might ask, “If James Strong understood that the Hebrew letter ה is not necessarily followed by a vowel sound, why didn't he produce the same Tetragrammaton pronunciation offered by Wilhelm Gesenius?” Indeed, if we refer to the pronunciation as shown by James Strong in *Strong's Concordance*, we find the pronunciation *Yehovaw*, which he in turn renders “Jehovah.” Here is what we see in *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*:

3068. הַיְהוָה **Y^hôvâh**, yeh-ho-vaw'; from 1961; (the) self-Existent or Eternal; *Jehovah*, Jewish national name of God:—Jehovah, the Lord. Comp. 3050, 3069.

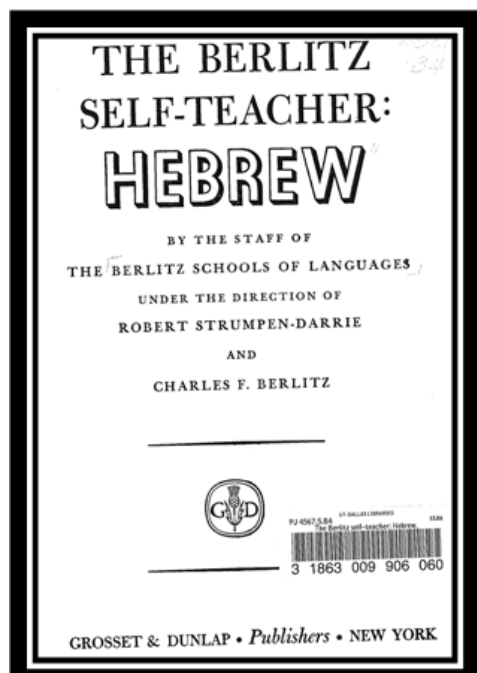
3069. הַיְהוִה **Y^hôvîh**, yeh-ho-vee'; a var. of 3068; [used after 136, and pronounced by Jews as 430, in order to prevent the repetition of the same sound, since they elsewhere pronounce 3068 as 136]:—God.

One could easily point to the above pronunciations offered by James Strong and conclude that the Tetragrammaton is either pronounced *Yehovah* or *Yehovih*; in fact, many have reached this conclusion based solely on the rendering found in *Strong's Concordance*. What the discerning Bible student will understand is that James Strong was merely reproducing the Hebrew spelling (including the vowel points) as found within the Masoretic Text. In other words, he is offering us each Hebrew word as it appears in the Masoretic Text as opposed to a rendering that he might feel best represents the pronunciation of those same Hebrew words. As we explained in chapter one, the way the Masoretes vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton reflected their Jewish tradition of vowel-pointing it in such a way so as to alert the reader to not pronounce it as it is written. Since the Masoretes deliberately vowel-pointed יהוה so as to *not* be pronounced a certain way and since James Strong was merely reproducing their work, we can understand that what we find in *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* is not an authoritative rendering of the correct pronunciation of יהוה.

The difference between the Tetragrammaton pronunciation renderings offered by Wilhelm Gesenius and James Strong, then, are this: Wilhelm Gesenius presented his readers with the pronunciation that he felt most closely parallels the original pronunciation, whereas James Strong was merely reproducing the pronunciation indicated by the vowel-pointings that the medieval Masoretic Jews added to the Hebrew text.

Are Other Hebrew Grammar Books in Error?

Supporters of the pronunciation *Yahuwah* not only ignore the Hebrew pronunciation rule cited




by Wilhelm Gesenius, which is a rule that James Strong apparently understood when he compiled his *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, but they must also disagree with other Hebrew grammar books. In 2010, when I was asked to give a presentation on this subject, I went to a nearby library in order to access available Hebrew grammar books to help validate the points that I intended to make. Not only did I find the one authored by Wilhelm Gesenius, but I also found a more modern one, *The Berlitz Self-Teacher: Hebrew*, which was published in 1953.

Does *The Berlitz Self-Teacher: Hebrew* offer any information as to whether or not the ה must be followed by a vowel sound when it is in the middle of a word? The following example demonstrates that the ה can indeed be a closed syllable (not followed by a vowel sound) when it is found in the middle of a word. The word that we're focusing on in the following screen shot is "Yahrblum,"

which, as it turns out, is a proper noun. Since our Heavenly Father's name is a proper noun, we trust that there is no problem with offering such an example:

EXAMPLE OF A “HEH” THAT IS NOT FOLLOWED BY A VOWEL SOUND

<p>138 THE BERLITZ SELF-TEACHER: HEBREW</p> <p>היסמין, השושנה והלילך פולם מריחים היטב במדח שוח. <i>Hah-yahs-MEEN, hah-shoh-shah-NAH veh-hah-lee-LAKH koo-LAHM</i> <i>m'tee-HEHM keh-TEHV b'mee-DAH shah-VAH.</i> The jasmine, the rose, and the lilac all smell equally good.</p> <p>מה טוב יותר: תה עם סוכר או בלי סוכר? <i>Mah tohu yoh-TEHR: tay im soo-KAHR oh b'lee soo-KAHR?</i> Which is better: tea with sugar or without sugar?</p> <p>תה עם סוכר טוב יותר. <i>Tay im soo-KAHR tohu yoh-TEHR.</i> Tea with sugar is better.</p> <p>אתה מדבר אנגלית היטב, אבל אתה מדבר עברית טוב יותר. <i>Ah-TAH m'dah-BEHR ahn-g'LEET keh-TEHV, ah-VAHL ah-TAH</i> <i>m'dah-BEHR eev-REET tohu yoh-TEHR.</i> You speak English well, but you speak Hebrew better.</p> <p>המבטא העברי שלך טוב (יותר) משלי. <i>Hah-meev-TAH hah-eev-ree sheh-l'HAH tohu (yoh-TEHR) mee-sheh-LEE.</i> Your Hebrew pronunciation is better than mine.</p> <p>המבטא הנכון של אהרן יאֶהרבלום הוא הטוב ביותר. <i>Hah-meev-TAH hah-eev-ree shall ah-DOHN Yahrblum hoo</i> <i>hah-tohu b'yoh-TEHR.</i> The pronunciation of Mr. Jahrbloom is the best.</p> <p> NOTE ON THE SUPERLATIVE: The superlative is formed also with the use of יותר (<i>yoh-TEHR</i>) plus the use of ה (<i>hah</i>) and ב (<i>b'</i>) arranged in the following manner: “the biggest” הגדול ביותר (<i>hah-gah-dohl b'yoh-TEHR</i>).</p> <p>Examples: “Jerusalem is big.” ירושלים גדולה. (<i>Yeh-roo-shah-LAH-yim g'doh-LAH.</i>) “Tel-Aviv is bigger.” תל-אביב גדולה יותר. (<i>Tel-Ah-VEEV g'doh-LAH yoh-TEHR.</i>) “New York is the biggest.” ניו-יורק היא הגדולה ביותר. (<i>New York hee hah-g'doh-LAH b'yoh-TEHR.</i>)</p>	<p>THE BERLITZ SELF-TEACHER: HEBREW 139</p> <p>המדבר אתה צרפתית כמו עברית? <i>Hah-m'dah-BEHR ah-TAH tsohr-fah-TEET k'moh eev-REET?</i> Do you speak French as well as Hebrew?</p> <p>אדון ברליץ מרביב משקפים. <i>Ah-DOHN Berlitz mahv-KEEV meesh-kah-FAH-yim.</i> Mr. Berlitz has eye-glasses.</p> <p>אתה אינך מרביב משקפים. <i>Ah-TAH ehn-HAH mahv-KEEV meesh-kah-FAH-yim.</i> You have no eye-glasses.</p> <p>הרואה אתה טוב יותר מאדון ברליץ? <i>Hah-roh-EH ah-TAH tohu yoh-TEHR meh-ah-DOHN Berlitz?</i> Do you see better than Mr. Berlitz?</p> <p>כן, אני רואה טוב יותר. <i>Kehn, ah-NEE roh-EH tohu yoh-TEHR.</i> Yes, I see better.</p> <p>התלמיד יוסף הרואה כמו התלמיד אורי. <i>Hah-tahl-MEED Yoh-SEHF hah-ROOHS k'moh hah-tahl-MEED oo-ree.</i> The pupil Joseph is as diligent as the pupil Uri.</p> <p>לונדון עיר גדולה כמו ניו-יורק. <i>LOHN-dohn eer g'doh-LAH k'moh New York.</i> London is as large as New York.</p> <p>המלון העברי עולה באותו מחיר כמו המלון האנגלי. <i>Hah-mee-LOHN hah-eev-ree oh-LEH beh-oh-TOH m'heer k'moh hah-mee-LOHN hah-ahn-GLEE.</i> The Hebrew dictionary costs as much as the English dictionary.</p>
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According to those who promote the pronunciation *Yahuwah*, the Hebrew name spelled **יהרבלום** as it is transliterated in the above Hebrew grammar book (*Yahrblum*) is a mistake. According to the *Yahuwah* proponents, the ה in the name **יהרבלום** should be followed by a vowel sound, resulting in a transliteration akin to “Yahurblum.” Who has the correct understanding – the authors of the grammar book or those who promote the pronunciation *Yahuwah*?

Examples of ה’s Followed by/Not Followed by a Vowel Sound -- As Well As Words Ending With Both an –eh and an –ah Sound

When I photocopied the page displayed below from *The Berlitz Self-Teacher: Hebrew*, I couldn’t help but notice examples of ה’s followed by an “-oo” sound as well as an example in which the ה closes the syllable and is *not* followed by a vowel sound. If you pay close attention, you will also notice that some of the Hebrew words end with an –eh, whereas others end with an –ah. We’ll address the endings of Hebrew words later, but for now, let’s focus our attention on the ה’s that appear in the middle of Hebrew words. Is it true, as claimed by some *Yahuwah* proponents, that this letter must *always* be followed by a vowel sound when it appears in the middle of a word?

Here are some of the words that we need to examine: From the second line appearing on page 266 (see screen shot below), we can observe that the word pronounced *hah-neh*-DAHR (הנהדר), which means “magnificent,” includes a ה that is not followed by a vowel sound. Why not? Did the person producing this transliteration in the Hebrew grammar book not know the rule that this ה *must* be followed by a vowel sound when it appears in the middle of a word? Or could it be that the believers who promote this understanding exhibit their own lack of comprehension of Hebrew grammar and linguistics?

On that same page we also see a word containing a ה followed by the vowel sound “-oh.” This is the Hebrew word for “lunch” (הצהרים), which is pronounced *hah-tsoh-hoh*-RAH-yim. This time, according to the scholar who transliterated the word, the ה needs be pronounced with a vowel sound (-hoh). I have circled both appearances of this Hebrew word.

266 THE BERLITZ SELF-TEACHER: HEBREW

לוי: רואה אני שדאנו כאן לכל הנהגות לתיירים.
Leh-YEH: Roh-eh ah-NEE she-dah-ah-GOO kah-ahn l'hohl hah-noh-hee-yoht l'tah-yah-REEM.
 Levy: I see that every accommodation has been provided here for the comfort of the tourists.

הבנו ויל המלון המהדר. *hah-behnt uhl hah-mah-LOHN hah-neh-DAHR hah-ZEH.*
 Look at this magnificent hotel.

בנו: זה מלון המלך דוד, אחד המפורסמים.
Nah-VOEN: Zeh mah-LOHN "Hah-MEH-lekh Dah-YEED", ah-SHAHD hah-m'foohr.
 Navon: This is the Hotel "King David", one of the best-known.

ביותר בעולם, וסוף מילונ.
sah-MEEM b'yoh-TEHR hah-oh-LAHM, u'fohf tee-yoo-LEH-noo.
 hotels in the world, and the end of our journey.

אעמיד פה את המכונית, ונפנס לארוחת הצהרים.
Ah-ah-MEEM poh ett hah-m'koh-NEET, u'nee-kah-NEHS lah-ah-roo-HAHT hah-tsoh-hoh-RAH-yim.
 I shall park my car here, and we shall go in for lunch.

לוי: אה! אתה רוצה לסעוד כאן ארוחת הצהרים?
Leh-YEH: OH! Ah-TAH roh-ZEH leet-sohd kah-ahn ah-too-HAHT hah-tsoh-hoh-RAH-yim!
 Levy: Oh! You want us to lunch here!

ואני הייתי רוצה שנלך למקום מפורסם יותר,
Vah-ah-NEE hah-YEE-tee ro-ZEH sheh-neh-LEKH l'mah-KOHEM tee-poo-SEE yoh-TEHR,
 And I would like to go to some place more typical,

מאשר למקום מפורסם זה.
meh-ah-SHEER l'mah-KOHEM m'foh-AHR zeh.
 rather than to this sumptuous place.

בנו: אם זה הוא מבוקשך, הבנו ואראה... טוב,
Nah-VOEN: Im zeh hoo m'voo-kahsh-HAH, hah-ah-veh-ett-zeh... tohv,
 Navon: If such is your wish, let me see... well,

את המכונית יכולים אנו בידך ובין כך
ett hah-m'koh-NEET y'hoh-LEEM ah-hoo behn-KAKH oo-behn-KAKH
 we can park the car here anyway

THE BERLITZ SELF-TEACHER: HEBREW 267

להעמיד פה, ונמסר ברנל לאחת
leh-hah-ah-MEED poh, u'nah-soor bah-REH-geil leh-ah-HAHT
 and we will take a walk to

המסעדות הקטנות הקרובות, מקום בו
hah-meet-ah-DOHT hah-k'tah-NOHT hah-k'roh-VOHT, mah-KOHEM boh
 a small restaurant near by, where you will be able

תוכל למעט מנהגים יהודיים מפורסמים.
too-HAHT leet-OHM mah-ah-hah-LEEM yeh-hoo-dee-YEEM tee-poo-see-YEEM.
 to taste typical Jewish dishes.

הייתי מציע זאת לראשונה, לו הייתי יודע
Hah-YEE-tee mah-TSEE-ah zoht la-ree-shoh-NAH, loo hah-YEE-tee yoh-DEH-ah
 I would have suggested it in the first place, if I had known

לבטח, כי אתה כה אוהב את המאכל היהודי.
lah-YEH-takh, kee ah-TAH koh oh-REHV ett hah-oh-hell hah-y'hoo-DEE.
 for sure that you like the Jewish food so much.

 NOTE ON THE CONDITIONAL:
 The conditional is expressed, in Hebrew, with the aid of the verb היה (hah-yeh) "to be" or "and יכול (yoh-hohl) "can", used as auxiliaries. We find, accordingly, the following types of construction:

a) Conditional with "to be" as auxiliary verb. The auxiliary is used in the past, the main verb in the present tense. Examples:
 הייתי כותב (hah-YEE-tee koh-TEHV) "I would write".
 הייתי הולך (hah-YEE-tee hoh-LEKH) "I would go".
 The use of this form requires a statement of the condition or prerequisite in the subordinate part of the sentence, starting with אילו (ee-loo) or its abbreviation (loo) "if". Example:
 הייתי קורא, אילו היה לי פנאי.
Hah-YEE-tee koh-REH, ee-loo (loo) hah-YAH lee p'nigh.
 I would read, if I had time.

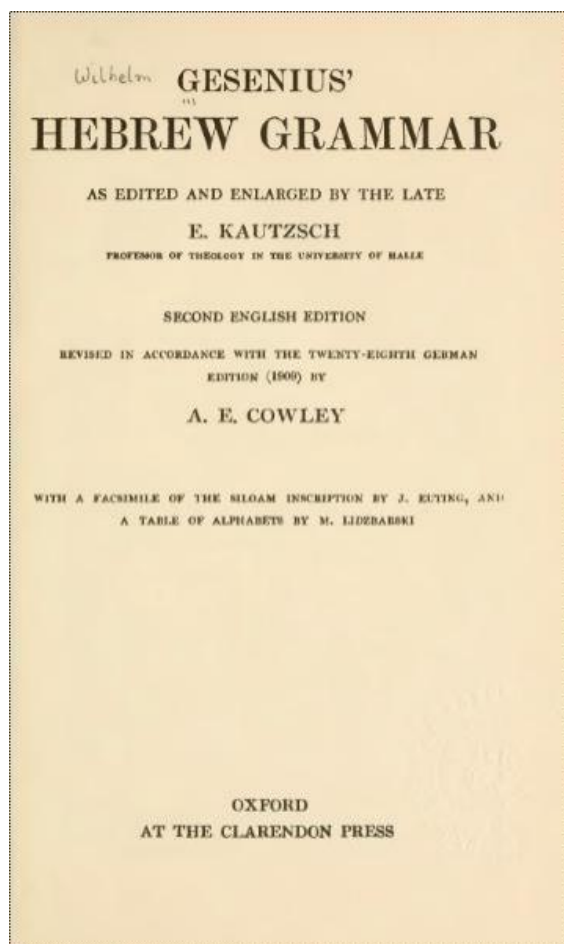
b) Conditional with "can" as auxiliary verb. The auxiliary is used in the past tense, the main verb in the infinitive. Example:
 יכולתי לכתוב (yoh-HOHL-tee leekh-toHV) "I could write" or "I could have written".
 To say "I could" or "I might" we use both auxiliaries, the first one in the past, the other one in the present tense, which gives us the construction הייתי יכול (hah-YEE-tee yoh-hohl) "I could" or יכול הייתי (yoh-HOHL hah-YEE-tee).

If you would like to take the time to review the above photocopied pages, you will also notice that on page 267 of the text, the Hebrew word for “Jewish” appears. This word, transliterated by the scholar as *y'hoo*-DEE, contains a ה followed by the “oo” vowel sound.

We thus see that Hebrew scholars exhibit the understanding that the ה can indeed be a closed syllable (not followed by a vowel sound) when it is found in the middle of a word.

4. Compounding Error From One Misunderstood Rule

In this chapter, we will address the compounding of errors introduced by misunderstanding one basic rule of Hebrew grammar. We have already examined Brian E. Allen's misrepresentation of a Hebrew grammar rule that he cited from *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*. We have shown that *if* Mr. Allen is correct about the rule he found in Gesenius' grammar book (with no exceptions allowed), then apparently Gesenius himself willfully broke that rule. Brian Allen, in a nutshell, claims that the \aleph must always be followed by a vowel when it's in the middle of a word. That is error #1. Error #2 is that his first [erroneous] rule must therefore require the addition of an extra syllable to the Hebrew word. Thus, according to Mr. Allen, the two-syllable pronunciation "Yahweh" is not possible because of the alleged rule that the \aleph *must* be followed by a vowel when it is in the middle of a word (potentially making the Tetragrammaton a three-syllable "Ya-hoo-weh," or in Brian Allen's estimation, "Ya-hoo-wah").



Cover of the 1910 edition of *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*

If you are one of those who has accepted the validity of Mr. Allen's reasoning, hopefully by now you can see that his misunderstanding and subsequent misrepresentation of this one rule from *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* automatically negates the second rule that Mr. Allen subsequently attempts to pass off on his reading audience. Although we have cited the "rule" as found within Brian Allen's book *Publish the Name Yahuwah*, other Sacred Name authors, such as John Hawkins, have followed his lead, authoring studies that give credit to Brian Allen's research for their own understanding.

Misrepresenting their primary source of information.

We have already demonstrated that Brian Allen, in citing page 56 of *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, overlooked the "exception to the rule" which states that a \aleph can never be a vowel letter in the middle of a word. Not only does Wilhelm Gesenius state very clearly that the *simple sh^ewâ* (.) can be used as a syllable-divider for any Hebrew

letter without expressing any sound, but the fact that he lists the pronunciation *Yahweh* as his own preference serves as his validation of how this vowel point is properly used. We have also demonstrated that other scholars share the understanding presented by Gesenius in his grammar book. How, then, did Brian Allen overlook Gesenius' Hebrew linguistics "exception to the rule"? Did he also overlook the fact that Gesenius treats *Yahweh* as the original pronunciation? Mr. Allen makes no attempt to explain why Wilhelm Gesenius states that the original vowel-pointing indicates *Yahweh* if, in fact, this pronunciation is in deference to the rules of Hebrew grammar.

There is another section in Gesenius' grammar book that explains yet *another* exception to the rule that the ה can never be a vowel letter in the middle of a word. It appears that Brian Allen also glossed over this portion of *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (§ 23) prior to composing his study. In this section, titled "The Feebleness of the Gutturals א and ה," Gesenius makes a statement that, at first glance, seems to support the understanding presented by Brian Allen. However, in a footnote on that same page, he explains an exception to the rule that, in and of itself, completely negates the conclusion that Mr. Allen imparts to his readers.

The quote from Gesenius reads, "The ה is stronger and firmer than the א. It never loses its consonantal sound (i.e. *quiesces*) in the middle of a word except in the cases below, in which it is completely elided by syncope."²⁵ This statement, on the surface, certainly appears to support the understanding that a ה cannot be silent when it is in the middle of a word; however, Gesenius specifies that there are exceptions "in the cases below." The "cases below" are found in a footnote at the bottom of the page:

Only apparent exceptions are such *proper names* as ,²⁶ עֲשֵׂה אֵל hence are , which are compounded of two words, and ²⁷ פְּדַח צִוּר sometimes even divided. Cf. forms like ²⁸ חֲזַאֵל for Another). ²⁹ חֲזַאֵל exception is ³⁰ יִפְהִיפִיָּה, the reading of many MSS. for the artificially divided form ³¹ יִפְהִיפִיָּה in the printed texts, Je. 46:20.³²

To those who don't take the time to examine and verify the information that Brian Allen offers in his publication, it might appear that he rightly expounded on the rule requiring the ה to be sounded out when it is found in the middle of a word. The linguistics rule that he cited plainly indicates that the ה never loses its consonantal sound in the middle of a word, i.e., it cannot be silent. However, not only did Wilhelm Gesenius provide an "exception to the rule" involving the use of the *sh'wâ*, but he also specified that *proper names* serve as exceptions to that rule. Since the issue at hand here involves a *proper name*, i.e., the Creator's name, it is clear that Brian Allen overlooked a critical footnote, resulting once again in the dissemination of false information. Since Brian Allen overlooked these exceptions to the rule about pronouncing the ה when it is in the middle of a word, his subsequent attempts to build on that one rule essentially amount to an irrelevant exercise in futility.

²⁵ From *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, Edited by E. Kautzsch, Second English Edition 1910, Revised by A. E. Cowley, Oxford at the Clarendon Press, London, England, 1956, p. 81.

²⁶ *Asah 'el*, #6214 in *Strong's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary*.

²⁷ *Pedah 'tzur*, #6301 in *Strong's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary*.

²⁸ *Chaza 'el*, #2371 in *Strong's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary*.

²⁹ *Chazah 'el*, #2371 in *Strong's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary*.

³⁰ *Yephêhphîyâh*, the same as word #3304 in *Strong's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary*. Please note that the word *Yephêhphîyâh* is not a proper name. This Hebrew word is a noun that means "very beautiful." We have previously cited other non-proper name exceptions, such as מְהִלֵּךְ (pronounced mahlêk instead of "mahulêk").

³¹ *Yephêhphîyâh*, word #3304 in *Strong's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary*.

³² From *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, Edited by E. Kautzsch, Second English Edition 1910, Revised by A. E. Cowley, Oxford at the Clarendon Press, London, England, 1956, p. 81.

Okay, So יהוה is a Proper Name, But Is It Compounded of Two Words?

In the footnote cited above from *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, we found that proper names are an “exception to the rule” requiring the ה to be pronounced when it is in the middle of a word. Of course, Gesenius goes on to state that this particular “proper name exception” must also consist of two words. During one of my presentations on this topic, one individual questioned whether or not the Tetragrammaton truly consists of two words, so I decided to incorporate the answer to his question into this study.

Sometimes the individuals best-suited to answer controversial questions of this nature are those who have an opposing view about how to pronounce the Tetragrammaton. Author Keith Johnson, in his book *His Hallowed Name Revealed Again*, upholds the three-syllable pronunciation *Yehovah*. Since the pronunciation *Yehovah* consists of three syllables, this in turn means that Mr. Johnson would agree with Brian Allen's view that the ה cannot be silent and is followed by a vowel. Nevertheless, Keith Johnson maintains that the Tetragrammaton is compounded not only of *two* words, but *three*. Here is what he writes in his book *His Hallowed Name Revealed Again*:

After Moses asks the question אל הענה (El Who Answers) gives the answer,

“What shall I say to them?” And יהוה said to Moses אהיה אשר אהיה (‘ehyeh ‘asher ‘ehyeh).

These three Hebrew words are the source of the age-old debate on the meaning of the name יהוה. For hundreds of years people have tried to analyze what is very clear in the Hebrew text. In English it means “*I AM who I AM*.” There have been many theories and wild guesses on the “hidden meaning” of (‘ehyeh), which is the first common singular of the verb היה (hayah). Do you remember that this verb is the root of His name? In a simple and yet profound way יהוה is saying, “*I AM like the verb TO BE*.” This verb is used in the past, present and future state. Nothing else in the earth or the heavens can carry this meaning the way יהוה does because He can back it up!³³

Keith Johnson, then, agrees that the Tetragrammaton is compounded of more than one word, which in turn means that it qualifies as one of the “exceptions” to the rule requiring the ה to be pronounced when it is in the middle of a word. A few pages later, Mr. Johnson presents a potential exclusive interview that an ancient Israelite journalist may have had with Moses prior to leading the Israelites out of Egypt. One of the journalist's questions had to do with the Creator's name, and here is Moses' answer:

When I asked יהוה what name I should tell the people, He answered me by telling me His name;

³³ Keith E. Johnson, *His Hallowed Name Revealed Again*, 1st edition, Biblical Foundations Academy, Minneapolis, MN, 2010, p. 84. Note: This same quote is found on pages 111-112 of Keith's 2010 updated version.

there was a promise of action through His name. He revealed Himself through His name as the One who is willing “TO BE”! Think of His name this way; He was, He is, and He will be! He is not limited by time or circumstance. He can never be too late or too early. He cannot be contained, controlled, shut out, locked up or ignored. The past failures, present threats or future challenges cannot stop the promise of His name in action.³⁴

The three-word combination from which our Creator’s name is derived, when viewed from the perspective presented above by author Keith Johnson, presents a compelling summary that explains, in what is perhaps the only way we humans can grasp, the meaning of our Heavenly Father’s name. We can thus understand that the Creator’s name is indeed a combination of more than one word.

Vague and Irrelevant “Hebrew Grammar Rules” From Brian Allen’s Publication

Earlier we mentioned that by misunderstanding *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar* rule about whether or not the Hebrew letter ם is silent when located in the middle of a word, Brian Allen compounded that misunderstanding by inventing a new “rule” that is equally erroneous. As we all should know by now, when you start with a faulty premise, you usually end up with a false conclusion. We will address Brian Allen’s additional errors in this section of our study. Here are the vague rules from *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar* cited by Mr. Allen in support of the Tetragrammaton being a three-syllable word:

RULE #2 Since the ם in the middle of a word is always a consonant, this means that in the set-apart name, there must be three syllables.³⁵

Since we have already demonstrated in chapter two that the ם in the middle of a word can close out a syllable when pointed with a *shêwâ* (׃), thereby creating a two-syllable Tetragrammaton, Brian Allen’s “RULE #2” is automatically invalidated. Nevertheless, since Mr. Allen continued his attempt to build on his “rules,” we will continue to address additional claims from his study.

³⁴ Ibid, p. 87.

³⁵ From chapter 7 of Brian Earl Allen’s study titled *Publish the Name Yahuwah*. This chapter may be read online by accessing the following URL: http://yahushua.net/YAHUWAH/chapter_07.htm. It should be pointed out that I was initially exposed to this rule when I read a separate study titled *The Two Greatest Names of the Universe: Yahuwah (Elohim the Father) and Yahushua (Adonai the Son Mashiach)*, by John R. Hawkins, July 2008, p. 25. Mr. Hawkins, it turns out, quotes extensively from Brian Allen’s study.

Can the Hebrew letter ה close a syllable?

Brian Allen goes on to write that the Hebrew ה cannot be used to close a syllable:

The vowel letters ה, ו, י, א, as such, naturally do not close a syllable ... On the other hand, syllables are closed by the consonantal ו and י.
Gesenius Hebrew Grammar p. 75³⁶

This is yet another misunderstanding of Gesenius' work. We will not argue that the letters ה, ו, י, א do not “naturally” close a syllable! However, according to the linguistic rule that Brian Allen overlooked in his study, if you put a *sh^ewâ* (.) under *any* Hebrew consonant, *that letter will definitely close the syllable!* We really do not need to argue this point because, as we have already seen, Gesenius himself put a *sh^ewâ* under the ה in יהוה. Here, once again, is how Gesenius vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton in his lexicon: יהוה. Any qualified Hebrew scholar will agree that the pronunciation indicated by Gesenius is *Yahweh*. Yet, Brian Allen mysteriously quotes from Gesenius in an attempt to disprove the very pronunciation that Gesenius supported! This would be akin to quoting excerpts from *The New England Journal of Medicine* in an attempt to prove that exercise and a balanced diet are not an integral part of a healthy lifestyle. Let's take one more look at Gesenius' comment of how the “silent *sh^ewâ*” closes a syllable, this time as it appears in the 1880 version of his work:

The sign of the *simple sh^ewâ* (.) serves also as a mere *syllable-divider*, without expressing any sound, and therefore called in this case *silent sh^ewâ* (Arab. *sukûn* rest). **It stands in the midst of a word under every consonant that closes a syllable**; at the end of words, on the other hand, it is omitted, except in *final* ה, e.g. מֶלֶךְ (*king*), and in the less frequent case where a word ends with a mute after another vowelless consonant, as in נָרַד (*nard*), אַתְּ (*thou, fem.*), קָטַלְתָּ (*thou hast killed*), וַיַּשְׁקֵהוּ (*and he watered*), וַיִּשְׁבֶּהוּ (*and he took captive*), אֲלֵתֶשֶׁת (*drink thou not*).³⁷

The above quote from Gesenius exposes Sacred Name author Brian Allen's lack of expertise in the area of Hebrew grammar and linguistics. The use of a *sh^ewâ* to close a syllable is a basic vowel mark used in Hebrew. It neither requires accessing Gesenius' work nor advanced expertise in Hebrew to know this.

Unraveling the Rule About “Assimilation”

In an attempt to build on the argument presented in his “Rule #2,” Brian Allen offers what he feels is additional evidence validating the way he feels the Tetragrammaton should be pronounced. We have decided to incorporate his commentary into this study for the sake of those

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ From *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, Translated by Benjamin Davies, LL.D, Ira Bradley & Co., Boston, MA, 1880, p. 47.

who may be persuaded that it in any way adds weight to his position. Here is his “additional evidence”:

“Assimilation” usually takes place when one consonant which closes a syllable passes over into another beginning the next syllable and forms with it a strengthened letter *Gesenius Hebrew Grammar* p. 68

“Stade, *Lehrb. der hebr. Gr.*, Lpz 1879, pp. 44, 103, rightly insists on the expression *strengthened pronunciation* instead of the older term *doubling*, since the consonant in question is only written once. The common expression arises from the fact that in transcription a strengthened consonant can only be indicated by writing it as doubled.” *Ibid* p. 55 footnote

This means that in the set-apart name *Yahuwah* the ך must be a consonant, because it closes a syllable and opens a new one, and therefore it becomes a strengthened consonant written ך, or doubled.

“Waw with Deges (ך) cannot in our printed texts be distinguished from waw pointed as Sureg (ך); the latter case the point should stand higher up. The (ך) u is, however, easily to be recognized since it cannot take a vowel before or under it. *Ibid* p. 55 footnote.³⁸

In his commentary above, Brian essentially presents the claim that “assimilation” proves that the Tetragrammaton must have three syllables. Since we are persuaded that the Tetragrammaton consists of two syllables (“Yah” יה) + (“weh” וה), it is clear that we believe the *waw* (ו) only opens the second syllable and there is no assimilation or doubling of a consonantal sound. According to Brian Allen, in the form *Yahuwah*, יהוהׁ the ך must be a consonant because he believes it closes one syllable and opens a new one (Ya ך + huw וה + wah וה). Thus, we have a situation in which June and I regard the *waw* (ו) as only beginning the second and *final* syllable of the Tetragrammaton, whereas Brian Allen believes it ends the *second* one and introduces a third and final syllable. After going to the trouble of offering his readers the explanation, does Brian Allen pronounce the Name as *Ya-huw-wah*? No, he does not. The pronunciation that he offers his readers is *Ya-hu-wah*. Thus, after all of this talk about a letter being doubled or strengthened, Mr. Allen totally ignores the rule he cites by only pronouncing the *waw* (ו) once. Does he follow his quoted rule when he transcribes the Name into English? Remember the rule that Brian cited:

... in transcription a strengthened consonant can only be indicated by writing it as doubled.

If Brian Allen truly believes the ך in יהוהׁ should be doubled in pronunciation, then while transcribing the Name into English he needs to demonstrate this principle by writing the letter

³⁸ From chapter 7 of Brian Earl Allen’s study titled *Publish the Name Yahuwah*. This chapter may be read online by accessing the following URL: http://yahushua.net/YAHUWAH/chapter_07.htm. This commentary is also cited in a separate study titled *The Two Greatest Names of the Universe: Yahuwah (Elohim the Father) and Yahushua (Adonai the Son Mashiach)*, by John R. Hawkins, July 2008, pp. 25-26.

twice, just as the rule states. However, Brian spells the Name as “Yahuwah” and *not* as “Yahuwwah.” Therefore, even in spelling he ignores the rule that he offers his readers.

We are persuaded that the reason Mr. Allen ignores the rule is because he apparently does not understand the rule. With the Hebrew vowel pointing, the reader understands to pronounce the letter *twice* (hence doubling the consonant), even though the Hebrew character only appears *once*. To express this “doubling” in English, the letter “w” must be written *twice*, which Mr. Allen does not do. Brian Allen offers the following explanation for his understanding of the rule that he quoted, first by showing an example with the name *Eliyahu* and then attempting to transfer the same understanding of the rule to the Creator’s name:

This same situation appears in many other names like Eliyahu. The “i” and the “y” are both indicated by a double י (yod):

(יְיָֿוָה)

↑

The dot in the center of the י, with the vowel mark *Qamets* beneath it, indicates that this is a double yod. The dot beneath the י (see arrow above) indicates that the first yod is a vowel, and the second yod is a consonant (Eliyahu).

Elihu (#453) has the same Hebrew letters as Eliyahu (#452), the only difference is a double yod. The vowel marking indicates that the yod has a vowel sound, else it would read Elyahu instead of Elihu. The same principle applies to the Tetragrammaton, as it does to Eliyahu; instead of the yod, the *waw* is doubled, but is written only once. The first ו is a vowel sound of (ū), indicated by the וְ with three dots under it. The second ו is a consonant sound of “w”.

Thus, the name is perfectly transliterated Yah?wwah, written in English as Yahuwah. Compare *Strong’s* #6312³⁹

The above explanation is, quite frankly, an exhibition of confusion about Hebrew grammar and linguistics. To illustrate this, let’s break down the syllables in both *Eliyahu* and *Yahuwah* and see if we can figure out how the assimilation works and how the names are to be pronounced and transliterated into English. First, please understand that each letter in Hebrew has an accompanying vowel. A standard exception is the last letter of a word, which may blend with the previous syllable. We have also addressed another exception, the use of the *shewâ* when dividing syllables. Secondly, each letter/vowel combination will often create its own syllable. A standard exception is with the vowel *shewâ*. A letter with a *shewâ* may blend with the previous syllable. Now let’s break down the syllables in the name (יְיָֿוָה):

³⁹ From *Publish the Name Yahuwah*, by Brian Earl Allen, chapter 7, “Next Letter: U, V or W?” This chapter may be read online by accessing the following link: http://yahushua.net/YAHUWAH/chapter_07.htm. Note: We feel confident that Mr. Allen did not intend to produce the spelling “Yah?wwah” (with the question mark incorporated into the spelling); however, we are not left with any clues as to the character that he intended to include instead of the ? symbol.

First syllable: The ך produces an “e” sound as in egg.

Second syllable: The ך produces an “l” with a long “e” sound as in the English name Lee. Thus far, the combination ךך gives us the pronunciation “ě-lē.”

Next, we see the *yod* with dagesh (ך). This means that the *yod* will be pronounced twice. The first pronunciation of this *yod* will be at the end of the second syllable (ך), and the second pronunciation will be the beginning of the third syllable (ך). Using the dagesh can be viewed as an “abbreviated” way of writing a word. It would actually be (ך ך ך ך). This “yod with dagesh” (ך) changes the second syllable from ך to ך and oddly enough, this combination (notice the missing *dagesh*) will also produce the “l” with a long “e” pronunciation (“ě-lē”). We believe this may be what Brian is referring to when he mentions, “The dot beneath the ך (see arrow above) indicates that the first yod is a vowel.” Thus, with the current English transliteration rules of Hebrew, ךך is pronounced the same as ךך. In other words, for this particular name, the inclusion of the *dagesh* with the *yod* is optional. *Eliyahu* is pronounced the same regardless of whether or not the *dagesh* is placed within the *yod*. A native Israelite may pronounce the two slightly differently, but with current vowel pointing pronunciation rules, both spelling options would be pronounced identically. When we are finished with the second syllable, the combination of ךך gives us the pronunciation of “ě-lē.”

The second *yod* gives us the third syllable ך, which produces a “y” with an “aw” sound as in yacht. Therefore, the combination of ךך produces the pronunciation “ě-lē-yă.”

The fourth and final syllable is ך, which sounds like “who.” Putting the four syllables together, we get the pronunciation “ě-lē-yă-hōo, which transliterates into English as *Eliyahu*.

Before we go any further, let us state what you may have already been thinking. All this discussion about vowel points is much ado about nothing because the ancient Hebrew language did not have vowel points. The above name was simply written as ךךךך. As previously mentioned, vowel points were added to the Hebrew text of Scripture in the 7th century CE by the Masoretes in order to help people who were unfamiliar with the Hebrew language to know how to pronounce the words. All words were supposedly properly vowel-pointed, except for “יהוה,” because the Masoretes did not want anyone to pronounce His name. Quite frankly, *any* vowel points may be added to the letters comprising the Tetragrammaton, resulting in several potential “linguistically and grammatically-correct” pronunciations. Wilhelm Gesenius, in his *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, pointed out that, in the absence of vowel points, the reader had to decide for himself which was the proper pronunciation of a word:

Even those *two vowel-letters* (י and ו) were used but sparingly, being at first, and as a rule, employed only when the sounds they represent were *long*, and not always then (§ 8, 4). Everything else relating to the quantity of the vowel-sounds, and also the entire absence of a vowel, and even whether the vowel-letter in the particular case was a vowel or a consonant, the reader had to decide for himself.

Thus, for example, קטל might be read *qātāl*, *qātēl*, *qātōl*, *q'ētōl*, *qôtēl*, *qītēl*, *qătēl*, *qūtāl*; דבר, *dābhār* (word), *dā'bhēr* (pestilence), *dībbēr* (he has spoken), *dābbēr* (to speak), *dôbhēr* (speaking), *dābhūr* (spoken), *dūbbār* (it has been spoken); מות might be *mā'wēth* (death), or *mûth*, *moth* (to die); בין might be read *bîn*, *bên*, *băyîn*.

How imperfect and indefinite such a mode of writing was, is easily seen; yet during the whole period in which the Hebrew was a living language, no other signs for vowels were employed. Reading was therefore a harder task than it is with our more adequate modes of writing, and the reader's knowledge of the living mother-tongue had to supply much.

3. But when the Hebrew had died out, and the ambiguity arising from such an indefinite mode of writing, and the fear of losing the right pronunciation, must have been increasingly felt; then the *vowel-signs* or *vowel points* were invented, which minutely settled what had till then been left uncertain. Of the date of this punctuation (*vocalisation*) of the Old Testament text we have no historical account; but a comparison of historical facts warrants the conclusion, that the present vowel-system was not completed till the seventh century after Christ; and that it was done by Jewish scholars, well versed in the language, who, it is highly probable, copied the example of the Syriac, and perhaps also of the Arabic, grammarians.⁴⁰

If everyone took Gesenius' commentary above to heart, there really wouldn't be any contentious opinions about the "only grammatically-correct" way of pronouncing the Tetragrammaton. If Gesenius was able to produce eight "linguistically correct" ways of pronouncing קטל, are we to believe that there can only be *one* "linguistically correct" way of pronouncing יהוה? According to Brian Allen, the answer to that question is yes. According to Gesenius' explanation, the answer must be no. The question, then, is not which way is the "grammatically and linguistically-correct" way of pronouncing the Tetragrammaton; rather, it is, "Can we demonstrate which pronunciation was used by the ancients?" We will address that question later in our study.

Further Examination of Brian Allen's Vowel-Pointing of the Tetragrammaton Reveals the Inconsistency of His Teaching

What we would like to do now is examine how the Tetragrammaton should be pronounced based on the way Brian Allen has it vowel pointed. Although June and I must once again preface our explanations of Hebrew grammar by stating that we are not qualified Hebrew scholars, at the same time, we have studied elementary Hebrew, and the elements of Hebrew that we are about to present fall within the parameters of basic Hebrew. We invite any readers to demonstrate that what we are about to explain is grammatically and linguistically incorrect. In reviewing the Tetragrammaton as vowel-pointed by Brian Allen, we would like to begin by breaking it down into the three syllables as required by the way in which Brian Allen vowel-points this name. Here

⁴⁰ From *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, Translated by Benjamin Davies, LL.D, Ira Bradley & Co., Boston, MA, 1880, pp. 31-32.



is how Brian vowel-points the Tetragrammaton : יהוה. For illustration purposes, we are providing a chart of the three syllables that we will be examining:

The Three Syllables of the Tetragrammaton as Promoted by Brian Allen

Syllable 1: יָ

Syllable 2: הָוֶ

Syllable 3: הוּ (2nd *waw* added because he believes the *waw* is doubled)

The first syllable is יָ, which we have already learned produces a “y” with an accompanying “aw” sound (as in “yacht”). The pronunciation we have thus far, then, is “yă.”

The second syllable is הָוֶ, which produces an “h” with an accompanying oo sound (like the English word “who”). The combination of the first two syllables (יהוֶ) produces the pronunciation “yă-hoo.”

This brings us to the third syllable (הוּ). Because of the dot next to the *waw*, this letter/vowel combination needs some explanation. A “waw” with a dot next to it can be used to represent one of two things. It is either a *waw* with the vowel mark “cholam,” which is a vowel with the pronunciation of “oo,” or it is a *waw* with dagesh, which means that the *waw* is pronounced twice. How do we know which it is? Look at the bottom of the *waw*. A Hebrew letter can only accept *one* vowel sound. If there is a vowel mark at the bottom of the *waw*, then the dot is not a vowel mark, but it can only be a dagesh. Since there is a vowel mark of “qamets” below the *waw*, the dot must be a dagesh, which in turn means the *waw* must be pronounced twice. The first pronunciation of this *waw* will be at the end of the second syllable (הָוֶ) and the second pronunciation will be the beginning of the third syllable (הוּ).

Since the dagesh inside the ה requires that a *waw* be pronounced at the end of the second syllable (הָוֶ), we must redo the second syllable to be הָוֶה, which produces an “h” with not only an accompanying oo sound, but *also* an accompanying “w” sound. Notice in the above chart that we removed the dagesh. This is because, for illustration purposes, we are showing how the *waw* must be pronounced twice. You will therefore see a “waw pronunciation #1” (in the second syllable) and a “waw pronunciation #2” (in the third syllable). The resulting combination of the first and second syllables, יהוֶה, produces the pronunciation of “yă-hoow.” We are now ready to return to the third syllable.

The third syllable, הוּ, produces a “w” with an “aw” sound and the final *hey* is silent. This syllable produces the pronunciation of “wă.”

Putting all three syllables together, the Tetragrammaton, as vowel pointed by Brian Allen (יהוֶהוּ), should be pronounced “yă-hoow-wă.” As we pointed out previously (and even Brian Allen points this out in his study), the *waw* is doubled. It is written only once, but this “once” applies to the *Hebrew*, not transliterations into other languages. Therefore, this name, as vowel-pointed by Brian Allen, can only be transcribed into English as *Yahuwwah*. Since we need to write a name out in such a way as to represent how it is properly pronounced, and since the *waw* is pronounced

twice the way Brian Allen vowel-points it, he really needs to spell the Tetragrammaton as *Yahuwwah* in his English transliteration.

We are concerned that Brian Allen's citation of the "assimilation" rule from *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* is not only an example of a misapplied reference, but it may also exhibit the use of a ploy known as *virtue by association*. In *virtue by association*, an author quotes an ambiguous portion taken from a credible source, then offers his own summary explaining what the select quote "really means." Hence we get:

This means that in the sacred name *Yahuwah* the װ must be a consonant, because it closes a syllable and opens a new one, and therefore it becomes a strengthened consonant written װ, or doubled.⁴¹

Actually, the above conclusion means nothing because it is only an assumption based on a misapplied grammar rule that subsequently brought Mr. Allen to his conclusion.

To be fair, I believe I should concede that I can see how the װ in יהוה may carry some consonantal value, especially since it begins the second syllable. However, this in no way diminishes from the pronunciation *Yahweh*. To demonstrate what I mean by this, here are some examples of װ serving as a "semi-vowel" in which the final syllable is pronounced "...weh": מַסְוֶה (*masweh*, veil, #4533 in *Strong's*), מִקְוֶה (*miqweh*, pool, #4723 in *Strong's*) and נֶאֱוֶה (*naweheh*, suitable, beautiful, #5000 in *Strong's*). In each of these words, the *waw* (װ) functions as a semi-vowel.

We suggest that you carefully read Brian Allen's explanation, then re-read the quote from Gesenius to see if Mr. Allen's explanation lines up with what *Gesenius Hebrew Grammar* says. In the final analysis, Brian Allen's commentary proves nothing. We once again emphasize that the very obvious question that the reader needs to ask Mr. Allen is, "If you believe your citation from *Gesenius Hebrew Grammar* proves that the װ in the Tetragrammaton must be vowel-pointed as װ, then why did Gesenius, in his lexicon, write out the Tetragrammaton as יהוה (with the װ vowel-pointed as װ)?"

Irrelevant Commentary on Grammar Rules Proves Nothing About the Tetragrammaton

Brian Allen offers additional commentary, apparently designed to add weight to his belief that the Tetragrammaton is most accurately pronounced *Yahuwah*, but as we can see, it amounts to nothing more than irrelevant data:

When a Hebrew word ends "וה", the *waw* is almost always a consonant after such an arrangement. Example: *Strong's Hebrew Dictionary* lists no words that end with "uah" spelled in Hebrew וה.

⁴¹ From chapter 7 of Brian Earl Allen's study titled *Publish the Name Yahuwah*. This chapter may be read online by accessing the following URL: http://yahushua.net/YAHUWAH/chapter_07.htm. This commentary is also cited in a separate study titled *The Two Greatest Names of the Universe: Yahuwah (Elohim the Father) and Yahushua (Adonai the Son Mashiach)*, by John R. Hawkins, July 2008, p. 26.



The sound always ends וַע, וְעַה, וְאַה, However there is an exception to the waw being a consonant after such an arrangement, that is Eloahh #433 and is spelled וְלֹאֵה, but please notice the ו is dotted in the center, meaning that it is a consonant.

“A point in the bosom of ו is called *Mappiyq* (*mappeek*). It occurs only in the final vowelless letter of a few words, and we have it represented by *hh*,” *Strong’s Concordance, Introduction to the Hebrew Dictionary*.⁴²

We’re not entirely certain of what Brian Allen hoped to achieve with the above commentary. It offers nothing in the way of supportive evidence for how he believes the Tetragrammaton should be pronounced. The citation of irrelevant Hebrew grammar rules should not be confused with supportive evidence. It is possible that the final paragraph above, in which Mr. Allen calls the reader’s attention to the *mappiyq*, serves as a lead-in to his third and final “rule,” listed below. That third “rule,” as with his “Rule #2,” proves to be irrelevant.

Here is Brian Allen’s “RULE #3”:

RULE #3 Unless the ו is dotted with *Mappiyq*, “at the end of a word it is always a mere vowel letter” *Gesenius Hebrew Grammar* p. 81

Yahuwah וְיָהוָה fits all the Hebrew Grammar Rules!⁴³

Brian Allen’s “RULE #3” has no bearing on the pronunciation Yahweh versus *Yahuwah*. We agree that the final ה of יהוה is a silent vowel sound. It bears repeating that we have never denied the fact that the Tetragrammaton can be vowel-pointed in such a way as to produce the pronunciation *Yahuwah*. As Gesenius pointed out with his eight different ways of vowel-pointing the Hebrew word קָטַל, a Hebrew word or name can be vowel-pointed in many different ways, each with its own unique pronunciation. In view of the many different pronunciation options that exist for יהוה, it hardly makes sense to flaunt one as being the only one that “fits all the Hebrew grammar rules.” Not only did Gesenius point out various pronunciation possibilities for one Hebrew word, but he also listed the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton that he felt best reflects the one used by the ancients: וְיָהוָה (pronounced “Yahweh”). Do we lend our support to the pronunciation possibility offered by Gesenius or the one proposed by Brian Allen?

To this point, we have only examined Brian Allen’s explanations for why he believes the Tetragrammaton consists of three syllables. As we have seen, he overlooked the “exceptions to the rule,” resulting in the dissemination of false propaganda designed to promote his pronunciation

⁴² From chapter 7 of Brian Earl Allen’s study titled *Publish the Name Yahuwah*. This chapter may be read online by accessing the following URL: http://yahushua.net/YAHUWAH/chapter_07.htm. This commentary is also cited in a separate study titled *The Two Greatest Names of the Universe: Yahuwah (Elohim the Father) and Yahushua (Adonai the Son Mashiach)*, by John R. Hawkins, July 2008, p. 26.

⁴³ Ibid.

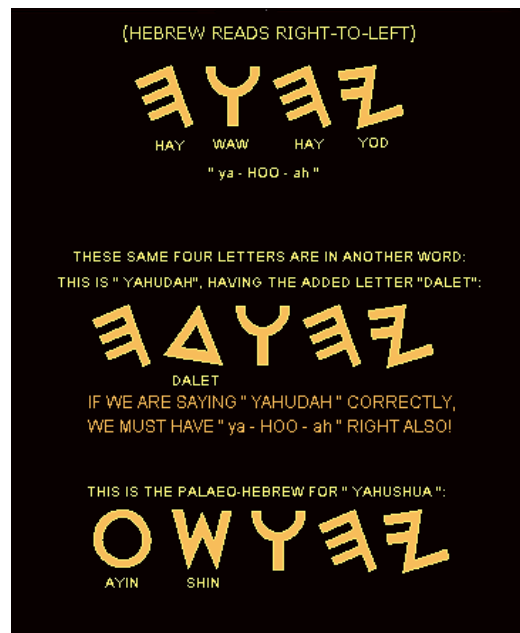


of choice. In our next section, we examine a widely-accepted teaching that the pronunciation of the final syllable of the Tetragrammaton should be based on the pronunciation of יהוּדָה (Judah).

5. Does the Name *Judah* (יהודה) Hold the Key?

In our concessions chapter (chapter one), we conceded that Hebrew masculine names may end with either an *-ah* or an *-eh* sound and we provided several examples to illustrate this fact. One of those examples is the name **Judah** (יהודה). The pronunciation of this name is vocalized differently by various scholars, including such forms as *Yehudah* and *Yahudah*. Author Lew White prefers the form *Yahudah*, and he maintains that this name is the “doorway” to knowing how to pronounce the Creator’s name, which he believes is most accurately rendered *Yahuah*. He writes:

Below, in tan lettering, is shown the palaeo-Hebrew script, which is the way the Name of **YAHUAH** looked as He wrote His personal Name in the stone tablets at Sinai with his own finger. It is read from right-to-left. The letters are YOD, HAY, UAU, HAY. Our letter, "W" is a new letter, and is really what it is called: a "double-U" (UU). There's actually no letter in Hebrew that matches it better than our letter, "U" - there's not a letter W in Hebrew, but you'll see it rendered "waw" and "uau". At the bottom, you see the Name of YAHUSHA, which is the real Name which most people have been taught is "JESUS". **In the center is the word "YAHUDAH", which serves as a litmus test for how to really pronounce the Name -- it contains all four letters of the Name, but has the letter "DALET" (D) inserted just before the last letter.** (The letter called "waw" is better described as "uau"):



"Whenever I said, Let me not mention Him, nor speak in His Name again, it was in my heart like a burning fire shut up in my bones. And I became weary of holding it back, and was helpless."
YIRMEYAHU 20:9

The word **YAHUDAH** is the doorway to the actual sound. The Hebrew script above is the "autograph", the personal inscription of the Name which Yahuah used at Sinai. "Modern" Hebrew letters are really Babylonian letters, brought back with the Yahudim after their captivity of 70 years. The written language of the Creator, especially how He



wrote His own Name with His finger, should be a subject of interest for those who claim to belong to Him.⁴⁴

The reasoning as expressed above by author Lew White is, on the surface, plausible. The Hebrew spelling of Judah (יהודה) is the same as the Tetragrammaton (יהוה) *except* for the fact that the name *Judah* contains the Hebrew letter known as the *dalet*. As plausible as Mr. White's reasoning may seem on the surface, it is nevertheless untenable and his argument ignores the rule of Hebrew linguistics that we examined in our previous chapter. That rule, as explained by Wilhelm Gesenius, is that one word can have many pronunciation possibilities. The correct pronunciation of words or names is not determined by cross-referencing similarly-spelled Hebrew words, but by the placement of vowel points. It is, in fact, vowel points that are at the heart of this particular issue because, as we have also seen, the Masorete scribes deliberately mis-vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton. Just as Brian E. Allen's lack of expertise in the area of Hebrew linguistics was exposed regarding his interpretation of a rule in *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, in the same way, Lew White exhibits a lack of understanding of the fact that the placement of letters in a Hebrew word does not determine which vowel "must" be associated with the consonant.

We understand that whenever we bemoan an author's lack of expertise in the knowledge of Hebrew linguistics, we open the door for others to scrutinize our own level of understanding. Our response is to reiterate the same reasoning that we provided in our previous chapter; namely, that renowned Hebrew scholar Wilhelm Gesenius knew how to pronounce the name commonly rendered *Judah* (יהודה), and he certainly understood that removing the *dalet* from this name results in the spelling of the Tetragrammaton. In spite of this understanding, Gesenius exhibited the understanding that the Tetragrammaton is pronounced *Yahweh* instead of *Yahuah*. Frankly, Lew White's conclusion begs the question of what does he know that Gesenius didn't? In spite of our not being qualified experts in the knowledge of Hebrew linguistics, what we are about to demonstrate is simple research that anyone can examine for themselves and see first-hand that the placement of letters within a word does not necessarily determine how that word must be pronounced.

The fact is, the placement of Hebrew letters in a word has no bearing on the vowels associated with those letters. For example, the Hebrew name אדם, vowel-pointed a certain way, produces the name *Adam*. When it's vowel-pointed another way, it becomes *Edom*. Both names are spelled the same in Hebrew, but they identify different people, depending on which vowel points are used.⁴⁵ We could cite many additional examples to demonstrate that Hebrew, like the English language, doesn't have set rules requiring what vowel sounds must be associated with the placement of certain consonants (e.g., *pint* vs. *pin*). We will cite one additional example to illustrate our point: The Hebrew word pronounced *nashah* (word #5382 in *Strong's*) is spelled נשח and means "to forget." However, if you vowel point this same word so as to pronounce it *nasheh* (word #5384), it carries the meaning of "rheumatic or crippled."

⁴⁴ From the article "The Name of the Creator of the Universe," by Lew White, printed from the Internet on 08/23/2005. This article may be read in its entirety by accessing www.fossilizedcustoms.com/name.html.

⁴⁵ The Hebrew name *Adam* is word #121 in *Strong's* Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary and is vowel-pointed אָדָם. The Hebrew name *Edom* is word #123 in *Strong's* and is vowel-pointed אֶדוֹם.

Lew White's reasoning seems to be as follows: Since יהוּדָה = Yahud**ah**, this means that all words ending with דָּה must be vocalized with a “-dah” ending. Regrettably, his premise seems to be based more on wishful thinking than on actual application of Hebrew linguistics rules. The Hebrew word *sâdeh* is an example of a word with the דָּה ending, yet it is pronounced –*deh* instead of –*dah*. This word, #7704 in *Strong's*, appears in Exodus 23:16 as בַּשָּׂדֶה (*basadeh*, which means “in the field”).

Still another Hebrew word with the –*deh* ending is the word *nêdeh*. This word, which is word #5078 in *Strong's* Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary, means “a bounty” and is spelled נָדָה. However, this same Hebrew word, vowel pointed as נִדְּהָ, is pronounced *niddâh*, which means “rejection” (word #5079 in *Strong's*). If the Hebrew letter *dalet* is the key to the sound that should be given to the final syllable of a word, and if that sound should be –*dah*, then would Lew White issue a correction to the Hebrew language regarding the word נִדְּהָ?


Lew White seems to attempt to present the view that a word spelled nearly identically to the Tetragrammaton will prove how the Tetragrammaton should be pronounced. In his case, he supports believing that the Hebrew name *Judah*, with its –*dah* ending (יהוּדָה) validates his pronunciation of choice, *Yahuah* (יהוה). But couldn't we make the same case with the Hebrew verb יהִגֶּה (pronounced *yehgeh*)? This word, as it appears in Psalms 1:2, means “he meditates”:

כִּי אִם בְּתוֹרַת יְהוָה תִּפְצֹו וּבְתוֹרָתוֹ יִהְיֶה יוֹמָם וּלְיָלָה:

This is the Hebrew text of Psalms 1:2, which reads, “But his delight is in the law of YHWH; and in His law doth **he meditate** day and night.”

The word יהִגֶּה in Psalms 1:2 is spelled the same as the Tetragrammaton with the exception of the Hebrew letter *gimmel* (ג) being used instead of the *waw* (ו). This word is clearly vowel-pointed so as to be pronounced *yehgeh*. Since this Hebrew word bears such a close resemblance to the spelling of the Creator's name, should we use it as a validation that the Tetragrammaton is more correctly pronounced *Yehweh*? Of course not; yet, this is the reasoning we are expected to follow with the Hebrew name יהוּדָה.

Regrettably, we are persuaded that the difficulty we are addressing in this chapter, as with our previous chapters, can be traced to non-Hebrew scholars who, for some strange reason, assume that they can assess how words are pronounced based on pre-determined patterns, which they proceed to define as “signs” or “keys” to understanding. This is not the way the Hebrew language works, but don't take our word for it; consult any qualified Hebrew scholar or professor. The Hebrew language, much like our own English language, does not have a consistent set of patterns dictating how certain words must be pronounced based on the arrangement of letters within a given word. Lew White's linguistic application of the Hebrew language is comparable to what some foreign novice might try to do with the English language. The novice might insist that the word “indict” must be pronounced “indikt” because that's how the endings of words such as “predict”



and “inflict” are pronounced.⁴⁶ Of course, the word *indict* is correctly pronounced “indite” (in·dīt’). Keep in mind that the rules governing the English language would normally allow the word *indict* to be pronounced just like it looks: in·dikt’; however, that is simply not the correct pronunciation of the word. In the same way, the rules governing the Hebrew language allow יהוה to be pronounced “Yahuah”; however, that does not mean this is the pronunciation that the Almighty gave to Moses.

As demonstrated with our analogy involving the English word “indict,” words in any language are simply pronounced the way a culture determines that they should be pronounced. Sometimes there is no “rhyme or reason” for why a word is pronounced a certain way. For example, why is the vowel “a” pronounced differently when you remove the letter “r” from the word “cart” (thus producing the word “cat”)? Using Lew White’s reasoning, shouldn’t the vowel sound for the letter “a” be pronounced the same for the word “cat” as it is for the word “cart”? After all, the only difference between the two words is the removal of a simple consonant! When we do “surface research,” it may seem reasonable to conclude that a vowel sound will not and cannot change by the removal of a single letter, such as a “d” or an “r.” However, when we dig deeper, we see that this is simply not how linguistics work, whether it be in the English language or the Hebrew language. In the words of common vernacular, “It is what it is.” Therefore, if the Tetragrammaton is correctly vocalized *Yahweh*, who are we to correct that original pronunciation? If the English word “indict” is correctly vocalized as “indite,” who are we to impose our impression of how the pronunciation rule *should* be applied to this word? Will linguists recognize our authority for “rules applications and enforcement” and subsequently alter the pronunciation of the word “indict” in order to meet our standard?

If we can understand that Hebrew linguistics really do allow for words to have more than one possible pronunciation, we can move forward in our quest to determine which pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton best reflects the one that the Creator gave to Moses. We can certainly understand Lew White’s desire to align the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton with a name that is spelled nearly identically, and although we appreciate the reasoning involved, and we certainly acknowledge that the pronunciation *Yahuah* is a linguistically possible pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton, at the same time, that is simply not the way Hebrew linguistics work.

⁴⁶ Other examples of the English language’s linguistic inconsistencies include “said” vs. “paid,” “instead” vs. “read,” “cough” vs. “though,” “took” vs. “spook,” “break” vs. “streak,” “beard” vs. “heard,” “mint” vs. “pint,” “ache” vs. “moustache,” “youth” vs. “south,” “daughter” vs. “laughter,” “horse” vs. “worse” and “doctrine” vs. “turpentine.” Shall we also mention “comb,” “tomb” and “bomb”? As you can see, the list of examples goes on and on.

6. Other Explanations For Why the Tetragrammaton (Allegedly) Must Have a “-WAH” Ending

A. Why John Hawkins Believes the Tetragrammaton Has a “-WAH” Ending

Although the reasoning supplied by Lew White in our previous chapter is the most common reason we have seen for believing that the final syllable of the Tetragrammaton is pronounced with an *-ah* sound, we have read additional commentaries that we feel are equally lacking in support. Nevertheless, we invite the reader to reach his or her own conclusion. To that end, we have decided to supply commentaries from both John Hawkins and Brian Allen.

What follows is the full quotation from a commentary taken from John Hawkins' book *The Two Greatest Names of the Universe: Yahuwah (Elohim the Father) and Yahushua (Adonai the Son Mashiach)*. Mr. Hawkins states (among other things) why he is persuaded that the Tetragrammaton has the “-wah” ending:

YaHuwah is used rather than Yahweh, for the sake of correct **(pronunciation and Meaning) Four (4) vowels** necessitates a **THREE (3) SYLLABLE PRONUNCIATION** Most people misunderstand the “W” that represents “V,V” or two “U,U” and is pronounced as a long U sound not silent, as some have the mistake. This is assured by more than ample examples written between 600-400 BC. from the Texts of Murasu, Elephantine and the Cuniform from different parts of the world when the name was spoken **profusely** by the Jews as **YaHu**. This represents the first **three** characters of the Father's name. **The last three characters of the Father's were used for Eve that means Life Giver was pronounced as chawah or hawah (to exist) with guttural sound removed. Thus the last three characters of the Father's name is life giver (chawah) so that all physical life comes from females, and the first three characters of the Father's name (YaHu) which is in the Savior's name who redeems us so that we can have Spiritual Life.** **YaHu** is established in several scriptures. First in Exodus 3:14 “**I AM (Yah)**”, also in John 8:58 “before Abraham was I AM (Yah). In Rev. 1 :11 saying “**I AM (Yah)** the Alpha and the Omega, the **First** and **Last**. . . Now notice the **second part** of the name **YaHU**. Isaiah 41:4. “I the Yahuwah and the **First** and **Last I am HU (He)**” Isaiah 43:25,” I even I, and **HU (He)** who blots out your transgressions. John 18:6 “I am **HU (He).**” – they fell to the ground. Thus **Yah** and **HU** combined is **YAHU**. If one would take the first two characters **Yah**, the middle two characters **HU** and the last two characters **wah** (Exhaustive Strong's Concordance) again one would have **YaHUwah** as it is pronounced. **Thus all physical and spiritual life comes from the Father, YaHUwah(to exist, to be) and Son, (YaHUshua (salvation).** This is confirmed by the great linguists; Matthew Stolpher, Michael Coogan, Albert Clay, F. Lutz, etc. The name Yahuwah, represents vowels as mentioned by Josephus. The first three characters are long pure vowels, and the last one, a short pure vowel. “**LORD**” which means **Baal**, was substituted for Yahuwah, as Satan's attempt to erase the name of Salvation. Jeremiah 23:27 “who **try to make My people forget My name** by

their dreams... as their father forgot My name for Baal” (LORD). Jeremiah 8:8 shows they changed the name of Yahuwah for LORD, “Look, the **false pen** of the **scribe** certainly works **falsehood**” In the Old Testament, “Yahuwah” is used 6,823 times, or around 7,000 times including New Testament quotes from the Old, with YAH and HU, shortened terms of Yahuwah used. In Leviticus, by skipping to every **7th Letter** the word **Yahuwah** is spelled out, which is beyond the capacity of man to orchestrate, and only Yahuwah could arrange.⁴⁷ (emphasis his)

We found the overall commentary above to be rather confusing; it contains false information interspersed with enough truth to throw off anyone who doesn’t take the time to check out the information provided instead of just taking the author at his word. For now, let’s focus on Mr. Hawkins’ explanation for how the Tetragrammaton must end with a “-wah” sound (we highlighted that portion in yellow for easy identification). Is it because of any linguistic rules that leaves Hawkins persuaded that the Creator’s name must end with a “-wah” sound? Is it because this is how His name was transliterated into other languages that retained this pronunciation? No, Mr. Hawkins reasons that it must be “-wah” because this is how the final syllable of Eve’s true Hebrew name, *Chawah*, is pronounced! This analogy would be akin to an attempt to prove that the name of the adversary, Satan, is most correctly pronounced with a “-man” ending because that’s the ending of Haman’s name. Or maybe it should be *Hatan* instead of *Haman* because that last syllable matches up with how the Adversary’s name is pronounced. Regrettably, this is the type of reasoning that John Hawkins uses to promote his belief that the Creator’s name ends with a “-wah” sound. Incredibly, some folks will actually accept and agree with this form of reasoning.

Thus, the teaching that the Creator’s name must end in -wah because that’s how Chawah’s name ends is based on nothing more than pure speculation combined with wishful thinking. Such a teaching might sound reasonable to some, but in the end it is traced to one’s own imagination without any factual basis. As the late journalist H. L. Mencken once said, “There is always an easy solution to every human problem--neat, plausible, and wrong.” Mr. Hawkins’ solution may seem neat and plausible, but unless he can provide any facts to validate his comment, it’s *wrong*.

Mr. Hawkins goes on to quote Isaiah, where the Almighty says, “I am HE.” Since the word for “he” in Hebrew is pronounced “HU,” John Hawkins finds this to be supportive evidence that the word “HU” must also form a part of the Creator’s name. With this logic, anyone referred to as “he” in Hebrew (pronounced “HU”), must also have a “HU” in his name. For example, when Peter told the men, “I am he whom ye seek” in Acts 10:21, we could take this to mean that his name must contain the “HU” sound. Also, in the book of Ruth, when Obed is listed as the father of Jesse, we read “He (HU) is the father of Jesse.” Shouldn’t the name *Obed* thus contain the word “HU”? Or, if we follow the reasoning presented by Mr. Hawkins, shouldn’t this mean that Yahweh (whose name is apparently *also* “HU”) is the father of Jesse?

With all due respect to Mr. Hawkins’ earnest attempts to justify his personal conclusion that the Creator’s name is most correctly vocalized *Yahuwah*, he only succeeds in validating the fact

⁴⁷ From *The Two Greatest Names of the Universe: Yahuwah (Elohim the Father) and Yahushua (Adonai the Son Mashiach)*, by John R. Hawkins, pp. 36-37, op. cit. Note: Sadly, Mr. Hawkins passed away on 02/12/2016.

that he *cannot* be a Hebrew scholar and that he is more satisfied with esoteric reasoning than with factual information.

B. Why Brian Allen Believes the Tetragrammaton Has a “-WAH” Ending

As untenable as John Hawkins’ reasoning for believing that the Tetragrammaton ends with a “-wah” sound is, it is no worse than the logic produced by Brian Allen. Whereas John Hawkins attempts to reveal a Scriptural connection, Brian Allen traces his reasoning to a form of the Creator’s name that was vocalized by American Indians, which he in turn traces to an island named Iona, which he maintains was originally named *Ioua*. This, reasons Brian Allen, leads us to the true pronunciation of the Creator’s name. Here is a portion of Mr. Allen’s explanation, taken from chapter 11 of his study:

But, before 1516 Roman scholars and theologians in the 1400's and 1500's used the form *Jova*, before that it was *Iova*, and before that it was *Ioua*, (Which form is seen in the Oxford English Dictionary under Jehovah). The sentence is in Latin, and reads:

"Non enim he quatuor liter יהוה si ut punctate sunt, legantur, **Ioua** reddunt: sed (ut ipsi optime nosti) Iehoua efficiunt]."

The sentence basically translates: "Not certain here of four letter יהוה (or) if in what manner to punctuate with marks the magnificent leger, **Ioua** redundant: apart from what manner He is able to do. Until then Iehova will suffice."

Also a book called *Origen's Hexapla* (not the original), but put together by Roman theologians in the 16th century, the text shows *Jova Deus*.

Also in 1278, Raymundus Martini came out with a book called *Pugiofidei* (Dagger of Faith), wherein he spelled the name *Yohoua*. Some time after, in 1303, Porchetus de Salvaticus completed a work called *Victoria Porcheti adversus impios Hebraeos* (Porchetus' Victory Against the Ungodly Hebrews). In this book he also referred to the name spelling it variously *Iohouah*, *lohous* and *Ihouah*.⁴⁸

To Mr. Allen’s credit, he ends chapter 11 by conceding that his sources are not very old, which certainly calls into question their reliability:

It shall now be admitted that these forms are not necessarily from the best of sources, nor are they very old, but are from Catholic writers during the Dark Ages. Nevertheless, they are forms that existed, and should be brought to light for what ever purpose they might serve. The Reformation did not begin until about 1353, with John Wycliffe.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ From *Publish the Name Yahuwah*, by Brian Earl Allen, chapter 11, copyright 2004. This study may be read online by accessing the following URL: http://yahushua.net/YAHUWAH/chapter_11.htm.

⁴⁹ Ibid.



Brian Allen’s reasoning, by his own admission, stems from recent and unreliable sources, yet he expects us to accept his reasoning as factual. He seems to be uncertain as to why he is even mentioning these sources; yet, if we don’t accept his conclusion, as we will read later, he is persuaded we are worshipping an idol instead of the true Creator of the universe. We will take a closer look at Brian Allen’s reasons for choosing the “-wah” ending over and above the “-weh” ending as we continue with this study. First, however, we would like to provide a response to those who involve Josephus in this discussion.

7. Why Involve Josephus in This Discussion?

Although first-century Jewish historian Flavius Josephus never transliterated the Tetragrammaton for his readers, he nevertheless provided a clue as to how the Name is pronounced when he wrote that it consists of four vowels. Brian Allen acknowledges Josephus' statement, but then (later) attempts to discredit him:

Josephus the Jewish historian seems to refer to the tetragrammaton as consisting of four vowels (*Wars of the Jews*, 5. 5. 7)⁵⁰

Mr. Allen doesn't provide his readers with the exact quote from Josephus, so here it is for us to review:

A mitre also of fine linen encompassed his [i.e., the high priest's] head, which was tied by a blue ribbon, about which there was another golden crown, in which was engraven the sacred name: **it consists of four vowels.**⁵¹

We are at a loss as to how anyone could write that Josephus "seems" to refer to the Tetragrammaton as consisting of four vowels, since that is what he plainly wrote. It is likely that Josephus understood the four letters of the Tetragrammaton as representing four vowels in the Hebrew language, even though he composed his work in Greek. Although, strictly-speaking, the Hebrew language is considered as having 22 consonants and no vowels, nevertheless, four of those consonants also serve as vowels. Wilhelm Gesenius, in his grammar book, explains:

Hence the letters ׀ and ׁ (with ׀ and ׁ, see § 23) are called *litterae quiescibiles*; when they serve as vowels, *quiescentes*, when they are consonants, *mobiles*. But the expression is not suitable; we should rather say, 'The vowel-letter is sounded as this or that vowel, or stands in place of the vowel.' The vowel-letters are also called by grammarians, *matres lectionis*, since they partly guide in reading the unpointed text.⁵²

Three of the above-referenced Hebrew letters make up the four-lettered name of our Heavenly Father (יהוה), with the ה appearing twice. If Josephus, like Gesenius, recognized those four Hebrew characters as representing vowels, then it would make sense for him to inform his readers of this fact. Early Greek writings indicate that they also understood that the Tetragrammaton consists of four vowels. Second century theologian Clement of Alexandria wrote, "The mystic name of four letters which was affixed to those alone to whom the 'adytum' was accessible, is called **Iaou** (Ιαου), which is interpreted, 'Who is and shall be.' The name of the Almighty, too, among the Greeks contains four letters."⁵³ Were the vowels Ιαου the four vowels to which

⁵⁰ Brian Earl Allen, *Publish the Name Yahuwah*, op. cit., chapter 7. Allen's statement also appears in *The Two Greatest Names of the Universe: Yahuwah (Elohim the Father) and Yahushua (Adonai the Son Mashiach)*, by John R. Hawkins, p. 25.

⁵¹ Flavius Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, Book V, ch. 5, sect. 7.

⁵² From *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, Translated by Benjamin Davies, LL.D, Ira Bradley & Co., Boston, MA, 1880, p. 37 (footnote #1).

⁵³ Cf., Clement of Alexandria *The Stromata*, Book V, ch. 6:34 (Codex Laurentianus V 3).

Josephus referred? One can only speculate. To be frank, those four vowels could just as easily have been Ιᾱυε or Ιᾱυα. Since Josephus didn't actually make any attempts to persuade anyone of how the Tetragrammaton is pronounced, it really doesn't follow that we should involve or implicate him in a discussion of this nature. Nevertheless, Brian Allen attributes another commentary from Josephus as representing evidence that he altered the Creator's name:

We already covered this in a previous chapter, but briefly, Josephus himself admitted to frequently altering Hebrew names, spelling them after the Greek fashion "to please [his Greek] readers." (*Antiquities* 1. 6. 1.)⁵⁴

The above comment is an obvious attempt by Brian Allen to malign the motives of Josephus in rendering pronunciations of names "after the manner of the Greeks." Let's take a look at what Josephus wrote to see if Mr. Allen is justified in portraying him in this light. In *Antiquities* 1. 6. 1., Josephus lists the names of Noah's descendants. As he winds down section 1 of this chapter, he explains how he renders the names:

And so many nations have the children and grand-children of Japhet possessed. Now when I have premised somewhat, which perhaps the Greeks do not know, I will return and explain what I have omitted; for such names are pronounced here after the manner of the Greeks, to please my readers; for our own country language does not so pronounce them; but the names in all cases are of one and the same ending; for the name we here pronounce Noaes, is there Noah, and in every case retains the same termination.⁵⁵

Those who read Josephus' commentary can, if they choose, pass judgment on Josephus for using the Greek pronunciations of Bible names. Of course, we could pass similar judgment on writers like Brian Allen, John Hawkins (and myself) for referring to the prophet Yirmeyahuw as "Jeremiah" instead of using the exact Hebrew transliteration. Josephus, in providing the Greek pronunciations of Bible names, was accommodating a Greek audience that was already familiar with those names from the Septuagint reading.⁵⁶ Rather than blaming Josephus for "altering names," we would be better served in blaming the Hebrew scholars who translated the Septuagint version over 350 years earlier! Of course, that is what many Sacred Name folks *do*, but that's another story. For the issue at hand, I believe we need to give Josephus a break because he never even gave his *opinion* of how the Name should be pronounced. He is a target for many Sacred Name believers, and I believe unjustifiably so – certainly in this instance.

⁵⁴ From *The Two Greatest Names of the Universe: Yahuwah (Elohim the Father) and Yahushua (Adonai the Son Mashiach)*, by John R. Hawkins, p. 25, and chapter 7 of Brian Earl Allen's original study titled *Publish the Name Yahuwah*, op. cit.

⁵⁵ Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book I, ch. 6, sect. 1.

⁵⁶ The Septuagint is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, generally agreed to have been completed around the year 250 B.C.E.

In his drive to denigrate the writings of Greek-writing scholars or historians while citing the rules from *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, Brian Allen overlooks the fact that Wilhelm Gesenius actually put a lot of stock in the names provided by the scholars who translated the Greek Septuagint version of the Bible. Please notice the following commentary:

The pronunciation of the Jews of the present day is very divergent. The Polish and German Jews adopt a worse one, partly like the Syriac, while the Spanish and Portuguese Jews, whom most Christian scholars (after the example of Reuchlin) follow, prefer a purer one, more in harmony with the Arabic.

The manner in which the Septuagint (LXX) wrote Hebrew proper names in Greek letters, furnishes an older and more weighty tradition. Several, however, of the Hebrew sounds they were unable to represent for want of corresponding characters in the Greek language, e.g., א, ע, ז, ק, שׁ (in which cases they made the best shifts they could).⁵⁷

Gesenius' above commentary about the Greek Septuagint version bears a stark contrast to the sinister image painted by Brian Allen, whose blanket distrust of anything "Greek" is reflected throughout his writings. For the record, Josephus' comment that the Tetragrammaton consists of four vowels is actually substantiated, not only by the Greek language, but by the *Hebrew* language as well. We have already seen how *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* validates Josephus' remarks about the four vowels. Other Hebrew grammar books do the same thing. Notice the following, as found in *The Alphabet: A Key to the History of Mankind*:

The Hebrew alphabet, as already mentioned, is purely consonantal, although four of the letters (*aleph, he, waw* and *yod*) are also employed to represent *long vowels*.⁵⁸

The four letters comprising the Tetragrammaton (*yod, heh, waw, heh*) are included with the above-listed letters of the consonantal Hebrew alphabet which are also used as vowels, thus corroborating Josephus' statement about the sacred name consisting of four vowels.

After Attempting to Discredit Josephus, John Hawkins Ends Up Agreeing With Him?

It is interesting to note that after John Hawkins quoted from Brian Allen's work, apparently agreeing with his treatment of Josephus, Mr. Hawkins later matter-of-factly affirms Josephus' statement about the Tetragrammaton containing four vowels as being correct. Here is what Hawkins wrote:

⁵⁷ From *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, Translated by Benjamin Davies, LL.D, Ira Bradley & Co., Boston, MA, 1880, p. 26.

⁵⁸ From *The Alphabet: A Key to the History of Mankind*, by David Diringer, Philosophical Library, New York, 1948, p. 264.



The name Yahuwah, represents vowels as mentioned by Josephus. The first three characters are long pure vowels, and the last one, a short pure vowel.⁵⁹

Since Mr. Hawkins ends up agreeing with Josephus, we hope you understand our questioning why he chose to involve Josephus in the first place!

⁵⁹ From *The Two Greatest Names of the Universe: Yahuwah (Elohim the Father) and Yahushua (Adonai the Son Mashiach)*, by John R. Hawkins, p. 37. Please keep in mind that here John Hawkins contradicts his Rule #1, which states, “This means that this letter [י] must be a consonant, and have a vowel following it such as 'hu', 'he', 'ha', etc.” On the one hand, Hawkins agrees with Josephus that the letters of the Tetragrammaton are vowels. On the other hand, he insists that the י must be a consonant.

8. Pronouncing the Ancient Hebrew

A. Quick Review of What We've Learned About the Modern Hebrew

We have already seen examples of how the Hebrew letter ך, when located in the middle of a word, can be followed by a vowel sound or, if punctuated with a “*simple shêwâ*,” it is silent and closes the syllable. This means that the Tetragrammaton, if not punctuated with the *simple shêwâ*, could conceivably be pronounced *Yahuwah*. Conversely, if it *is* punctuated with the *simple shêwâ*, it could be pronounced *Yahweh* or even *Yahwah*. Thus, from a purely linguistic standpoint, both forms represent possible pronunciations, depending on whether or not the inclusion of the *simple shêwâ* under the first ך of the Creator’s name (ך) represents an accurate pronunciation that traces to the original vocalization. Since both forms are linguistically possible within the framework of Hebrew grammar (depending on the vowel points used), it should be obvious that neither side has any business attempting to prove or disprove one pronunciation over the other based on Hebrew grammar rules. The fact is, we have no business attempting to re-invent the Hebrew language wheel, as some folks seem to be attempting to do. If we check out *The Berlitz Self-Teacher: Hebrew*, we can see many examples of words containing either a ך followed by a vowel sound or a ך that is silent and closes a syllable.

Given the fact that the pronunciations *Yahweh* and *Yahuwah* both represent linguistically possible pronunciations of the Tetragrammaton, the following question arises: How could someone who has learned basic Hebrew linguistics look at any non-vowel-pointed Hebrew word and *know* with certainty how it is pronounced? *The Berlitz Self-Teacher: Hebrew* not only offers examples of Hebrew words containing either a ך followed by a vowel sound or a ך that is silent and closes a syllable, but this Hebrew grammar book *also* presents examples of Hebrew words ending with a ך that has either an “-ah” sound or an “-eh” sound. How did the scholars who compiled this grammar book know that the word ending with a ך is correctly pronounced as “-ah” as opposed to “-eh” (and vice-versa)?

If we can understand that Hebrew linguistics really do allow for words to have more than one possible pronunciation, we can move forward in our quest to determine which pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton best reflects the one that the Creator gave to Moses. *The Berlitz Self-Teacher: Hebrew* provides transliterations beneath the Hebrew phrases designed to help novice students learn how to pronounce the words. What would happen if the transliterations were removed from the grammar book? What if the beginner could only see the printed Hebrew text without any vowel points to assist him or her? How would the student know whether a word with a final ך is pronounced with an “-ah” sound or an “-eh” sound? Answer: *He wouldn't!*

On the copy displayed below from *The Berlitz Self-Teacher: Hebrew*, I have blocked out the transliteration of most of the sentences. Can you read each Hebrew word and correctly pronounce each one? How would you *know* that your pronunciation is correct? How would you know your pronunciation is correct if there were no vowel points to help you?

52 THE BERLITZ SELF-TEACHER: HEBREW

שש. בטה ספרים יש על השולחן?
How many books are there on the table? Six.

שמונה. בטה עפרונות יש שם?
How many pencils are over there? Eight.

עשרה. בטה בקאות יש בקדר הנה?
How many chairs are there in this room? Ten.

בטה חלונות? בטה דלחות?
How many windows? How many doors?

בטה מלין מתליאביב לירושלים?
How many miles is it from Tel-Aviv to Jerusalem?


בבטה עולה ספר זה?
How much does this book cost?

זה עולה בשלושה דולרים.
It costs three dollars.

זה עולה בששים לירות. בבטה עולה שעון זה?
How much does this watch cost? It costs sixty pounds.

A LAST WORD ON NUMBERS:
All numbers come before the noun except "one".
Example: "Five hundred books" (hah-MEHSH meh-OHT s'fah-REEM)
"One book" ספר אחר (seh-fer eh-HAHU).

53 THE BERLITZ SELF-TEACHER: HEBREW



THINKING IN HEBREW
(Answers on page 283)

- מה אתה עושה? ספר מאחד עד עשרה.
- אני סופר: אחר שנים שלושה וכו'.
- מה עושה המורה? מה אני עושה?
- בטה בקאות יש בקדר הנה?
- היש שם שולחן?

If you would like to check out the correct pronunciations, move on to the next page!

The page displayed below presents vowel-pointed Hebrew text with both an English transliteration and translation beneath the Hebrew phrase. It is understood that beginning Hebrew students should be able to read and pronounce each Hebrew word by having already learned some basic pronunciation rules, including the use of vowel points. Would you have been able to accurately pronounce the Hebrew words if there had been no vowel points provided?

52 THE BERLITZ SELF-TEACHER: HEBREW

בְּמָה קְסָרִים יֵשׁ עַל הַשּׁוּלְחָן? שֵׁשָׁה.
 KAH-mah s'fah-REEM yehsh ahl hah-shool-HAHN? Shee-SHAH.
 How many books are there on the table? Six.

בְּמָה עֶפְרוֹנוֹת יֵשׁ שָׁם? שְׁמוֹנֶה.
 KAH-mah eff-roh-NOHT yehsh shahm? Sh'moh-NAH.
 How many pencils are over there? Eight.

בְּמָה בִּקְאוֹת יֵשׁ בַּחֲדָר הַזֶּה? עֲשָׂרָה.
 KAH-mah kis-OHT yehsh bah-HEH-dehr hah-ZEH? Ah-sah-RAH.
 How many chairs are there in this room? Ten.

בְּמָה חַלּוֹנוֹת? בְּמָה דְלָחוֹת?
 KAH-mah hah-loh-NOHT? KAH-mah d'lah-TOHT?
 How many windows? How many doors?


בְּמָה מָלִין מִתֵּל־אֲבִיב לִירוּשָׁלַיִם? שֵׁשָׁה עוֹלָה שְׁפָר זֶה?
 KAH-mah mee-LEEN m'Tel-Ah-VEEV lee-Yeh-roo-shah-LAH-yim? B'HAH-mah oh-LEH seh-fer zeh?
 How many miles is it from Tel-Aviv to Jerusalem? How much does this book cost?

זֶה עוֹלָה בְּשָׁלוֹשָׁה דּוֹלָרִים. זֶה עוֹלָה בְּשִׁשִּׁים לִירוֹט.
 Zeh oh-LEH besh-loh-SHAH doh-LAH-reem. Zeh oh-LEH b'shee-SHEEM LEE-roht.
 It costs three dollars. It costs sixty pounds.

בְּמָה עוֹלָה שְׁעוֹן זֶה? זֶה עוֹלָה בְּשִׁשִּׁים לִירוֹט.
 B'HAH-mah oh-LEH shah-OHN zeh? Zeh oh-LEH b'shee-SHEEM LEE-roht.
 How much does this watch cost? It costs sixty pounds.

A LAST WORD ON NUMBERS:
 All numbers come before the noun except "one".
 Example: "Five hundred books" חֲמִשָּׁה מֵאוֹת קְסָרִים
 (hah-MEHSH meh-OHT s'fah-REEM)
 "One book" קְסָר אֶחָד (seh-fer eh-HAHN).

53 THE BERLITZ SELF-TEACHER: HEBREW



THINKING IN HEBREW
 (Answers on page 283)

1. מָה אִתָּה עוֹשָׂה?
 קְסָר מֵאָחָד עַד עֲשָׂרָה. מָה אִתָּה עוֹשָׂה?
 S'foht meh-eh-HAHN ahd ah-sah-RAH. Mah ah-TAH oh-SEH?

2. אֲנִי סוֹפֵר: אֶחָד שְׁנַיִם שְׁלוֹשָׁה וְכוּ'
 Ah-NEE soh-FEHR: eh-HAHN sh'NAH-yim sh'loh-SHAH v'hoo.

3. מָה אֲנִי עוֹשָׂה?
 מָה עוֹשָׂה הַמֶּרֶז? מָה אֲנִי עוֹשָׂה?
 Mah ah-NEE oh-SEH? Mah oh-SEH hah-moh-REH?

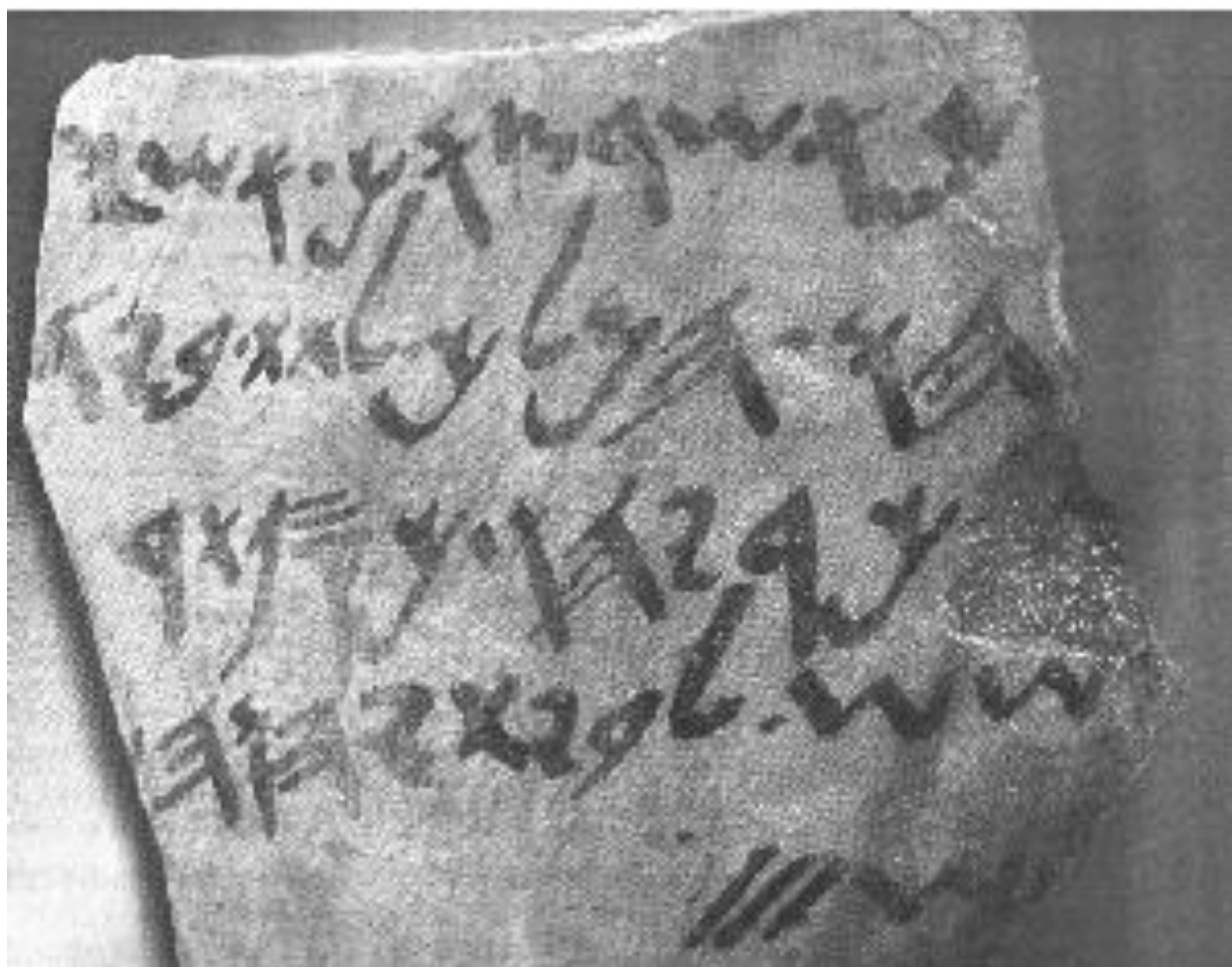
4. בְּמָה בִּקְאוֹת יֵשׁ בַּחֲדָר הַזֶּה?
 KAH-mah kis-OHT yehsh bah-HEH-dehr hah-ZEH?

5. הֵי שָׁם שוֹלְחָן?
 Hah-YEHS shahm shool-HAHN?

If we think it's difficult discerning how individual words are pronounced in Modern Hebrew with the vowel pointing provided for us, how can we succeed in pronouncing words written *without* the vowel pointings? How many of us are able to accurately read and pronounce the words on the above page without the vowel points? For those who would feel comfortable pronouncing the above words without the benefit of vowel pointings, let's take things to yet *another* level. How would you fare in pronouncing the above page if the Hebrew consisted solely of Paleo-Hebrew characters? This brings us to the theme of this portion of our study: *Pronouncing the Ancient Hebrew*. Hopefully, by now we can see the futility of looking at a Hebrew word and immediately recognizing how that word was pronounced in ancient times. Even when you think you know all the rules, do you know all the exceptions?

B. Time for Level 2 – Advancing from studying the pronunciation rules for Modern Hebrew to vocalizing the Paleo-Hebrew

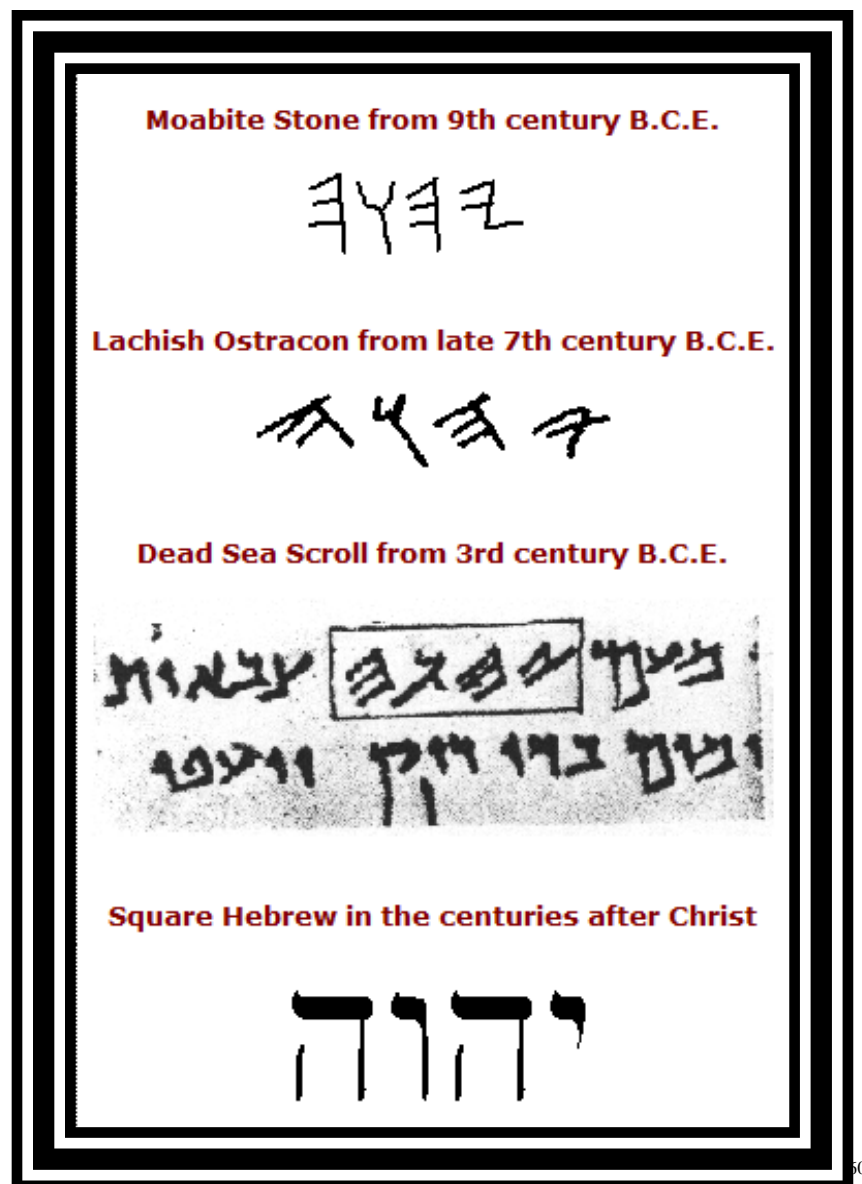
Not only do we find non-Hebrew scholars promoting their version of how the Tetragrammaton ought to be pronounced based on what is known as the “Modern Hebrew” characters, but we have also encountered writings (again, from non-Hebrew scholars) in which we are expected to trust the author’s conclusion because he goes all the way back to the ancient “Paleo-Hebrew” characters. The desired effect, of course, is that of stopping all arguments because, after all, they have gone to a more ancient source. But wait! *Of what benefit is going to the ancient Paleo-Hebrew to determine how the Creator’s name is pronounced if we don’t know how to vocalize words in Paleo-Hebrew?* Who can truthfully say they are expert linguists in Paleo-Hebrew? Can anyone transliterate the Hebrew text on the inscription displayed below? If so, how do we know we are pronouncing each word correctly?



Can you identify the Tetragrammaton where it appears on the above inscription?

Can you imagine someone pointing at the Paleo-Hebrew writing below while exclaiming, “There! See how the most ancient spelling is written? This PROVES that the original pronunciation is *Yahweh*!” Would you think to ask them how they base their knowledge of the

pronunciation of Paleo-Hebrew? Where exactly did they find the “Paleo-Hebrew Pronunciation Guide”?




Quite frankly, we are not willing to trust anyone who expects us to believe a certain pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton based on his or her understanding of Paleo-Hebrew grammar and linguistics *unless they can produce a suitable pronunciation guide to help us understand the basic pronunciation rules*. Does such a pronunciation guide exist? As we will see later, the answer is yes.

⁶⁰ This chart is taken from “The Tetragrammaton in the Los Lunas Decalogue,” found on the web at the following link: <http://www.mhccorp.com/archaeology/decalogue-tetragrammaton.html>.

C. How do we qualify as Hebrew scholars capable of determining the closest (or most approximate) pronunciation of אָהָה?

I am not a Hebrew scholar, but I have found that some folks in the Sacred Name Movement, who are equally unqualified, exhibit a sense that once they learn the Hebrew characters comprising the Tetragrammaton, they suddenly know all the rules of Hebrew grammar and linguistics. I compare this attitude to my study of the French language. Before I began studying French, my older sister taught me how to count to ten in that language. On the first day of class, the teacher asked if anyone already knew how to count to ten in French. Of course, I proudly raised my hand and counted to ten. Quite frankly, I felt as though I had already somewhat mastered French, which in turn meant that I really didn't even need to pay attention in class! A week later, we had our first quiz. We were told to get out a sheet of paper and conjugate the verb *être*. I suffered the embarrassment of having to turn in a blank sheet of paper. I learned a valuable lesson that day: I had lots of studying to do before I could hope to be even halfway proficient in the French language!

I have enough “bare bones” knowledge of Hebrew to know that there is no “rhyme or reason” for why certain letters convey certain sounds when forming certain words, and why those same letters convey other sounds when forming other words. For those who profess to have sufficient knowledge of Hebrew to “just know” that the Creator’s name should be pronounced a certain way simply by looking at non-vowel-pointed Hebrew characters, please explain why, in the following sample from *The Berlitz Self-Teacher: Hebrew*, one word ending with a ה is vocalized with an “-ah” ending, whereas another word ending with this same Hebrew character is vocalized with an “-eh” ending?



ATTENTION, PLEASE: You have just encountered two tenses, the past and the future. Simply learn these two words as they stand הָיָה (*hah-YAH*)—“was”, and יִהְיֶה (*ye-YEH*) — “will be.” The past and future tenses will be fully explained in later lessons.

אם אָהָה רֹוֹצֶה לָדַעַת אֵת הַתַּאֲרִיךְ, אָתָה מְבִיט בַּלּוּחַ.
Im ah-TAH roh-TSEH lah-DAH-ah ett hah-tah-ah-REEKH, ah-TAH mah-BEET bah-LOO-akh.

If you wish to know the date, you look at the calendar.⁴⁰

Can you explain why the word אָהָה is pronounced “ah-TAH,” whereas the word רֹוֹצֶה is pronounced “roh-TSEH”? Both words end with a ה, yet one ה carries the “-ah” sound and the other ה carries the “-eh” sound. Can you explain the pronunciation rule used in determining why those two words have the same ending, yet are pronounced differently?

⁶¹ From *The Berlitz Self-Teacher: Hebrew*, by the Staff of The Berlitz Schools of Languages under the direction of Robert Strumpfen-Darrie and Charles F. Berlitz, Grosset & Dunlap, New York, NY, 1953, p. 267.



D. Is the Greek language traced to the ancient Paleo-Hebrew?

Thus far into our study we have learned that a primary supporter of the form *Yahuwah*, Brian Allen, offers disparaging comments about anything remotely associated with the Greek culture. In a flier distributed by Brian Earl Allen in the late 1990's, he boldly (and cynically) asks, “***Can the Greek Language transliterate the name YAHUWAH and YAHUSHUA correctly?***”⁶² Prior to asking this question, Mr. Allen put forth considerable effort into discrediting anything associated with the Greek language. Here is another example of Mr. Allen's extreme skepticism of anything Greek, taken from chapter five of his study *Publish the Name Yahuwah*:

Though the Greeks loved to walk around in white pretentious robes, our Creator labeled them as a kingdom with spots "like a leopard." Dan. 7:6. Can the leopard change his spots? (Jer. 13:23). How then can they do good that are accustomed to do evil, including changing names? Our Creator knew that the Grecians would seek to remove the children of Israel far from their border! YAHUSHUA is coming back for a glorious congregation "not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Eph 5:27⁶³

The above is simply an unfair analogy—a misguided attempt to associate the prophecy of a coming world power (Greece) with a pagan language. The reference in Daniel 7:6 is indeed widely recognized as a reference to the Grecian empire—a nation represented in vision as a leopard; however, this vision should be viewed as a panoramic image of the nation as a swift conquering superpower, *not* as a derogation of its individual citizenry, its brightest scholars or its language. If such were the case, then please consider the United States of America in prophecy, notably in these unstable times when the Bible and even the notion of an intelligent Creator are under attack. Many consider the prophecy found in Micah 5:7-15 to include the United States of America, which is now widely regarded as a heathen nation, and a nation upon which the Almighty will “execute vengeance in anger and fury” (Micah 5:15). As the once-popular preacher Jimmy Swaggart used to boldly declare, “If the Almighty doesn't punish America for its sinful acts, He will have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah.” I was no supporter of Jimmy Swaggart Ministries and his aversion to Torah obedience, yet this one saying of his is something that rings more true with each passing day. The United States is a true “one nation under God.” The **God** of the United States of America is a peculiar God who, by the collective standards of its public schools, doesn't even exist. Indeed, the United States of America adequately fulfills the prophecy found in 2 Timothy 3:1-5:

¹ This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

² For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

⁶² A scanned copy of Brian Allen's flier appears in chapter 13 of this study.

⁶³ From chapter 9 of Brian Earl Allen's study *Publish the Name Yahuwah*. Chapter 9 is titled “Evidence for Yahweh: Several Early Greek Writers?” and may read in its entirety online by accessing the following URL: http://yahushua.net/YAHUWAH/chapter_09.htm.

- ³ Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are righteous,
⁴ Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of the Almighty;
⁵ **Having a form of piety, but denying the power thereof:**
 from such turn away.

Yes, the United States of America has a *form* of piety, proclaiming faith in a higher power on our money (“In God We Trust”), it resonates within the Declaration of Independence, and every United States President must place his left hand on a Bible when taking the oath of office, swearing to faithfully execute the office of President and to the best of his ability preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States of America “so help me God.” At the same time, that same President would have to acknowledge that the nation he leads teaches its children that we all evolved from a primordial soup millions of years ago—not from the Creator as presented in the Bible on which his hand was so solemnly laid.

Interestingly, a few days after I posted our most recent update to this study (August 16, 2022),



the local TV news station here in North Texas carried a report of an unusual state law that took effect in 2021, but no one took much notice until 2022. The law? Texas schools are required to display “In God We Trust” posters if they are donated (Senate Bill 797). So if you attend public school in Texas, please consider this: When you enter your school, you are greeted with a bold “**In God We Trust**” sign, but then your science instructor teaches you that we weren’t created at all—we *evolved*! What kind of “trust” is *that*?

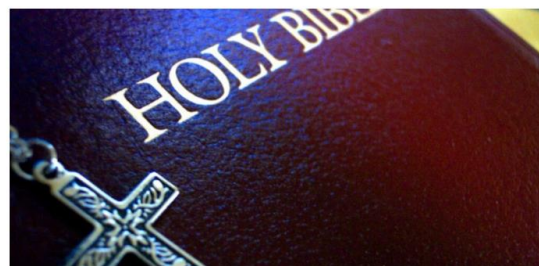
But even more stunning was the TV station’s *very next* report; it was about a school district’s decision to pull certain books, *including the Bible*, from their library. Yes, that’s the nation we live in!


Could 2 Timothy 3:5 be a prophecy of the United States of America? A nation that on the one hand acknowledges and swears by a higher power, but then teaches that there is no higher power (and removes those books that say otherwise)?

Brian Allen, who openly mocks anything “Greek,” is an inhabitant of the very heathen United States of America. As such, can we trust that *anything* he says or writes is true? How could anyone living in such a heathen nation as the USA have the *foggiest notion* of how to pronounce the Creator’s name? But wait! Please consider the fact that Brian composes his studies in the

Texas School District Pulls The Bible And More From School Libraries

By ERIKA HANSON | PUBLISHED 1 DAY AGO





English language, a language widely understood as being the most corrupt language on the face of the earth. English is often termed a melting pot of other languages. The resulting brew has us English speakers uttering the name of a different heathen idol with nearly every sentence.⁶⁴ If we pursue the same approach with writings composed in English by authors residing in the USA that Brian Allen takes with writings composed in Greek, then we should automatically reject as rubbish *anything* that Brian Allen writes. In a classic case of the pot calling the kettle black, Brian Allen's own writings must be expunged along with the ones he rejects.

One might also ask Brian how he can be absolutely certain the first syllable of the Creator's name is pronounced *Yah*.

Let's also remember that in spite of Mr. Allen's adamant stand against anything "Greek," the author of the Hebrew grammar book from which he derives his "rules" governing the correct way to pronounce the Tetragrammaton, Wilhelm Gesenius, *extols* the Greek Septuagint. In fact, as we read in our previous chapter, Gesenius wrote, "The manner in which the Septuagint (LXX) wrote Hebrew proper names in Greek letters, furnishes an older and more weighty tradition." Wilhelm Gesenius obviously had a great deal more respect for the Greek connection to the Hebrew Bible than Brian Allen does. What did Gesenius know about the Greek language that Brian Allen doesn't? As the title of this section suggests, Gesenius understood that the Greek written language was borrowed from the ancient Paleo-Hebrew. As such, if Greek characters were used to transliterate a name from Hebrew to Greek, those characters could very well be the key to unlocking how that name was originally pronounced in the Hebrew language, which would in turn offer us a clue as to how words were pronounced in the ancient Hebrew tongue. But how did the Greek language come from Hebrew?

Edward Horowitz, in his book *How the Hebrew Language Grew*, offers in layman's terms an in-depth explanation of how Paleo-Hebrew is the foundation of the Greek language. Although the following excerpt is lengthy as far as excerpts go, it is very enlightening and well worth the time it takes to read it:



THE GREEKS LEARN TO USE THE ALPHABET

The first great nation the Phoenicians met as they travelled westward were the Greeks. They were impressed by the power, the beauty and the music of the Greek language. It did not take long for the Phoenicians to discover to their complete and utter amazement that this intelligent and gifted race could not read or write.

A group of Phoenician traders were exchanging wares with some Greek merchants. The Phoenicians wanted the Greeks to write records of the transaction. The Greeks looked up in astonishment and said, "What do you mean—write?" The Phoenician said, "You know, write down what we bought and sold." The Greeks said again, "What do you mean—write?" After this had gone on for a while it dawned on the Phoenicians that this people did not know what writing was.

⁶⁴ Just to list a few examples: *Vitamin* is derived from the Egyptian deity *Amon*. Words like *martial*, *March* and *marshall* are taken from *Mars*, the deity of war. *Chronology* is derived from *Chronos*, the deity of time. *Money* is derived from *Juno Moneta*. *Cereal* is derived from *Ceres*. *Morgue*, *morbid* and *mortuary* are derived from *Mors*, the deity of death. There's even a deity named *Set*.

The Phoenicians then explained that writing meant putting down on papyrus what had been said. The Greeks were now eager and willing to learn. "Show us how and we will write."

The Phoenicians then said, "Well, how do you say 'big' in Greek?" "Mega." "Good," said the Phoenicians. "For 'M' we will make a picture of a wave. For 'G' we will make a picture of a camel's hump. Thus we have   and whenever you see these signs it will mean 'big.'"

"How do you say 'beautiful'?" "Kalon" was the answer. The Phoenicians said, "We will make two signs, one for K and one for L."

"Oh, how wonderful," said the Greeks. "Show us more, teach us all the signs for all the sounds!"

The Phoenicians taught them all the twenty-two letters of their alphabet. The Greeks went off by themselves and played this fascinating new game, the game of writing their beautiful Greek language with these strange-looking letters. After a while, they called over the Phoenicians and said, "Where are the letters for the vowel sounds? You know, a, e, i, o, u, etc.?" "Vowels?" said the Phoenicians, "We never use vowels in writing, they don't count at all, you don't really need them."

The Greeks seemed puzzled at this answer. They were not at all satisfied. However, they again went off by themselves and tried to write Greek. Finally, in desperation, they begged the Phoenicians to come over.

"Something is wrong," they said, "perhaps you can write Phoenician without vowels, but it is simply impossible to make sense out of Greek written without vowels.

Now, what was the trouble? The Phoenicians soon found out.

THE GREEKS NEED PICTURES FOR THE VOWELS

In Greek as in other European languages, including, of course, English, the meaning of the word depended upon the vowels as well as the consonants. Different vowels when used with the very same consonants would create entirely different words having altogether different meanings.

Since you probably don't know Greek very well, I will illustrate this in English. Let us take the two consonants R—D.

Look what can happen:

R	ai	D	y
	ea		
	ee		
	ea		
	e		
	i		
	i		
	oa		
	o		
	u		

By changing the vowels of these two consonants we will get many, and for the most part entirely unrelated words. There is a difference between a "reed," "red" and "ride," and it would be altogether impossible or extremely difficult to read a writing made up only of consonants, and which omitted the vowel letters of those words. The Greeks simply had to have vowel letters.

However, just look at Hebrew. Take the word קדש. We can change the vowels of these consonants in many different ways, just as we changed the vowels of "R——D," and we will also get many words.

However, all the words coming from קדש namely

- קדוש - a holy person
- קדוש, קדושה - holiness
- קדיש - the mourner's prayer
- קדוש - prayer declaring the Sabbath or festival night to be holy

have the same essential idea in them, namely "Holiness"

It is for this reason that it is quite possible, in fact, easy for a person with a fair knowledge of Hebrew to read Hebrew without vowel signs. Hebrew got along without any vowel signs for many centuries. It is quite impossible to do the same in Greek or English. The Hebrew vowel signs we now use were invented quite late and first came into use in the seventh century of the common era.

Actually, English does also use somewhat the principle of Hebrew, i.e., changing vowels to get different shades of the same idea. Several of the R——D group are actually connected: thus from "ride" arose "road" (where one rode). Raid was generally a particular kind of RIDE. Ready probably meant being prepared for the road.

THE GREEKS ADD VOWEL LETTERS

The Greeks were a clever people and solved this difficult problem very easily. They noticed that the Hebrew alphabet had several sounds that did not exist in Greek, so they took the letters which they did not need and used them to indicate vowels.


For example: the letter ׀ is a very deep guttural sound which the Greek could not use because he did not have that sound in his language. They took the ׀ which in old Hebrew was written like an "O" and used it—you can easily guess—for the vowel sound "O"—which value it still has in English today. In this fashion, Hebrew ׀ became A, the ׀ became "E," the ׀ an "AY" sound, and the ׀ was used for the "EE" sound.


This adaptation by the Greeks of letters for the vowel sounds was a great and momentous forward step. With it the alphabet passes from the exclusive possession of the Semitic group and becomes an instrument useful for the writing of the Indo-European languages. In a certain sense the Greeks can be regarded as co-creators of the alphabet as used at present.


The old Hebrew alphabet is widely different from our present Hebrew writing. It was Ezra the Scribe, who about 440 B.C.E. adopted


our present modern square Hebrew writing. It was the old Hebrew alphabet that the Greeks borrowed and passed on to Latin, and it is the old Hebrew alphabet that the Greek most closely resembles.


Greek used to be written as Hebrew is, from right to left. When the order was changed, that is when they began to write from left to right, they turned many letters around. If you turn around some of the old Hebrew letters you will see that they are almost identical with our present English letters.


 —is old Hebrew א. Set it up straight; it is an “A.”


 —is old Hebrew ד. Turn it sideways and curve it slightly; it is a “D.”


 —is old Hebrew ה. Turn it around; it is “E.”


 —is old Hebrew ז. Turn it around; it is “Z.”

 —is old Hebrew מ. It resembles English “M.”

 —is old Hebrew ל. The Greeks used it for the sound “O”; they had no ו sound.

 —is old Hebrew כ. It resembles English “Q.” כ is a “K” sound made deep in the throat and in English it is used only in the combination “QU.”

 —is old Hebrew ט, having almost exactly the same form as an English “T” has now.

 —is old Hebrew ש. Turn it sideways and curve the line; it will become an “S.”⁶⁵

We cannot emphasize enough the significance of the above information supplied by Edward Horowitz because it reveals that, contrary to the propaganda spread by Brian Allen and those who continue to disseminate his teachings, the Greek language is the key to understanding how words (and names) were pronounced in ancient Hebrew. Indeed, instead of demonizing the Greek language we should be looking to it for the pronunciation clues that we seek. How did the Greek culture write the name of the Creator? How did they pronounce it?

⁶⁵ From *How the Hebrew Language Grew*, by Edward Horowitz, KTAV Publishing House, Inc., New York, NY, 1960, pp. 14-19.

9. “Can the Greek Language Transliterate the Name יהוה Correctly?”

A. Are Greeks “hostile witnesses” to the pronunciation of the Name?

We have thus far demonstrated the great, though flawed, effort that *Yahuwah* proponent Brian Earl Allen puts forth in attempting to discredit anything associated with the Greek language. It should come as no surprise that, based on his abuse of *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, Brian Allen is to a large extent unfamiliar with Hebrew linguistics. Nevertheless, to our amazement, students who are apparently qualified in the area of Hebrew linguistics have more or less echoed Mr. Allen’s disdain for the Greek language. Yoseph Viel, who claims to speak both Hebrew and Greek fluently, writes the following:

You wouldn't ask a German man for advice on how to speak Chinese or a Russian for advice on how to speak Swahili. So why do some people consult Greek for how to say the Hebrew Name? It makes no sense.⁶⁶

Notice Mr. Viel’s clever transition from asking a man for advice on how to speak a certain language to asking a man for advice on how to say a *name* in another language. This is known as a *red herring*, which is a term used for distracting others from the main argument. We can hopefully all agree that it is one thing to know how to speak a foreign language and something entirely different to know how to say a foreigner’s *name* in his or her native language. For example, we don’t need to know how to speak the Hindi language to know how to pronounce the name of India’s famous non-violent leader, Mahatma Gandhi. Must being fluent in Hebrew be a prerequisite for knowing how to speak the Creator’s name? While knowledge of Hebrew is certainly helpful, at the same time, if an ancient Greek traveler was an ear-witness to a native Hebrew-speaker vocalizing the Creator’s name, should we dismiss the ear-witness’s testimony because he doesn’t speak Hebrew? According to Yoseph Viel, the answer is an unqualified yes.

Aside from Mr. Viel’s red herring argument above, we feel that we should also point out that, presuming he has extensive knowledge of the Hebrew language, this does not mean he has a lot of common sense, which is yet another factor that must be considered when weighing all the evidence. We are certain that Mr. Viel’s persuasive efforts are successful in reaching those who do not pursue a more in-depth study of linguistics (Hebrew or Greek) and especially those who have a penchant against anything Greek; however, as we demonstrated in our previous section, the Greek language in fact holds the key to how words and names were pronounced in that most ancient form of Hebrew, the *paleo-Hebrew*. We understand that citing Horowitz’ book *How the Hebrew Language Grew* and *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar* as our supportive evidence may not be sufficient for those who have already made up their minds that anything Greek must be evil. For those who remain skeptical of the information that we have thus far provided, we thought that a few thought-provoking questions might help to make our point a little clearer. Here are some things to think about:

⁶⁶ Yoseph Viel, *The Complex Name of the Almighty*, 2010, p. 48. Note: Mr. Viel makes a case for the pronunciation “Y’howah,” largely based on the vowel-pointing used within a medieval text known as *Segulah Niphlah*.

1. What is the name of the leader of the terrorist movement generally considered responsible for “9/11”?
2. Who did President Reagan admonish to “tear down that wall”?
3. What is the name of the Iraqi dictator who was captured, then later hanged, for crimes perpetrated upon Iraqi citizens?

The answer to the first question is *Osama bin Laden*. However, how do we know his name is *truly* pronounced *Osama bin Laden*? Aren’t we relying on reports from the secular press and otherwise unfaithful sources for this information?

The answer to the second question is *Mikhail Gorbachev*. Gorbachev was the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from 1985 until 1991, but how can we know that his name is *truly* pronounced “Mikhail Gorbachev”? Can we trust the Communists to correctly disseminate this man’s name to the rest of the world? For that matter, can we trust our secular media to provide us with the correct pronunciation of his name?

The answer to the third question is Saddam Hussein, the deposed Iraqi dictator. Using the same reasons listed above, how do we know the pronunciation of this famous leader’s name has been correctly transmitted to us?

We hope you can by now at least understand the point that we are trying to make. It seems that we trust the media every day with the names of world-famous leaders, never questioning whether or not the pronunciations are generally accurate (we understand allowing for differences in dialect). When it comes to the possibility of the ancient Greek culture holding the key to the pronunciation of the Creator’s name, however, many Sacred Name believers balk. Is their rejection of the ancient Greek culture based on sound reasoning or is it based on a pre-formed bias? Regrettably, our experience indicates that it is the latter.

To assist you with better understanding and visualizing the obstacle that modern linguists are faced with in attempting to pronounce a name written out as 𐤀𐤓𐤁𐤏, especially if they are not familiar with the characters and the sounds they represent, try pronouncing the following names in their respective native tongues:

1. 胡锦涛
2. ي التكريت المجيد عبد حسين صدام
3. Михаил Горбачёв
4. בנימין נתניהו
5. ن لاد بن عوض بن محمد بن أسامة



To see the generally agreed-upon pronunciations of the above names, see the footnote below.⁶⁷

The above names represent just a few examples of the names of foreign leaders that we have heard many times over the radio and on TV. There really haven't been any debates over the accuracy of the general pronunciations that we have heard over the airwaves, and this is probably due to the likelihood that the pronunciations we have heard are correct. However, are we *sure*? If we can trust secular American reporters to correctly transliterate the names of these famous men, what purpose would Greek reporters have for mis-transliterating the Creator's name? It would be as illogical as me attempting to distort the pronunciation of the name of the chief idol worshipped by the Greeks. What purpose would it serve?

If we can trust the secular media to correctly transliterate 胡锦涛 as *Hu Jintao*, then on what basis should we harbor such distrust for the way the Greek culture transliterates אֱלֹהִים?

Brian Allen isn't the only Bible student promoting distrust for transliterating the Creator's name into Greek.

B. What is the name of this ancient Hebrew character? א

The Paleo-Hebrew character א is named the "heh," which is the equivalent of the modern Hebrew character ה. We have previously seen that the Hebrew ה can carry either the "-eh" sound or the "-ah" sound, and the same is true for the more ancient character א. What did Edward Horowitz say the Greeks did to this ancient Hebrew character? Did he claim that they altered the pronunciation? No, not at all.

According to Horowitz, the Greeks, instead of altering the pronunciation of the Hebrew א, turned it around to produce the Greek character that we know as the letter "E." In Horowitz's words, "א —is an old Hebrew ה. Turn it around; it is an 'E.' The Greeks used it for the vowel 'E' since they had no need for it as a consonant."⁶⁸ Those who have not studied foreign languages may, at this point, become confused. After all, the letter "E," in the English language, doesn't normally carry the "-eh" sound, does it? However, if you have studied Spanish, you know that, with very few exceptions, the letter "E" in that language is consistently vocalized as "eh" or "ay" as in "say." In fact, the English word "hey" carries this same "-eh" sound. In the Greek language, the backwards א at first represented either the "-eh" sound or the "-ah" sound.

Some folks are of the opinion that the character א can only represent one vowel sound, not two, so they reject the notion that this same Hebrew character could be used to denote both an "-ah" sound and an "-eh" sound within the same word. This form of reasoning would be like saying the vowel "e" in the English word "secret" can only be pronounced one way. Hopefully, we all

⁶⁷ 1. Hu Jintao (President of the People's Republic of China); 2. Saddam Hussein Abd al-Majid al-Tikriti (Iraqi dictator and President of Iraq from 1979 - 2003); 3. Mikhail Gorbachev (General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from 1985 until 1991); 4. Benjamin Netanyahu (former Prime Minister of Israel); 5. Osama bin Mohammed bin Awad bin Laden (founder of the Al-Qaeda terrorist network).

⁶⁸ From *How the Hebrew Language Grew*, op. cit., p. 18.

know better. The following commentary from Aramaic scholar John Wheeler exhibits this understanding of the ancient א:

By 1000 BC the Phoenicians and other Semites (including no doubt the Hebrews) were using a sort of backwards E to represent the letter *he*. The Greeks adopted the form as such, calling it epsilon, and eventually reversed the form. This came in time via Latin into English as our E. Yes, this is the letter and the sound at the end of IAUE, but the Semitic *he* didn’t always mark an “e” vowel – it could represent one of the “a” vowels, for example.⁶⁹

Since the ancient א could be used to represent either an “-ah” sound or an “-eh” sound within the same word, you might wonder how one can know for sure whether the Tetragrammaton was pronounced “Yahweh,” “Yehwah” or even “Yehweh.” It is only through later transcriptions in the Greek language that we obtain any clues as to how the first א and the last א were pronounced.

While giving a presentation on this topic in May 2010, a member of the audience raised an interesting possibility that maybe slight variations in the way the א was written could offer us a clue that different shapes of this letter might suggest differing pronunciations. He specifically referred to the Tetragrammaton that was found inscribed inside an ancient amulet. The discovery of this ancient amulet, which is made from silver and was rolled into a tiny scroll, was reported in the June 1987 issue of *Reader’s Digest*. The amulet contains what is known as the “Priestly Benediction” (Numbers 6:24-26) in a microscopic etching, and according to the *Reader’s Digest* article, it was discovered in Cave 25, just west of Jerusalem’s Old City, in July 1979. The Tetragrammaton appears three times in this benediction and one of those instances, greatly magnified, appears at the front of the *Reader’s Digest* article, as displayed below:



The gentleman who raised the question at my presentation pointed out that the two א’s in the above etching have slight differences. He is correct. The first א (when reading from right to left) has a short bar at the top and a long bar at the bottom. The final א has a long bar at the top and a short bar at the bottom of its character. Could the first א be a means of denoting the vowel-sound “-ah” and the second one a means of expressing the “-eh” sound? The man’s suggestion was an intriguing one. However, I was concerned for two reasons. For one, the only etching from the amulet that I had to look at was the one appearing in the *Reader’s Digest* article. How could I know whether this same pattern was repeated with the other two instances of the Tetragrammaton? My other concern is the fact that I have seen photographs of other instances of the Tetragrammaton in various paleo-Hebrew inscriptions, and the way in which the letter א was written seems to be

⁶⁹ Posted by John Wheeler, the editor and co-publisher of *The Music of the Bible Revealed*. Mr. Wheeler’s full commentary may be read by accessing the following link:
<http://lcscribe.wordpress.com/2011/04/03/the-new-covenant-aramaic-peshitta-text-with-hebrew-translation/#comment-163>

more an issue of handwriting skills than an intentional effort to produce a slightly different א character denoting a different vowel sound.

I eventually came across a web site that displays the unrolled silver scroll, allowing me to view all three instances of the Tetragrammaton.⁷⁰ The character א appeared to be too similar in each of the instances for me to reach a conclusion that this character would have been deliberately altered so as to produce an “-ah” sound versus “-eh” sound. In an effort to demonstrate what I mean, I copied (to the best of my ability) one of the transcriptions for you to see for yourself. While I’m not about to claim to be an expert transcriptionist, at the same time, I am able to illustrate that the length of the “bars” on the ancient א had nothing to do with the vowel sound that they produced. Here is a reasonable facsimile of what I saw:



When we sort out all the facts about the Tetragrammaton from its earliest stages, we really do not have ironclad information validating one pronunciation over another. Those who favor the form *Yahuwah* would naturally claim that both א characters brought forth the “-ah” sound and those who support the form *Yahweh* uphold the first א carrying the “-ah” sound and the second א conveying the “-eh” sound. As you might imagine, we are also aware of a small contingency of individuals who support the pronunciation *Yehuwweh*; they would support believing that the א consistently represents the “-eh” sound. We have previously displayed examples from *Strong’s Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary* in which the first syllable of the name *Yehday* (word #3056 in *Strong’s*), even though it begins with the “yod-heh” combination, is pronounced *yeh* instead of *yah*. Wilhelm Gesenius, in his supplementary *A Course of Exercises in Hebrew Grammar*, provides another example of a Hebrew word whose first syllable is pronounced *yeh*: *Yehdoph*. Here is the pertinent quote from Gesenius’ work:

Compare the punctuation of these letters in the following examples, in which they retain their power as consonants: **הֵם** *hēm*, **יְאֹחָב** *yěA-tābh*, **יְעֹסֵף** *yē-ʾsōph*, **יְהֹאֵל** *vʾēAōth*, **יְהֹדָף** *yěh-dōph*, **יְהֹרָג** *yă-h^arōgh*, **אֶחָל** *ʾēkhōl*, **וָן** *vân*, **דַּי** *dăy*, **יָהּ** *yâh*.⁷¹

While we do not personally believe there is linguistic evidence supporting the *yeh* pronunciation of the first syllable of the Tetragrammaton in ancient times, we offer the above information to illustrate the fact that such a pronunciation possibility certainly falls within the scope of Hebrew linguistics. This is an opportune moment to interject that we believe there is sufficient linguistic “room” to allow for each of the pronunciation possibilities that we have presented (*Yahweh*, *Yahuweh*, *Yahwah*, *Yahuwah*, *Yehowah*, and even *Yehuwweh*); in view of these linguistic possibilities, it should go without saying that we would all be better served by exhibiting greater understanding and support for each view instead of flaunting our opinions over and above

⁷⁰ I found this web site at the following link: <http://www.divine-name.info/archaeology/zilverrol.JPG>.

⁷¹ From *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, 11th ed., supplement *A Course of Exercises in Hebrew Grammar*, Section IV, “Quiescence of the Feeble Letters,” Translated by T. J. Conant, Gould, Kendall, and Lincoln, Boston, MA, 1839, p. 18.

those of others. Not only would we be better served by taking this approach, but we would show ourselves to be better *servants* as well.

For now, as we prepare to move to our next chapter, I believe we need to dispel the predisposition that anything “Greek” is inherently evil and cannot be trusted. The Greek culture, in spite of being well-known for its heathen idol-worshipping customs (as is the USA), became the medium for transmitting and transliterating the Hebrew language to the world. Remember what Horowitz wrote:

This adaptation by the Greeks of letters for the vowel sounds was a great and momentous forward step. With it the alphabet passes from the exclusive possession of the Semitic group and becomes an instrument useful for the writing of the Indo-European languages. In a certain sense the Greeks can be regarded as co-creators of the alphabet as used at present.⁷²

Like it or not, it was the Greek culture that contributed to the development of our own language, and it was the Greek culture that helped to preserve the pronunciation of the Hebrew א. Did this same Greek culture preserve the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton? Can the Greek culture correctly transliterate the pronunciation of יהוה?

⁷² From *How the Hebrew Language Grew*, op. cit., p. 18.

10. How Did Ancient Greeks Pronounce the Tetragrammaton?

We have already examined credible testimony that the language of the ancient Greeks was borrowed from the *paleo-Hebrew* language; we have also seen that it is as unreasonable to believe the Greek culture would deliberately subvert the Creator's name as it is to believe that our own culture would deliberately subvert the names of foreign leaders and dignitaries. While we're not about to portray the Greek culture as being the epitome of righteousness and purity in the eyes of the Almighty, at the same time it is just as unlikely that they are the ultimate representation of evil to the extent that they would either hide or tamper with the Creator's name. It is more likely that a culture not driven to worship the Mighty One of Israel would laugh or deride His name, thus preserving its pronunciation, rather than intentionally alter its pronunciation.

Equipped with this understanding, it is the Greek culture that we can turn to for assistance in determining how the Tetragrammaton was transliterated. No other culture is known to have recorded anything that would serve to adequately transliterate the sound that was heard when the Name was spoken in the Hebrew tongue. To that end, the earliest known record of a transliteration only goes back to the 4th century CE. While we would certainly prefer a much earlier time frame, at the same time there is no rational reason to believe that the Greek scholars who transliterated the Tetragrammaton did so with malevolent intentions and any discrepancies can be attributed to differences in dialect rather than carelessness or intentional subversion.

A. According to the *Jerusalem Talmud*, a group of people known as the Cutheans pronounced the Name “as it is spelled out” when they took oaths

Before we address how the Greeks pronounced the Tetragrammaton, we need to turn our attention to a group of people known as the *Cutheans*. The *Cutheans* were non-Jews who were relocated to Samaria, the capital of Israel, from their hometown of Cutha (located in Mesopotamia), in the 8th century BCE by the Assyrian king (see II Kings 17). They are called “Cutheans” because most of them were brought from the city of Cutah; they are also called “Samaritans,” a term which refers to their new homeland.⁷³ As transplanted inhabitants of Israel, the Cutheans were certainly not of Jewish descent; nevertheless, they became acquainted with their new neighbors to the south and eventually picked up on some of their customs, including how to articulate the Creator's name.

Some may question whether or not the Cutheans learned the correct pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. The Jews of the 4th century CE did not question whether or not the Cutheans knew how to pronounce the Creator's name. In fact, the Cutheans knew the pronunciation well enough that it drew the unmitigated ire of Judaism, which by now had banned the utterance of the Tetragrammaton. According to Judaism, those who speak the Sacred Name of the Almighty will have no portion in “the world to come.” Notice what is recorded in the *Jerusalem Talmud*:

⁷³ Cf., *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 1, David Noel Freedman, Editor-in-Chief, Doubleday, New York, NY, 1992, article “Cuth,” by Samuel A. Meier, p. 1,221.

R. Joshua b. Levi said, “Even if one has said, ‘When a man has on the skin of his body a swelling or an eruption or a spot, and it turns into a leprous disease on the skin of his body’ (Lev. 13:2), and then has spat—he has no portion in the world to come.”

Abba Saul says, “Also: he who pronounces the divine Name as it is spelled out.”

R. Mana said, “For example, the Cutheans, who take an oath thereby.”

R. Jacob bar Aha said, “It is written YH[WH] and pronounced AD[onai].”⁷⁴

Based on the recorded discussion found in the *Jerusalem Talmud*, the Jews specifically condemned the Cutheans because they “pronounced the divine Name as it is spelled out.” It is highly unlikely that the name by which the Cutheans took oaths would have hit Judaism’s radar if they mispronounced it. The fact that Judaism recognized the Cutheans as pronouncing the divine Name as it is spelled out strongly suggests that they were pronouncing it correctly.

Please bear in mind that the Cutheans also came to be known as the *Samaritans*, as outlined in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*:

Jewish accounts, characterized by 2 Kings 17 and Josephus (*Ant* 9.277-91) claim that the Samaritans are descendants of colonists brought into the region of Samaria by the Assyrians from other lands they had conquered, including Cuthah, and thus the Jewish designation of Samaritans as Cutheans (*Ant* 9:290). The Jews have argued that the veneer of Israelite religion displayed by the Samaritans is the result of instruction by an Israelite priest repatriated from Assyria after the colonists had been attacked by lions sent by God (2 Kgs 17:25-26).⁷⁵

Now that we know the Cutheans and the Samaritans comprise the same group of people, we *also* know the Jewish rabbis considered them all to be a “lost cause” due to their practice of uttering the Almighty’s name when taking oaths. If those Samaritans were mispronouncing the Name, would the rabbis have cared enough to even bother discussing their fate amongst themselves?

Once we understand that the Cutheans (a.k.a. the Samaritans) “pronounce the divine Name as it is spelled out” – and they came close enough to the correct pronunciation that the rabbis deemed them unworthy of the “world to come,” the question arises as to how these people pronounced the Tetragrammaton. If we can know how they pronounced it, this will offer us the strongest clue attesting to the original pronunciation – a pronunciation that certainly caught the attention (and wrath) of Judaism.

⁷⁴ From *The Talmud of the Land of Israel*, Vol. 31 (Yerushalmi Sanhedrin 10:1, XI:A-C), translated by Jacob Neusner, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, 1984, p. 325. Note: The Cutheans were non-Jews brought to Israel by the Assyrian king from Cutah and other lands, and who were re-settled in the cities of Samaria (see II Kings 17). They are called “Cutheans,” since most of them were brought from the city of Cutah; they are also called “Samaritans,” a term which refers to their new homeland.

⁷⁵ From *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 5, David Noel Freedman, Editor-in-Chief, Doubleday, New York, NY, 1992, article “Samaritans,” by Robert T. Anderson, p. 941.



B. How did the Cutheans (Samaritans) pronounce the Tetragrammaton?

We have just addressed the fact that the Samaritans of the first century primarily consisted of transplants from Cutah, courtesy of the king of Assyria during the Israelite dispersion. The Jewish rabbis, not wishing to recognize them as kinfolk, referred to them as “Cutheans” – a polite term for unwelcome and uninvited foreigners feigning to live and teach Torah. The rabbis had no desire to recognize them as Samaritan kinfolk from up north! I’m sure those Samaritans had their share of faults, but was mispronouncing the Tetragrammaton one of them?

As we just mentioned, if the Samaritans were mispronouncing the Tetragrammaton, the rabbis most likely wouldn’t have cared one way or the other. In fact, they would most likely have joked amongst themselves about how the Cutheans didn’t even know how to pronounce the Name. The fact that the concern was over the Samaritans pronouncing the divine name “as it is spelled out” is a strong clue that they were pronouncing it correctly. So how did they pronounce it? Hans H. Spoer, in his 1899 dissertation on this very topic, not only agrees that the rabbis wouldn’t have been concerned with the Samaritans’ pronunciation of the Name if they had been mispronouncing it, but he also agrees that their pronunciation came very close to *Yahweh*:

A great variety of transliterations of the name יהוה is found in the Greek and Latin Fathers. Clemens of Alexandria reads Ἰαοὺ, which doubtless points to the abbreviation יהי. Origen reads Ιαω, which is perhaps יהי, and also Ια—IAH, which very probably represents יה. The most important reading is that found in Epiphane, in his catalogue of divine names, and that of Theodoret, who both write and pronounce Ιαβέ = יהוה [Yahweh]. This pronunciation rests upon living tradition, as they claim to have obtained it from the Samaritans. That this was the true pronunciation is attested by the fact that R. Mana, who lived in the fourth century after Christ, said that the Samaritans pronounced the holy name in oaths which the Jews should not imitate. If the Samaritans had not employed the right pronunciation, there would have been no reason for R. Mana to make such a statement, since to use a substitute, as the Jews themselves did, was perfectly allowable.⁷⁶

As alluded by Spoer, the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton used by the Samaritans/Cutheans was recorded by Greek scholars. According to Theodoret of Cyrus (393 – 457 CE), they pronounced it *Iabe*. Here is what he wrote in his work *The Questions on the Pentateuch*:

What is the meaning of “My name ‘Lord’ I did not make known to them”?

This conveys the great honor and kindness with which God treated Moses. Declaring, “I am who am,” he disclosed to Moses the name

⁷⁶ [*The Origin and Interpretation of the Tetragrammaton*](#), by Hans H. Spoer, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, 1899, p. 27.

he had never revealed to the patriarchs. Among the Hebrews this is known as the unspoken name; they are forbidden to utter it aloud. It is written in four consonants, and so they speak of it as the “Tetragrammaton.” This name was also inscribed on a plate of gold worn on the forehead of the high priest and bound to his head with a fillet. The Samaritans call it “Iabe [ʾIαβέ],” the Jews “Ia.”⁷⁷

We understand that some individuals criticize Theodoret’s rendering because of the *b* in *Iabe*, which would more accurately have been a *u*. However, the Greek *b*, by the time of Theodoret, had the pronunciation of *v*, and the *v* pronunciation is in turn traced to an original *u* sound (the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *waw*). It can thus be argued that Theodoret came very close to transliterating the pronunciation *Yahweh*;⁷⁸ in fact, it is partly due to Theodoret’s rendering of the Tetragrammaton that Wilhelm Gesenius attributed the pronunciation *Yahweh* to יהוה. Earlier in our study (chapter 2), we displayed a quote from Gesenius’ *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* in which he offered the spelling “Yahweh.” However, we only displayed a portion of the listing from his lexicon. In the complete listing, he offers details explaining why *Yahweh* is likely the original form, and Theodoret’s name is included:

יהוה^{c.6823} i.e. יהוה n.pr.dei Yahweh, the proper name of the God of Israel—(1. MT יהוה⁶⁵¹⁸ (Qr אֲדֹנִי), or יהוה³⁰⁵ (Qr אֱלֹהִים), in the combinations יהוה אֲדֹנִי & יהוה אֲדֹנִי (vid. אֲדֹנִי), and with prep. בִּיהוה, לִיהוה, מִיהוה (Qr בְּאֲדֹנִי, לְאֲדֹנִי, מֵאֲדֹנִי), do not give the original form. Ⓢ and other Vrss follow the Qr. On the basis of Ex 20⁷ Lv 24¹¹ יהוה was regarded as a *nomen ineffabile* (vid. Philo^{de Vita Mosis} iii.519, 529), called by the Jews הַשֵּׁם and by the Samaritans שִׁימָא. The pronunciation *Jehovah* was unknown until 1520, when it was introduced by Galatinus; but it was contested by Le Mercier, J. Drusius, and L. Capellus, as against grammatical and historical propriety (cf. Bō⁸⁸). The traditional ᾿Ιαβέ of Theodoret and Epiphanius, the יהוה, יהוה of compound.pr. and the contracted form יה, all favour יהוה (cf. יהוה יְהִי לְמֹסֶךְ^{ψ746}; תְּהִרִי Is 33¹¹), v. Lag^{Sym.i. 14} Baudissin Studien i. 179 ff; DrStud. Bib. i. 1 ff. For *Jeve* v. StaZAW 1881, 346 Deib. 1882, 173 f. & Gn. Excurs. ii.⁷⁹

We thus see that Gesenius’ conclusion about Theodoret’s transliteration of the Tetragrammaton is that he (Theodoret) was attempting to reproduce the pronunciation *Yahweh*. If

⁷⁷ Theodoret of Cyrus, *The Questions on the Pentateuch*, Vol. 1, “The Questions on Exodus,” Question XV, English translation by Robert C. Hill, The Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C., 2007, pp. 250-251.

⁷⁸ Cf., *The New Bible Dictionary*, 2nd ed., J. D. Douglas, Editor-at-Large, Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, IL, 1982, article “God, Names of,” p. 430, where we read, “The pronunciation Yahweh is indicated by transliterations of the name into Greek in early Christian literature, in the form *iaoue* (Clement of Alexandria) or *iabe* (Theodoret; by this time Gk. *b* had the pronunciation of *v*).” Also, according to Edward Horowitz in *How the Hebrew Language Grew*, KTAV Publishing House, Inc., New York, NY, 1960, p. 30, “The Yemenite Jews of Arabia who retain an ancient, correct and pure pronunciation of Hebrew still pronounce the *l* as “w”—as does Arabic, the close sister language of Hebrew.”

⁷⁹ Wilhelm Gesenius, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Translated by Edward Robinson, edited by Francis Brown, D.D., D.LITT., S. R. Driver, D.D., LITT.D. and Charles A. Briggs, D.D., D.LITT, Oxford at the Clarendon Press, London, England, 1st ed., 1907, reprinted with corrections in 1955, pp. 217-218.

we can allow for basic differences in dialect, it is reasonable to conclude that, indeed, Theodoret was attempting to reproduce in the Greek language, a transliteration that is at least a close approximation of the pronunciation *Yahweh*. Again, this is a transliteration that Theodoret would have picked up from the Samaritans, who did not share Judaism's conviction that the Tetragrammaton should not be spoken.

As mentioned earlier, we understand that there are critics of Theodoret's rendering of the Tetragrammaton because of his transliteration of the י in יהוה as a *b* instead of the Greek *u*. One of those critics is Keith Johnson, in his book *His Hallowed Name Revealed Again*:

The scholars who say His name is *Yahweh* base their argument on information from sources outside of the Hebrew Bible.⁸⁰

I try not to interrupt others, but this is an instance in which I feel I must step in and say something in response to the above remark, which is nothing short of unfair and misleading. Here Keith is attempting to portray himself as a faithful steward who relies solely on the Hebrew text of Scripture for his source of information, whereas those who refer to the Almighty as *Yahweh* rely on *outside* sources which, in Keith's estimation, are inferior. However, as we have previously demonstrated, no one is legitimately able to look at the original unpointed Hebrew text, find the Tetragrammaton, and point to it saying, "There! This proves that the pronunciation I use is correct and I'm going *strictly* by the Hebrew Bible text!" Such a remark might come across as authoritative and maybe even pious, but the fact of the matter is, the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton as it is found in the Hebrew text is what this entire discussion is all about in the first place, so the pronunciation key is *not* found within the Hebrew text. You see, one student, after careful analysis of the Hebrew text, may conclude that יהוה is pronounced a certain way; another student, equally confident of his Hebrew skills, insists that it's pronounced another way. Keith Johnson says it's *Yehovah*. Brian Allen says it's *Yahuwah*. Larry Acheson is persuaded that it's *Yahweh*. Each of us can legitimately make the claim that we're basing our conclusion on the Hebrew text of Scripture, but in the end, as we learned in the previous chapter, the best source for determining how a name is or was pronounced is by finding out how that name is transliterated in *another* language.

After leading off with his unfair generalization about those who favor the pronunciation *Yahweh*, Keith continues his commentary:

The primary source that is used comes from Theodoret of Cyrus who lived in the fifth century C.E. and is considered a Church Father. Theodoret writes concerning the name יהוה:

The Samaritans call Him IABE

The ancient Samaritans called יהוה Yaheh יָהֶה meaning "the beautiful one." In Samaritan Hebrew the letter *pe* (פ) is often replaced by *b* (ב). One theory is that the Samaritans told Theodoret that יהוה is called

⁸⁰ Keith E. Johnson, יהוה: *His Hallowed Name Revealed Again*, Biblical Foundations Academy, Minneapolis, MN, 2010, p. 106. Note: This quote is found on p. 137 of Keith Johnson's revision that came out in the fall of 2010.

Yafeh, “the beautiful one,” but because of their Hebrew accent it came out as *Yabe* (Yahveh).

Most scholars claim that the *b* in IABE pronounced (Yahbay) is a distortion of a Hebrew *vav* ם and that the first *hey* ה of יהוה was dropped because Greek does not have a ה sound in the middle of a word. As a result most scholars translate the Samaritan IABE back into Hebrew as *Yahweh*. As you can guess, there is not one time, of the 6,828 times, that the name is written as יהוה, *Yahbey*, *Yahvay* or *Yahwey*. This is a biblical fact, not a scholarly guess.⁸¹

Please notice that in one of the above paragraphs, Keith advances a *theory* that the Samaritans told Theodoret that יהוה is called *Yafeh*, “the beautiful one,” but because of their Hebrew accent it came out as *Yabe* (Yahveh). Please keep in mind that this is a *theory*. In other words, it’s a *guess*, the very thing Keith later tries to make out as though he doesn’t do. The notion that Theodoret mistook *Yafeh* as being the name of the Creator is simply a proposal that someone came up with that they feel suffices to explain an apparent discrepancy between the historical record and their interpretation of the facts. If you recall from Theodoret’s actual explanation, he went to some trouble to explain that this name (Ἰαβέ) was also inscribed on a plate of gold worn on the forehead of the high priest. It is highly unlikely that he mistook an adjective meaning “beautiful” for the Name worn by the high priest. Also, as a reminder, we need to emphasize that the Hebrew scholar who is a universally recognized authority, Wilhelm Gesenius, understood that Theodoret was transliterating the Creator’s name in the Greek language. Keith Johnson rejects Gesenius’ understanding in favor of what we feel is a bizarre attempt at justifying his own pronunciation of choice.

In the very next paragraph following the advancement of his *Yafeh* theory, Keith makes another point and then writes, “This is a biblical fact, not a scholarly guess.” And what is the “biblical fact”? It is the fact that the Tetragrammaton is never, ever vowel-pointed as יהוה (pronounced *Yahweh*) in the Hebrew Bible. This remark should be regarded as an insult to all thinking people because we should all agree that the Masoretic scribes deliberately mis-vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton so as to not accidentally express the Sacred Name. In other words, whatever the correct pronunciation of יהוה is, the *last* place we should expect to find it is the Masoretic Text. If anything, the fact that the Tetragrammaton is not vowel-pointed a certain way in the Masoretic Text should automatically qualify that vocalization as a candidate for being the original pronunciation.

Not only this, but Keith Johnson’s remark can also be regarded as an attempt to undermine the intelligence and integrity of Theodoret. That Theodoret was referring to the Almighty by name instead of an adjective meaning “beautiful” should be evidenced by his follow-up assertion that the Jews call Him *Ia* (Yah). Did Theodoret correctly identify the name “Yah” while confusing “Yafeh” as His name? That is what Keith Johnson would have you to believe. It is highly unlikely that Theodoret overheard the Samaritans referring to the Almighty as “the beautiful one” and then mistook that epithet as a name. We have seen that the spelling used by Theodoret is Ἰαβέ. We will here reiterate the fact that the Greek *b*, by the time of Theodoret, had the pronunciation of *v*,

⁸¹ Ibid, p. 106-107 (p. 137-138 of the fall 2010 revision).

and the *v* pronunciation is in turn traced to an original *u* sound (the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *waw*). Author R. Clover, in his book *The Sacred Name* אֱלֹהִים, expounds on this fact:

It is also known that the ancient Greek letter β (the text being first composed in Greek and then later translated into Latin) carried the value of the Latin *v* and not the English *b*. For example, the Latin name for the famous Gothic tribe that ravaged Europe during the latter fourth and early fifth centuries C.E. is *Vandali*. Yet in Greek texts, such as that written by Procopius, the name Vandali is rendered Βανδύλους (Bandilous). Because of this detail some have contended that the third letter of יהוה (i.e. ו) should be rendered as a “v.” They propose that the name should therefore be vocalized as Yahveh, Yahva, Yahve, Jahveh, or some other like form.

The suggestion that the third letter of the sacred name should be read as a “v” is an error for two reasons. First, the Latin *v* is not equivalent with the English letter “v.” *Harper’s Latin Dictionary*, for example, informs us:

The sound of V seems to have been the same with that of English initial W.... V has the closest affinity to the vowel *u*, and hence, in the course of composition and inflection, it often passed into the latter.

The connection between the Latin *v* and the initial English “w” (as in the word wet), which is also the early English and Germanic letter “w,” is further attested to by the above example, the name *Vandali*, which in Old German is *Wandal*, and in Old Anglo-Saxon *Wendil*. In the Anglo-Saxon and Germanic tongues, the Latin *v* was understood to mean *uu* or *u*, hence our present name for the letter “w,” i.e. “double u.” The modern letter “W” was originally formed by placing two Latin *v* letters together (*vv* = *w*). *Webster’s New World Dictionary* makes the following comments about the letter “W”:

1. the twenty-third letter of the English alphabet: its sound was represented in Anglo-Saxon manuscripts by *uu* or *u* until 900 A.D., then by \mathfrak{w} (*wen*) borrowed from the runic alpha-bet, or sometimes by *wu*, *v*, *wo*, *vo*, *uo*, or *o*. In the 11th century a ligatured *VV* or *vv* was introduced by Norman scribes to replace the *wen*. 2. the sound of *W* or *w*: in English, it is a lip-rounded tongue-back semivowel like a quickly cut-off *oo* at the beginning of words; concluding a diphthong it is a *u*-glide. Before *r*, as in *wrist*, and in some words, as *answer*, *sword*, *two*, it is silent.

This fact means that the Greek β and Latin *v*, which come across into English as the early Anglo-Saxon “w,” are in fact vowel consonants and like the Hebrew ו stand for a “double u” or *oo* sound. This conclusion is further verified by a variant text reading belonging to Epiphanius. Here we find the Greek terms Ἰαβέ and Ἰαβαί are



rendered into Latin as *IAUE*,⁸² once again demonstrating the “u” value of β.⁸³

In spite of Mr. Clover’s informative commentary, his attempt to draw a close parallel between the Greek β and the Hebrew י does not explain how or why both the Greek β and the Greek υ can (apparently) be interchangeably used to represent the “u” sound. Certainly, there must be a difference between the Greek β and the Greek υ, but when it came to representing the Samaritans’ pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton, fifth century theologian Theodoret chose the β over the υ. One might ask, since the Greek alphabet included both the β and the υ, why didn’t Theodoret just transliterate יהוה as ’Ιαυέ? That would have served to have eliminated this particular aspect of the controversy.


As we reflect on Theodoret’s rendering of ’Ιαβέ, we believe it is prudent to bear in mind that Theodoret was evidently transliterating the sound he heard from Samaritans, and that sound came from a sect whose native language was not Greek. In other words, at the very least, we need to allow for dialectical differences; at most we need to allow for a language barrier that may have existed between Theodoret and the Samaritans, whose vocal reproduction of the Tetragrammaton he transliterated the best he could. We should also consider the possibility that Theodoret may never have actually overheard any Samaritans vocalizing the Creator’s name; he could have passed along a pronunciation that he in turn heard from someone else.

We are persuaded that many otherwise dedicated believers overlook the significance of dialectical differences, even within the same language. For example, in the northern United States, you might hear someone ask for a glass of water. In the southern states, you might hear someone ask for a glass of “waddah.” Also, I remember hearing my grandmother say, “Warsh the dishes,” but in school I was taught to say, “Wash the dishes.” We have all heard the word “nuthin” used instead of “nothing,” and, finally, a Massachusetts native might well say something like, “Pawk the caw” instead of “Park the car.” Many of us have heard these and other differentiations that could easily explain how the Samaritan could have said, “Yahweh,” but Theodoret *heard* “Yahveh” or even “Yahbeh.”

I am reminded of a phone conversation that I had with a manager of a tractor assembly plant shortly after moving to Texas. At that time I was working for a staffing agency and I was assisting with the recruitment of workers at the facility. During the conversation, the manager gave me one of the requirements for all employees that we were to recruit. He said, “They must wear stilted cheese.” The phone line was quite clear and there was no background noise, so I was literally flabbergasted and confused by the requirement to wear “stilted cheese.” I apologized for not understanding what he said and asked if he could please repeat that requirement. He reiterated, “They must wear *stilted cheese*.” By that time, I was so confused that I couldn’t even *imagine* what he was trying to convey to me. It seems so obvious now, in view of the work environment in which our employees would be working, but at that moment, I was totally bewildered and stumped. Knowing that I *had* to put together an accurate job description, and knowing that our job applicants

⁸² This is R. Clover’s footnote: Epiph., 40:5, var. lect.; *Zeitschrift Für Die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 54 (1936), from the article “The Tetragrammaton Jahweh, Name or Surrogate?” by Lukyn Canon Williams, p. 264; *Oudtestamentische Studiën*, E.J. Bill, Leiden, 1948, article “The Name Jahu” by B. D. Eerdmans, p. 5.

⁸³ From *The Sacred Name* יהוה, Vol. 1, by R. Clover, Qadesh La Yahweh Press, 3rd edition, Garden Grove, CA, 2002, pp. 110-111. This study may be accessed online at www.yahweh.org/publications/sny/sn09chap.pdf.



would have no idea what was meant by “stilted cheese,” I had to once again apologize and ask the man to *spell* what he was telling me they had to wear. He slowly spelled, “S - T - E - E - L - T - O - E - D - S - H - O - E - S.” I was at last relieved to understand what he had been trying to convey to me, but I was simultaneously very apprehensive about this new language spoken by Texans! Of course, it wasn’t a new language, but what I experienced was the difficulty in learning a new *dialect*.

Since that educational conversation, I have run into a few Texans with accents/dialects as difficult to understand as that man, but thankfully, after over 25 years as a Texas resident, I have adjusted to this environment. I have learned to adapt to a variation within our own English language. That experience certainly gave me a deeper appreciation for the age-old debate regarding which pronunciation of the Almighty’s name is the “most correct” one. Something tells me the Almighty is more concerned about how understanding we are of each other’s views than about how close we come to pronouncing His name with 100% accuracy. We may well find out that there are many variations that are equally “correct,” but simply represent the different Hebrew dialects. If we can somehow learn to appreciate and respect these variations, as well as the individuals who use them, I believe we will come that much closer to becoming the children that our Creator wants us to be. Until that time comes, all we can do is offer our own personal explanation in defense of the pronunciation that we believe most closely matches the name He revealed to Moses.

Theodoret doesn’t tell us how he came across his rendering of the Tetragrammaton, so we are left to speculate. At the same time, with diligent research, we can determine that, indeed, the third letter of the Tetragrammaton is better represented by a “u” sound than a “b” or “v” sound. The only syllable of concern, from our perspective, is the final one. We are persuaded that if the ending was an “-ah” ending, this sound would have been too easily distinguished from an “-eh” sound. It would be akin to distinguishing our own English words *saw* and *say*. Thus, regardless of how some folks will focus on Theodoret’s β in their attempt to either downplay or disallow the pronunciation *Yahweh*, we are persuaded that Theodoret’s rendering of Ἰαβε came very close to transliterating the pronunciation *Yahweh*. We also need to remember that the Samaritans whose pronunciation Theodoret attempted to transliterate were condemned by rabbinic Judaism for pronouncing the Creator’s Name “as it is spelled out.” To the best of our knowledge, unless Keith can demonstrate otherwise, the only recorded transliteration of the Name used by the Samaritans is Ἰαβε (*Iabe*), which, as we have demonstrated, comes very close to the pronunciation *Yahweh*.

In his lexicon’s listing for the Tetragrammaton, Wilhelm Gesenius also mentions a second witness for the pronunciation *Yahweh*. This second witness is Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis (320 – 403 CE). Are we to believe that Epiphanius *also* confused the adjective “Yafeh” for the Creator’s name? Although Epiphanius does not mention the Samaritans in his exposé, the transliteration that he offers nevertheless serves as corroborating evidence that it was understood that this is how the Creator’s name was pronounced. Here is an excerpt from Frank Williams’ translation of *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis*:

Already in the previous Sects I have dealt at length with the translation of Sabaoth and other names – Eli and Elohim, El and Shaddai, Elyon, Rabboni, Jah, Adonai and Jahveh—(9) since they are all to be translated as terms of praise, and are not as it were given names for the Godhead. Here too I hasten to give them in translation. (10) ‘Eli’

means ‘Elohim,’ ‘Mighty One forever’; ‘El’ means ‘Shaddai’; Eliyon means ‘Rabboni’; ‘Yah’ means ‘Adonai’; ‘Iabe’ means ‘He who was and is, He who forever is,’ as he translates for Moses, ‘He who is’ hath sent me, shalt thou say unto them.’ ‘Elyon’ is ‘highest.’ And ‘Sabaoth’ means ‘of hosts’; hence ‘Master Sabaoth,’ means ‘Mighty One of Hosts.’⁸⁴

We need to emphasize that the above is an English translation of Epiphanius’ work. You may have noticed that Epiphanius used the same Greek spelling for the Name that Theodoret used (Ἰαβέ), which we confirmed from the Greek text of his work:⁸⁵

πεπραγμάτευται περὶ ἐρμηνείας τοῦ Σαβαώθ καὶ ἄλλων ὀνομασιῶν, τοῦ τε Ἥλι καὶ τοῦ Ἐλωείμ, τοῦ τε Ἥλ καὶ τοῦ Σαδδαὶ τοῦ τε Ἑλλιών τοῦ τε Παββωνί τοῦ τε Ἰὰ τοῦ τε Ἀδωναὶ τοῦ τε Ἰαβέ, ὡς ὀνομασίαι εἰσὶ δοξολογιῶν ἅπασαι ἐρμηνευόμεναι καὶ οὐκ ὀνόματά ἐστι θετὰ ὡς εἰπεῖν τῇ θεότητι, ἅτινα καὶ ἐνταυθοῖ σπουδασθήσονται ἐρμηνευθέντα κεῖσθαι· τὸ Ἥλ θεός, τὸ Ἐλωείμ θεός αἰεί, τὸ Ἥλι θεός μου, τὸ Σαδδαὶ ὁ ἰκανός, τὸ Παββωνί ὁ κύριος, τὸ Ἰὰ κύριος, τὸ Ἀδωναὶ ὁ ὢν κύριος, τὸ Ἰαβέ ὅς ἦν καὶ ἔστιν ὁ αἰεὶ ὢν, ὡς ἐρμηνεύει τῷ Μωϋσῇ «ὁ ὢν ἀπέσταλκέ με, ἐρεῖς πρὸς αὐτούς», καὶ τὸ Ἑλλιών ὕψιστος, καὶ τὸ Σαβαώθ δυνάμεων ἐρμηνεύεται. κύριος οὖν Σαβαώθ κύριος τῶν δυνάμεων. πάντῃ γὰρ <κύριος> πρόσκειται ὅπου τοῦ Σαβαώθ ὄνομα λέγει ἢ γραφή· <ἢ γὰρ γραφή> οὐ μόνον ἐκφωνεῖ λέγουσα· «εἶπέ μοι Σαβαώθ ἢ ἐλάλησε Σαβαώθ», ἀλλὰ εὐθύς λέγει κύριος Σαβαώθ. οὕτως γὰρ ἢ Ἑβραῖς φάσκει «Ἀδωναὶ Σαβαώθ», ὅπερ ἐρμηνεύεται κύριος τῶν δυνάμεων.

While we may not endorse some of the religious beliefs advocated by either Theodoret or Epiphanius, at the same time they should not be considered any less accurate with their reporting than today’s secular news media. There is no reason to question that they were transmitting at least a fairly accurate representation of the Creator’s name as they heard it spoken. The fact that they were passing along a pronunciation used by Samaritans in defiance of Judaism’s *ineffable name* doctrine – to the chagrin of the Jewish rabbis – is evidence that the pronunciation that they used is at least sufficiently correct, if not 100% so.

Modern-day scholars, looking back at all the available evidence supporting the ancient pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton, agree that transliterations from the Greek language provide the most compelling support:

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.”⁸⁶

The New Encyclopædia Britannica expounds on the above commentary as follows:

The Masoretes, who from about the 6th to the 10th century worked to reproduce the original text of the Hebrew Bible, replaced the vowels of the name YHWH with the vowel signs of the Hebrew words Adonai

⁸⁴ From *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis*, Book I (Sects 1-46), Anacephalaeosis III, 40. Against Archontics, 5.8 – 5.10, 2nd ed., Translated by Frank Williams, Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands, 2009, p. 288. Note: This work may be available for viewing online at the following URL:

http://books.google.com/books?id=s9-utOHPLfEC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false

⁸⁵ Available online at <http://khazarzar.skeptik.net/books/panariog.htm>.

⁸⁶ From the *Encyclopædia Judaica*, Vol. 7, Encyclopædia Judaica Jerusalem, The Macmillan Company, Copyright 1971 by Keter Publishing House, Ltd., Jerusalem, Israel, p. 680.



or Elohim. Thus, the artificial name Jehovah (YeHoWaH) came into being. Although Christian scholars after the Renaissance and Reformation periods used the term Jehovah for YHWH, in the 19th and 20th centuries biblical scholars again began to use the form Yahweh. Early Christian writers, such as Clement of Alexandria in the 2nd century, had used a form like Yahweh, and this pronunciation of the tetragrammaton was never really lost. Other Greek transcriptions also indicated that YHWH should be pronounced Yahweh.⁸⁷

Responsible scholarship acknowledges that although the linguistic mechanics of Hebrew allow for several possible pronunciations of יהוה, the available Greek transliterations offer compelling insight into which pronunciation is most likely the original one. In our next chapter, we will examine a well-known modern-day scholar who at one time sided with the *-wah* ending, but later changed his mind.

⁸⁷ From *The New Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. 12, 1998, Chicago, IL, p. 804.

11. What Do Modern-Day Experts Say?

When it comes to weighing in on what modern-day experts have to say about the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton, we are hard-pressed to find anyone who is more qualified than Wilhelm Gesenius, who supported the pronunciation *Yahweh*.⁸⁸ As we saw early on in our study, even those who promote the pronunciation *Yahuwah* are compelled to quote from his grammar book in an attempt to defend their reasoning for believing as they do. Throughout our study, we have marveled that anyone would think to use Gesenius' grammar book to promote a pronunciation that he did not support. Adding to our confusion is the fact that if these individuals correctly gleaned what they did from his book, then Gesenius defied his own Hebrew linguistics and grammar rules by supporting the form *Yahweh*.

While there is no shortage of modern-day scholars who support the pronunciation *Yahweh* as most likely being the original pronunciation – we could cite several – we will only produce one additional scholar: Franz Delitzsch.

Franz Delitzsch (1813–1890) is well known for co-authoring the highly-regarded Keil & Delitzsch *Commentary on the Old Testament* with C.F. Keil. However, what many folks are not aware of is the fact the Franz Delitzsch, a Hebrew scholar in his own right, translated the Greek New Testament into Hebrew. This translation is still regarded as the standard New Testament edition in Hebrew. The following information comes from *Wikipedia*:

Today Delitzsch is best known for his translation of the New Testament into Hebrew. Delitzsch's translation is still considered the standard New Testament edition in Hebrew and in its 10th Edition it was revised by a young Arnold Bogomul Ehrlich at Delitzsch's insistence. This edition was to be utilized for proselytization among Jews. It is remarkable that these editions were composed before the modern revival of Hebrew, but the translations still remain fresh and alive for readers today.”⁸⁹

Interestingly, when we researched the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton supported by Franz Delitzsch, the references we found state that he favored a pronunciation very similar to the one suggested by those who promote the forms *Yahuwah* or *Yahuah*. The following information comes from *Dr. William Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*:

Delitzsch maintains that, whichever punctuation be adopted, the quiescent sheva under ה is ungrammatical, and Chateph Pathach is the proper vowel. He therefore writes it יְהוָה, *yahāvāh*, to which he says the Ἀᾱ of Theodoret corresponds; the last vowel being Kametz instead of Segol, according to the analogy of proper names derived from ל"ה verbs (e. g. ימנה, ימרה, יסכה, and others). In his opinion

⁸⁸ The editors of Gesenius' *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, op. cit., referred to him as “the father of modern Hebrew lexicography.” In the Preface of this work we read the following: “Wilhelm Gesenius, the father of modern Hebrew Lexicography, died in 1842.”

⁸⁹ Wikipedia contributors, “Franz Delitzsch,” *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Franz_Delitzsch&oldid=345982642 (accessed April 3, 2010).



the form יהי is not an abbreviation, but a concentration of the Tetragrammaton (*Comm. über den Psalter, Einl.*).⁹⁰

Based on the above article, it is only natural that various authors, including William Smith, formed the impression that Franz Delitzsch supported the form *Yahavah*. In fact, this is the information that we find in the *Wikipedia* article “Tetragrammaton”:

Delitzsch prefers "יהוה" (yah^avah) since he considered the shewa quiescens below ה ungrammatical.⁹¹

If we were to stop with the above information, as many have done, we would be obligated to conclude that Franz Delitzsch disagreed with Wilhelm Gesenius' conclusion that the Tetragrammaton is most likely pronounced *Yahweh*. However, if we do additional checking, we find that Franz Delitzsch, after researching this topic further, changed his mind. What follows is Delitzsch's own personal testimony, as found within the Preface to his commentary on the book of Psalms:


Note on יהוה

Jahve is (1) the traditional pronunciation, and (2) the pronunciation to be presupposed in accordance with the laws of formation and of vowel sounds. It is the traditional, for Theodoret and Epiphanius transcribe Ἰαβέ. The mode of pronunciation Ἀϊά (not Ἰαβά), on the contrary, is the reproduction of the form of the name יהי, and the mode of pronunciation Ἰαω= of the form of the name יהו, which although occurring only in the Old Testament in composition, had once, according to traces that can be relied on, an independent existence. Also the testimonies of the Talmud and post-talmudical writings require the final sound to be ה and the corresponding name by which God calls Himself, אֱהְיֶה, is authentic security for this ending. When it is further considered that יהו (whence יהוה) according to analogous contractions has grown out of יהוה, and not out of יהוה, and that the Hebrew language exhibits no proof of any transition from ה to ו which would not at the same time be a transition from the masculine to the feminine, it must be conceded that the pronunciation *Jahve* is to be regarded as the original pronunciation. The mode of pronunciation *Jehova* has only come up within the last three hundred years; our own “*Jahavā*” [in the first edition] was an innovation. We now acknowledge the patristic Ἰαβέ, and hope to have another opportunity of substantiating in detail what is maintained in this prefatory note.⁹²

⁹⁰ From *Dr. William Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. II, Revised and Edited by Professor H. B. Hackett, D. D., Published by Hurd and Houghton, New York, NY, 1872, p. 1,241.

⁹¹ Wikipedia contributors, “Tetragrammaton,” *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tetragrammaton> (accessed October 20, 2011).

⁹² C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 5, “Psalms,” by F. Delitzsch, Translated by Francis Bacon, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, originally published by T. & T. Clark, Edinburg, Scotland, 1866-91, 2001, Preface, p. xiii.



We thus see that renowned Hebrew scholar Franz Delitzsch, who had previously supported the form *Jahavā*, reconsidered his “mode of pronunciation,” instead settling on the form *Jahve*, which we can hopefully agree is more accurately rendered *Yahweh*. It is regrettable that the editors of *Dr. William Smith's Dictionary of the Bible* apparently never got the message of Delitzsch’s final conclusion.

It is interesting to note that this renowned Hebrew scholar at one time considered the form *Yahweh* to be “ungrammatical.” He eventually changed his mind and conceded that *Yahweh* is most likely the original pronunciation. In this study we have already witnessed commentaries from unqualified Hebrew scholars who charge that the form *Yahweh* doesn’t “fit the Hebrew grammar rules,” so it is clear that the attempts to discredit *Yahweh* for grammatical reasons haven’t stopped, nor do we expect any changes to this unsustainable approach in the near future. Nevertheless, as we continue to read persistent attempts to refute the form *Yahweh* on the basis that it doesn’t conform to “Hebrew grammar rules,” we need to bear in mind that the likes of top scholar Franz Delitzsch, who likewise struggled with this view, eventually concluded that it is the “original pronunciation.”

12. The “Guilt by Association” Approach: Can Pure Worship Be Corrupted?

A. Analogy Between Calendar Debate and Name Pronunciation Issue

Can pure worship be corrupted? Of course, the answer is yes, but if we ascribe to the reasoning presented by some folks, the answer to this question would seem to be NO. Thus, any belief that can be linked in some way to heathen worship must be considered suspect at best. With the “Guilt by Association” approach, an individual who doesn’t like or approve of a certain practice or belief links it to heathen idol worship. If they can get others to associate the belief with paganism, they in turn succeed in their attempt to influence their target audience. When it comes to the Almighty’s name, here’s how that thought process works: The pronunciation “Yahweh” MUST be incorrect because it may be traced to the heathen idol “Jove,” and since *Yahweh* so closely resembles Jove’s name, this must mean that it is also corrupt. The name “Yahweh,” then, must have been corrupt from the start!

The question that we *really* need to answer in this chapter is this: “*Is Yahweh traced to Jove, or is Jove traced to Yahweh?*” Since one question usually leads to another, a follow-up question might be, “Is it possible that the heathen *Jove* is traced to the pure *Yahweh*, and that *Jove* is actually a link that connects and identifies the (later) rebellion from the pure form of worship?”

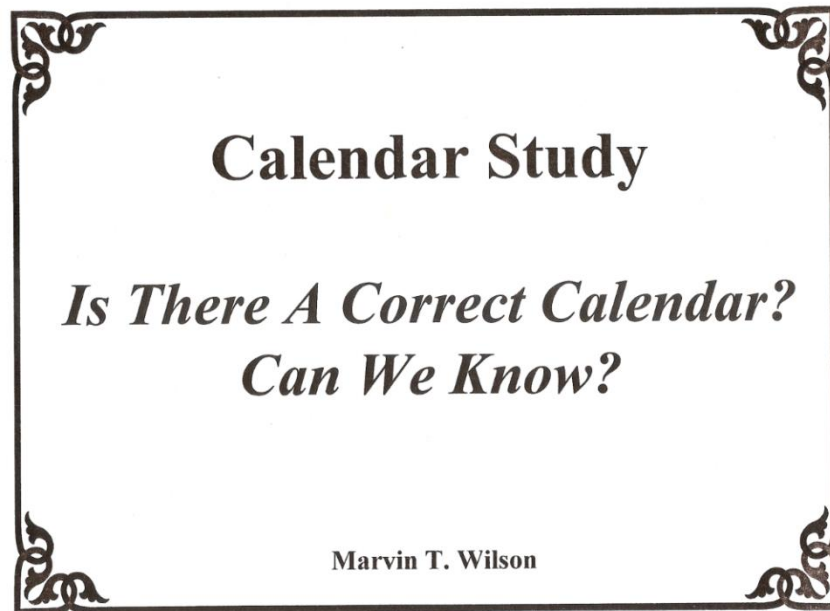
Before we answer the above questions, I believe we should review an approach used by one individual in an attempt to attribute a heathen origin to a practice that may have in fact emanated from pure worship. At a 2001 “Unity Conference,” a believer named Marvin Wilson gave a presentation based on his study *Calendar Study: Is There A Correct Calendar? Can We Know?* In his study, Mr. Wilson uses the “Guilt by Association” approach, depicting those who start the new Scriptural month with the sighting of the crescent moon as imitating heathens ... all because heathens worshipped the crescent moon.

What Mr. Wilson didn’t address in his study is the possibility that maybe – just maybe – the faithful ancient believers used the sighting of the crescent moon to begin each new month, but later, when pure worship was corrupted, those who abandoned the ways of the Almighty regarded the crescent moon as an object to be worshipped. Could this have possibly happened? Of course it could have, but such a potential scenario doesn’t seem to factor into Mr. Wilson’s thought processes. We must either be open to all possible contingencies or risk exposing a narrow-minded approach that overlooks key evidence and reaches a premature (and false) conclusion. If true believers originally began each new month by sighting the new moon, but unfaithful members later abandoned pure worship and began a new custom that involved worshipping the moon, would this fact automatically invalidate beginning the new month with the sighting of the crescent moon? Regrettably, according to Marvin Wilson’s study, there doesn’t appear to be any room for considering any possibility other than to understand that the crescent moon has always represented a heathen symbol and object of worship; as such, according to this view, righteous men of Old never, ever, used the crescent moon for beginning the new month.

Of course, Mr. Wilson is free to believe and teach as he pleases, but has he (or anyone) ever produced evidence supporting crescent moon worship prior to any man’s decision to use the crescent moon for starting a new month? No, he has not.

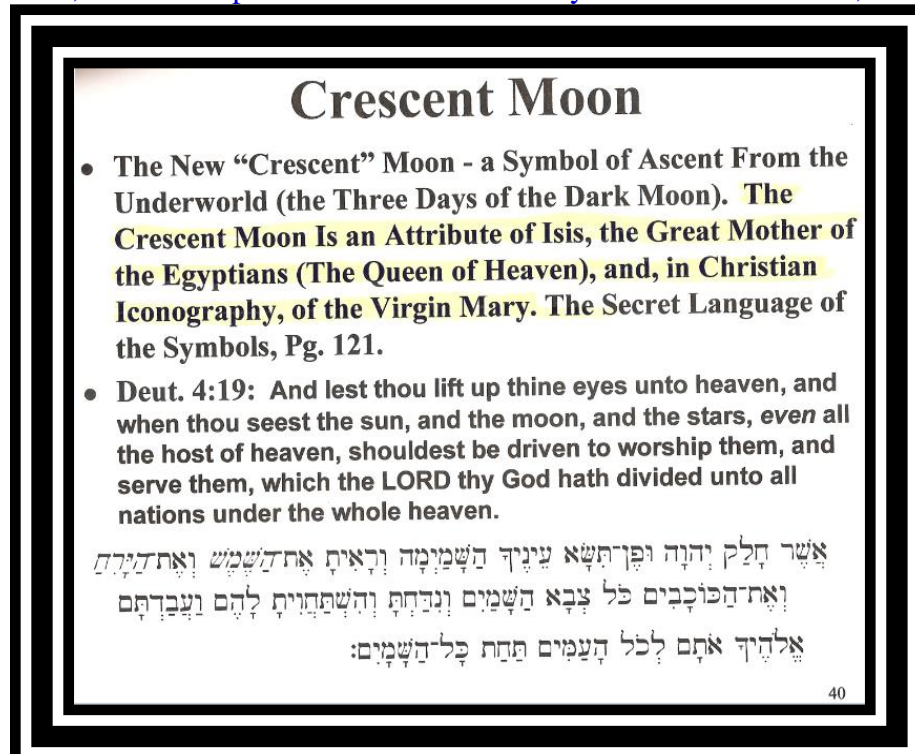
To illustrate Marvin T. Wilson’s “Guilt by Association” approach, I am providing copies from his study, as exhibited below:


This is the title page to Mr. Wilson’s 2001 Unity Conference presentation:



1

From page 40 of *Calendar Study: Is There A Correct Calendar? Can We Know?* by Marvin T. Wilson, which was presented at the 2001 Unity Conference in Cisco, Texas:





We hope you are able to observe the “Guilt by Association” technique that was used in Mr. Wilson’s presentation: His first point is designed to expose a negative heathen attribute to the “Crescent Moon.” He then quotes a verse of Scripture warning us against worshipping the sun, moon and stars. While we should certainly focus on worshipping Yahweh instead of the “host of heaven,” this doesn’t mean we cannot use heavenly bodies such as the sun and moon to determine when a day begins and ends or when a month begins and ends. Certainly, if Yahweh gave us the sun, moon and stars to use for determining “seasons, and for days, and years” (Genesis 1:14), then doing so should hardly be construed as worshipping those celestial bodies. Moreover, all ancient sources that we are aware of agree that believers of Old used the sighting of the crescent moon to begin a new month; we are unaware of any ancient writings indicating otherwise. There is nothing in these ancient records to indicate that these believers worshipped the crescent moon. While we respect the decision of those who prefer to not go by crescent moon sightings for beginning a new month, at the same time, it is not fair to characterize those of us who do as imitating the practices of heathens – without at the very least producing Scriptural evidence supporting the view that crescent moon worship was going on prior to any man’s decision to use the crescent moon for starting a new month.

B. GUILT BY ASSOCIATION II: GASP! Is “Yahweh” Associated With “Jove”?


Just as determining the start of a new month based on the sighting of the crescent moon is wrongly vilified by some individuals who insist that the moon’s conjunction is what determines each new month, in the same way, some folks attempt to demonize the pronunciation *Yahweh* by associating this form with the idol *Jove*. As mentioned in this chapter’s opening paragraph, according to this line of reasoning, the pronunciation “Yahweh” MUST be incorrect because it may be traced to “Jove,” and since *Yahweh* so closely resembles the idol Jove’s name, this must mean that it [*Yahweh*] is also corrupt. The name “Yahweh,” then, must have been corrupt from the start!

If we invalidate the pronunciation *Yahweh* due to its association with heathen worship, shall we go one step further and also eliminate *Yah* because of its pagan connection?

One of the primary champions of this method of reasoning is Brian Allen. We have already examined Brian Allen’s misunderstanding and misapplication of *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, but as we are about to see, he doesn’t stop there. Elsewhere in his study, Mr. Allen attempts to draw a parallel between *Yahweh* and *Jove*:

In 1672, *Wilkins National Religion* p. 51, “Believing but one supreme Deity, the Father of all subordinate powers:.. whom they call Jupiter or Jove, with plain reference to the Hebrew name Jehovah.” *Oxford English Dictionary*, under “Jove.”⁹³

⁹³ From *Publish the Name of YAHUWAH*, by B. Earl Allen, chapter 10, titled “Modern Idolatry.” This study may be read online by accessing the following link: http://yahushua.net/YAHUWAH/chapter_10.htm.



We find it interesting that Brian Allen would use the above excerpt in his attempt to malign the pronunciation *Yahweh*; after all, the pronunciation that is actually maligned in the excerpt he provides is *Jehovah*. *Jehovah* more closely resembles the form *Yahuwah*, which is supported by Mr. Allen. Nevertheless, our question remains: *If* “Jehovah” were the original pronunciation, but it later degenerated to the name of an idol named “Jove,” would this make “Jehovah” an idol’s name instead of the Creator’s name? Brian Allen is faced with the same essential task that Marvin Wilson needed to address in his calendar study: *Proving that “Jehovah” was originally the name of a heathen idol*.

Of course, for our present study, Mr. Allen needs to prove that *Yahweh* is originally the pronunciation of a name attributed to heathen idol worship. Is Brian Allen able to do this? He continues:

In the book *Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop, it shows that “Jove” was used as the set-apart name, see pages 26 & 73.⁹⁴

Once again, Brian Allen leaves unanswered questions, such as: Is it possible that true believers originally called upon the Almighty by the name *Yahweh*, but as the pure worship became corrupted, not only did they alter their pure worship, but they made slight, subtle changes to *Yahweh*? In fact, the form *Jove* would have been pronounced nearly the same as *Yahweh*.

Brian mentions two pages from *The Two Babylons*, but he doesn’t provide his readers with any excerpts to illustrate the apparent problem. Here is an excerpt from page 26:

The distinguished Gesenius identifies him [**Hermes**] with the Babylonian Nebo, as the prophetic god; and a statement of Hyginus shows that he was known as the grand agent in that movement which produced the division of tongues. His words are these: "For many ages men lived under the government of Jove [evidently not the Roman Jupiter, but the Jehovah of the Hebrews], without cities and without laws, and all speaking one language."⁹⁵

Curiously, the reference cited by Brian Allen quotes Wilhelm Gesenius, the same Hebrew scholar whose grammar book Mr. Allen misapplied ... the same Hebrew scholar who concluded that the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton is *Yahweh*. Once again, the name that is maligned in the above quote is *Jehovah*, not *Yahweh*. Please note that the author could just as easily have written *Yahuwah* and it still wouldn’t have made any difference. *If* the correct pronunciation is *Yahuwah*, does Brian Allen not understand that the once-pure worship of *Yahuwah* became corrupt? As the worship of *Yahuwah* became more and more corrupt, if men began praying to a tree, addressing it as “Yahuwah,” would this corrupt worship invalidate the pronunciation *Yahuwah*?

By the same token, if the original pronunciation really is *Yahweh*, and if mankind, in its gradually-deteriorating faithfulness to Him, began forsaking His laws and altered His name to *Yoweh*, would this invalidate the pronunciation *Yahweh*?

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ From *The Two Babylons*, by Alexander Hislop, Cosimo, Inc., 2009 (orig. published in 1903), p. 26.

In his next remark, Brian Allen applies the “Guilt by Association” to the Catholic church:

The Catholic scholars and monks have no problem with the form Yahweh! As a matter of fact, they are evangelizing it! It is contained in their New Jerusalem Bible and in their New American Bible in Genesis 22:14 and Exodus 17:15 etc.⁹⁶

The desired effect of the above comment is this: Since the Catholic Church, whose teachings Brian Allen so vehemently opposes, uses the form *Yahweh*, this must automatically prove that *Yahweh* cannot be the original pronunciation. Once again, Brian does not address whether or not it is possible that the original pronunciation could have been *Yahweh*, and if so, whether or not the once-pure worship of *Yahweh* could have deteriorated to a thin veneer of worship, with unregenerate men attributing that original pronunciation to wood, stones and even “the host of heaven.” Is it possible? By now, we hope you can see that the answer is a firm “yes.” Brian continues his “Guilt by Association” exercise:

In the Greek Dictionary of *Strong’s Concordance* #2203, we find that “Jove” is a name for Jupiter or Zeus!? Yet in Numbers 21:14 of Origenis [sic] Hexapla, in the place of the tetragrammaton is found the word “Jovae.”⁹⁷

At the risk of being redundant, once again, Brian Allen does not address whether or not it is possible that the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton could have been *Yahweh*, which was eventually altered as the once-pure worship deteriorated. If the Tetragrammaton was originally pronounced *Yahweh*, but as men wandered away from the true faith, they not only abandoned His laws, but they also altered His name and subsequently identified that altered name (Jove) with a planet, would those actions invalidate the original pronunciation *Yahweh*?

Brian’s next point actually proves the points that we have been establishing in our response to his study: *Yahweh* may indeed be an older form of *Jove*! If *Yahweh* is older, wouldn’t this be evidence of how the once-pure worship of *Yahweh* deteriorated into an altered, but recognizable, form of that original name? Here is Mr. Allen’s point:

The oldest form of Jove is spelled “Ioue”. If these four vowels are said fast enough, as today’s modern promoters teach, you will say “Yahweh!”⁹⁸

If it is true that saying “Ioue” fast enough produces the pronunciation “Yahweh,” we are curious as to what sound is produced if you only say the first syllable fast enough. Should that sound concern us? Again, to reinforce our point in response to Brian’s point: If *Yahweh* or *Ioue* are the oldest forms of *Jove*, how do we know that when we trace the “youngest form” (*Jove*) all the way back to the “oldest form,” we don’t eventually come to the “purest form”? If that “oldest form” is also the “purest form,” then how is that a problem? Also, can Brian Allen demonstrate that the form *Yahuwah* pre-dates the form *Yahweh*? As we noted back in chapter five of this study, Brian has already conceded that form he promotes is not necessarily obtained from the best of

⁹⁶ From *Publish the Name of YAHUWAH*, by B. Earl Allen, chapter 10, op. cit.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

sources, nor are those sources very old. What does that say about how far back we can trace the form *Yahuwah*? Here, once again is his admission, taken from chapter 11 of his study:

It shall now be admitted that these forms are not necessarily from the best of sources, nor are they very old, but are from Catholic writers during the Dark Ages. Nevertheless, they are forms that existed, and should be brought to light for what ever purpose they might serve.⁹⁹

Brian wraps up chapter 10 of his study with an assumption. He assumes that the name *Yahweh* was invented by men:

How can commandment keepers, living in the closing scenes of earth’s history, who profess to love the appearing of the Sovereign YAHUSHUA in the great clouds of glory, be sympathetic to a name that was invented or made up by men’s hands? Especially the Greeks and Gnostics, at that! How can we be sympathetic to the gods of the Romish church?¹⁰⁰

Notice Brian Allen’s inference that the pronunciation *Yahweh* was “invented or made up by men’s hands.” This conclusion is unsubstantiated, which means it is an opinion, but based on what evidence? Brian offers his readers no evidence other than his concern about the heathen association. Brian Allen believes that the form *Yahweh* was invented by heathens because of its association with heathens. This is a totally unjust charge, primarily because regardless of which pronunciation we believe is originally attributed to the Creator’s name, the original pure form of worship associated with that name was eventually corrupted. Brian might express the notion that there is no record of a heathen connection with the pronunciation *Yahuwah* [יְהוָה]. However, we would counter that there is likewise no record of a heathen connection with the pronunciations *Yihowuh* [יְהוֹוָה] or *Yuhewih* [יְהוּוֹה], both of which represent Hebrew consonant/vowel combinations that are as linguistically possible as the pronunciation offered by Brian. Could there be no record of a heathen connection with these pronunciations because *no one* – true believers or otherwise – ever used such pronunciations in reference to the Creator (or any idols)?

⁹⁹ Ibid, chapter 11, op. cit.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, chapter 10, op. cit.

13. The Pure Worship of יהוה Was Corrupted

In the book of 2 Kings, chapter 21, we read about King Manasseh, the son of King Hezekiah. There should be no question that King Manasseh knew how to pronounce the Creator's name. He certainly heard his father use it enough times, plus we read in 2 Chronicles that King Manasseh prayed to יהוה. However, King Manasseh goes down in the record books as a wicked king who corrupted the worship of Yahweh.

In fact, King Manasseh had no problem with worshipping the “Asherah pole” in 2 Kings 21:1-3 (NRSV):

¹ Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign; he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hephzibah.

² He did what was evil in the sight of YHWH, following the abominable practices of the nations that YHWH drove out before the people of Israel.

³ For he rebuilt the high places that his father Hezekiah had destroyed; he erected altars for Baal, made a sacred pole [Hebrew *Asherah*], as King Ahab of Israel had done, worshiped all the host of heaven, and served them.

What is really interesting about King Manasseh is how in 2 Kings 21, absolutely nothing praiseworthy is said about him. If all you read was 2 Kings' account of his life, you would have to conclude that King Manasseh had no redeeming qualities whatsoever.


However, when you read about King Manasseh in 2 Chronicles 33, you come away with a different perspective. Yes, he did evil in the sight of YHWH, no doubt about that. However, according to the account in 2 Chronicles, he later *repented* of all his evil. According to this account, when it was all too obvious that Manasseh had no intention of obeying the Almighty, YHWH sent the Assyrians against Judah. The Assyrians eventually captured Manasseh and took him captive to Assyria. While in distress, Manasseh decided that he would pray to YHWH. YHWH heard his prayer and restored him to power.

Back in Jerusalem, Manasseh commanded all of Judah to serve YHWH. Let's read about that in 2 Chronicles 33:16-17 (NRSV):

¹⁶ He also restored the altar of YHWH and offered on it sacrifices of well-being [peace offerings] and of thanksgiving; and he commanded Judah to serve YHWH Almighty of Israel.

¹⁷ The people, however, still sacrificed at the high places, but only to YHWH their Almighty.

We highlighted the verse 17 because we believe it offers us a key to understanding how people think and act. Keep in mind that Manasseh began to reign at the age of 12. Once he was in charge of the kingdom, we can be certain that he didn't immediately overturn everything his father,



Hezekiah, had instituted. Eventually, however, the worship of YHWH took a back seat to the worship of idols, including the *Asherah pole*. With 55 years of power, you can well imagine that the majority of those years were years of corruption and rebellion against the ways of YHWH.

Late in King Manasseh's reign, however, he "saw the light" and attempted to undo all the evil he had inflicted upon Judah. Nevertheless, as we read in 2 Chronicles 33:17, Manasseh wasn't completely successful at reinstating the pure worship of YHWH.

Suffice it to say that YHWH was by now identified with heathen worship.

Is there a point to all this? Yes, there is! Here is our point:

Let's say that the Creator's name really is pronounced *Yahweh*. If King Hezekiah taught his son Manasseh that the Creator's name is pronounced *Yahweh*, then you can be sure that not only was Manasseh quite familiar with this pronunciation, but so were all the inhabitants of Judah.

We can also be sure that when Manasseh turned to Baal worship and worshipping the *Asherah pole*, he didn't forget how to pronounce the Creator's name. If the pronunciation he had been taught was *Yahweh*, then we can be reasonably certain that he still kept this pronunciation in mind, even though he somehow thought he would be better off worshipping Baal and Asherah.

Years later, when Manasseh came to his senses and reinstated the worship of *Yahweh*, we are certain that he *still* remembered how to pronounce that name, and most likely so did the older folks in and around Jerusalem. Some of the younger generation may not have learned the Creator's name, but that's just speculation on our part.


We also know that King Manasseh was not entirely successful in restoring the pure worship of *Yahweh*. In fact, as soon as King Manasseh's son became king, he turned everyone back to idol worship!

With this backdrop, can you get a picture of how the pure worship of the Almighty can become corrupted?

Consider the possibilities!

We know that the idol *Jove* has a name that is very similar in pronunciation to *Yahweh*. Of course, we know that *Jove* is more akin to the pronunciation *Yove*, and since we know the "v" sound is more accurately a "w" sound in Hebrew, this means the name's pronunciation is really more akin to *Yowe*; moreover, since we know the final "e" is pronounced like "ay" in "way," this makes the pronunciation more accurately something like *Yoweh*, and if you say *Yoweh* really fast, it sounds close enough to *Yahweh*. In fact, Brian Allen makes the point that if you say *Jove* the correct way, and you say it really fast, it comes out like *Yahweh*.

According to Brian, that is a bad thing, and it proves that *Yahweh* is connected to *Jove*, which is the same as *Jupiter*, which in turn can ONLY mean that *Yahweh* is the name of a heathen idol. We submit that there most likely is indeed a connection between *Jove* and *Yahweh*, but not in the



way proposed by Brian Allen. We are persuaded that the Creator's name was originally pronounced *Yahweh*, but when pure worship was abandoned, not only were Yahweh's laws forsaken, but there were also some subtle changes to the way His name is pronounced. The example we provided of King Manasseh is just *one example* of many in which it can be demonstrated that people corrupted the pure worship of the Almighty (regardless of how His name is pronounced), worshipping Him the same way the heathens worshipped their idols. It follows that if a culture decides to disregard the Almighty's commandments, other aspects surrounding the way He was once worshipped, including the pronunciation of His name, will suffer.

Something else to consider is the fact that just as people in today's world relocate for various reasons, so it was in ancient times. People moved. Some people were forcibly moved to other parts of the earth, and I am persuaded that the name *Yahweh* made its way to such places as Italy, including Rome. For all we know, the first people to worship *Yahweh* in Italy did so with pure motives and they did so blamelessly. However, just as our forefathers who penned the constitution could never have foreseen just how far this nation would depart from the ways of purity and honest government, so it was with the purity of the worship of Yahweh.

It may have started with believing that Yahweh must have a consort, and eventually there arose a consort named *Juno*. Of course, other legends eventually surfaced and eventually, whether it be due to dialect or other factors, *Yahweh* became *Jove*.

Also keep in mind that the word *Jupiter* is formed from the compound *Iou* and *pater*. *Iou* is known as another way of saying *Yahu*, and *pater* is the word for *father*.

Is what we have just proposed possible? If it is, would the fact that the pronunciation *Yahweh* degenerated into *Jove* make the original *Yahweh* heathen? We hope you know better.

For those who remain determined that the pronunciation *Yahweh* is "heathen to the core," all we need to do is demonstrate that even *Yah* can be shown to be heathen – at least when we use the same rule promoted by those who try to make the pronunciation *Yahweh* out to be heathen. Yes, even *Yah* can be shown to be "heathen" – at least when we apply the standard promoted by Brian Allen. The following information is taken from the book *Encyclopedia of Gods*:

Yah

Moon god. Egyptian. Yah may have been an import to Egypt brought about by Semitic immigrants who based his profile on the Mesopotamian god Sin. He is mentioned largely from the twentieth century BC onward and is depicted in human form, but can also be represented by the falcon and the ibis.¹⁰¹

Hopefully we can all agree that the Creator *Yah* precedes and pre-dates the Egyptian moon deity named *Yah*. We are not about to repudiate the original *Yah* due to its [later] heathen connection and we doubt that Brian will, either. Just as we recognize the possibility that the pronunciation *Yahweh* was most likely the original pronunciation that was later stained by those who abandoned the once-pure worship, in the same way, we believe that *Yah*, a mutually-agreed-upon, legitimate form of our Heavenly Father's name, was eventually corrupted by unregenerate

¹⁰¹ Michael Jordan, *Encyclopedia of Gods*, Facts on File, Inc., 1993, p. 291.

men. In spite of their contemptible treatment of His name, this does not invalidate the pronunciation of that name.

How did the original, pure *Yah* become the name of the Egyptian moon deity? We can only surmise that an individual or group from Israel or Palestine relocated to Egypt. The form of worship that they brought with them may well have retained its original purity, only for a subsequent generation to introduce deviations that evolved into *Yah* becoming known as a moon deity. Is it possible that later generations, only retaining bits and pieces of the original pure worship, began to identify the moon, not only as the marker for a new month, but as the actual identity of the Creator?

Would the corruption of the original *Yah* to a moon deity make the original *Yah* heathen?

Would the corruption of the original *Yahweh* to *Jove* make the original *Yahweh* heathen?

By applying the reasoning that we must reject the form *Yahweh* due to its “apparent” connection to the idol *Jove*, we not only need to also reject the form *Yah*, but we must additionally reject the form *Yahu*. In chapter six of this study, you may have noticed that author John Hawkins made a reference to the name used by the 5th century BCE Jews of Elephantine Island (17) as supportive evidence for his belief that the Tetragrammaton is pronounced *Yahuwah*. This pronunciation, according to Mr. Hawkins, is *Yahu*. Since the Elephantine Island papyri were composed in Aramaic without vowel points, we can only guess as to how the spelling they used for the Creator’s name was pronounced. In fact, as we are about to see, in Hebrew scholar A. Cowley’s opinion, this three-letter form is pronounced *Yau*. We will address this discrepancy later; for now, the reason we are addressing John Hawkins’ point about the form used by the Jews of Elephantine Island is to call your attention to the fact that the Elephantine Island Jews mixed their worship of the Almighty with other deities as well. As such, and in keeping with the reasoning presented by these *Yahuwah* proponents, Mr. Hawkins and Brian Allen must reject the form יהוה because, by their standard, it is a heathen name. The following information comes from the Introduction of A. Cowley’s work *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.*:

He [the Almighty] is generally called, between Jews, simply ‘Yau the God’ (13¹⁴, 22¹, 25⁶); in dealings with Persians, ‘the God of heaven’ or ‘Yau the God of heaven’ (30^{2.15.27} [but cf. 30^{6.24.26}], 32³ [but cf. 33⁸]), and often in letters. Yet we also find other gods mentioned besides Yau. The most explicit case of this is in 22¹²³⁻¹²⁵ where the temple-fund is to be divided between Yau and ‘Anathbethel in nearly equal shares, and Ishumbethel who receives much less. In the law-courts they swear usually by Yau, but in 44³ an oath is recorded ‘by the temple and by ‘Anathyau’, and in 7⁷ a man is challenged to swear ‘by Herembethel the god.’¹⁰²

¹⁰² From *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.*, by A. Cowley, Oxford at the Clarendon Press, London, England, 1923, Introduction, p. xviii.

Based on the above information, as obtained from the writings of the 5th century BCE Jews of Elephantine Island, they incorporated the names of idols into their worship of יהוה. If we follow the reasoning supplied by Brian Allen, then we must dismiss the name יהוה (which he would pronounce *Yahu*) because of its pagan association with idols such as *Anathbethel*, *Ishumbethel* and *Herembethel*. Although we hope you know better than to reject the name based on its heathen connection with idol worship, this is nevertheless the line of reasoning that Brian Allen uses with his rejection of the pronunciation *Yahweh*.

As a final point of consideration, please consider how all it took for the inhabitants of Jerusalem to pollute the Creator's name was to forsake the observance of the Sabbatical year and releasing their slaves at that time:

¹⁵ You yourselves recently repented and did what was right in my sight by proclaiming liberty to one another, and you made a covenant before me in the house that is called by my name;

¹⁶ But then you turned around and profaned my name when each of you took back your male and female slaves, who you had set free according to their desire, and you brought them again into subjection to be your slaves. (Jeremiah 34:15-16, NRSV)

When the people rejected the covenant they had made with Yahweh, they the same as corrupted their worship of Him, and in so doing, they profaned His name.

According to the Almighty, the house of Israel profaned His name wherever they were scattered. Notice what it says in Ezekiel 36:19-28 (NRSV):

¹⁹ I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed through the countries; in accordance with their conduct and their deeds I judged them.

²⁰ But when they came to the nations, wherever they came, they profaned my holy name, in that it was said of them, "These are the people of YHWH, and yet they had to go out of his land."

²¹ But I had concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations to which they came.

²² Therefore say unto the house of Israel, thus saith YHWH Almighty; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went.

²³ And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am YHWH, saith YHWH Almighty, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.

²⁴ For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.



²⁵ Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

²⁶ A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

²⁷ And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

²⁸ And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your Almighty.

Please notice that when the Israelites profaned the Creator's name, He didn't explain that they had forgotten how to properly pronounce it. It wasn't their pronunciation that was in question here; it was their *conduct* in how they represented that name in the places where they were scattered.

We remain persuaded that one of the many places where the Israelites were scattered is Italy. They brought their corrupted form of worship there, but that doesn't mean they also brought a corrupted or even mangled form of the Creator's name with them, although even that scenario must be considered as a possibility. We are persuaded that they brought the name *Yahweh* with them, but their unregenerate, heathen practices made the form of worship that should be associated with His name unrecognizable when compared with what was originally ordained.

Thus, we once again ask the question, "Would the corruption of the original *Yahweh* to *Jove* make the original *Yahweh* heathen?"

To further illustrate the unjust approach exhibited by Brian Allen, we have decided to incorporate screen shots on the following pages of a tract that he distributed to us and other acquaintances back in the late 1990's. Of particular interest is his attempt (at the bottom of the first page) to draw a parallel between the "Yahuwah vs. Yahweh" dispute and the "Elijah vs. the prophets of Baal" contest of I Kings chapter 18. In presenting the "Yahuwah vs. Yahweh" challenge, he goes on to ask, "*How long halt ye between two opinions?*" (c.f., I Kings 18:21). This approach is at once disappointing, unjust and, as we have seen, wrong. We will address this and other improper devices that Brian Allen incorporates into his writings on the pages that follow.

This is a double-sided tract that we were given by Brian Allen in the late 1990's:

*The 1611 King James Version was preserved by the Creator to reveal the language controversy, concerning His very own name !
The New Age Bible Versions cover up the controversy !*

*Whats wrong with this statement ? "Several early Greek writers of the Christian Church testify that the name was pronounced Yahweh." The Modern Judaica Excl. Vol 7, p 679
יהוה (YHWH) is a Hebrew name !*

<i>HEBREW BASE</i>		<i>Compare names vs.</i>	<i>GREEK BASE</i>	
Bethaniah	(Heb)		Bethanie	John 12:1
Chavah	Genesis 3:20 margin		Eve	Genesis 3:20
Gomorrhah	Genesis 19:24		Gomorrhoe	II Esdras 2:8
Jeremiah			Ieremie	I Esdras 2:1
Ioppa	Ezra 3:7		Ioppe	I Esdras 5:55
Ioshah	1 Chron 4:34		Iose	Luke 3:29 (Compare NTV)
Ioshua	Exodus 17:9		Iosue	I Esdras 5:26
Iudah	Genesis 29:35		Iude	(N/T Book)
Korah	Numbers 16:1		Core	Jude 11
Malachi or Malchiah			Malachie	II Esdras 1:40
Noah	Genesis 5:29		Noe	Matthew 24:37
Nogah	1 Chron 3:7		Nogge	Luke 3:25
Oshea	Numbers 13:8		Osee	Romans 9:25
Tekoa	2 Chron 11:6		Thecoe	1 Macc 9:33
Tobiah	Ezra 2:60		Tobie	1 Macc 5:13
Zechariah			Zacharie	II Esdras 1:40

(Hebrew) **YAHUWAH**
1 Kings 17:1 margin

VS.

Yahweh (Greek)

How long ha it ye between two opinions ?



Greek writers

IAUE - Josephus, to the Greeks
(Anti. i. 8. 1, wars v. 5, 7)

Ιαουε - Clement of Alexandria

Ιαβε - Theodoret & Epiphanius

Iae - Origen

Jove - Horner

These testify to the "e" at the end !

Other sources

IAUA - Adairs, History of the American
Indians, the Greeks p. 218

Ioua - Sabbath keepers on the Island of Iona
(7th Century)

Yuah - Indonesians

Iowa - Indians

Jova - Romans

Yohouah - Ramundus Martini A.D.1278

Iohouah - Porchetus A.D. 1303

Yah Wah - Indians (Adairs History of the
American Indians p. 218

Yohewah - Indians (Adairs History of the
American Indians p.218

Iehovah - Peter Galitin A.D. 1518

These all testify to YAHUWAH, "a" at the end !

***Can the Greek Language transliterate the name YAHUWAH and
YAHUSHUA correctly ?***

Below is a list of names that they did end with the "uah" source

	(LXX)	
Phuwah	Φουα	Genesis 46:13
Puah	Φουα	Exodus 1:15
Ishwah	Ιεσσουα	Genesis 46:17
Cathua	Καθουα	I Esdras 5:30
Zatthua	Ζατθουα	Ezra 2:8
Jaddua	Ιεδδουα	Nehemiah 10:22

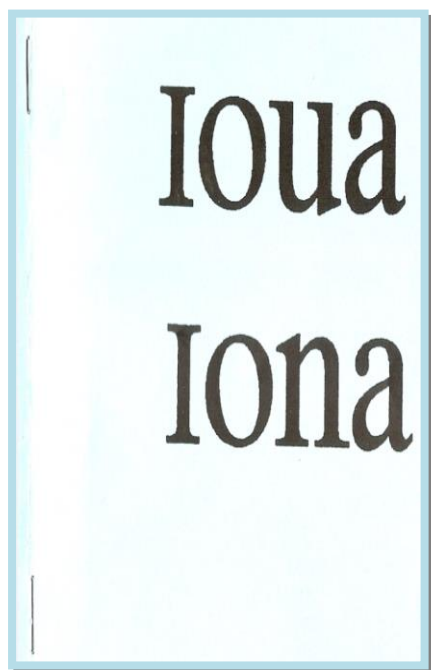
Why not Ιασσουα, instead of Ιησουε ?

Ezra 2:6 (LXX)

Carefully Examining the Above Document and the “Guilt by Association” Approach

In the above document, Brian Allen exhibits the ability to effectively harness the power of persuasive techniques – but does he do it righteously? Here are some tactics that I observed in Mr. Allen’s tract:


1. **Guilt by Association** – Anything associated with Greek authors or the Greek culture must be summarily dismissed and rejected on the basis of the fact that the Greeks worshipped heathen idols.
2. **Piling on the Supportive Evidence While Skipping on Opposing Evidence** – This certainly makes the scales appear to tip in favor of the desired position, but is the “supportive evidence” as weighty as we’re led to believe? If you examine Brian’s document, you will notice that he lists five sources in support of the pronunciation “Yahweh,” whereas a whopping TEN are offered in support of the “-wah” ending! It looks like “-wah” wins! On a side note, we can only wonder why Brian Allen focuses so heavily on the *ending* of the Tetragrammaton, while not addressing the fact that different American Indians have conflicting *beginnings* (e.g., “Yah Wah” vs. “Yohewah”). Are we to believe that even though the Indians apparently couldn’t reach an agreement on how the first syllable is pronounced, their unanimity on the final syllable serves as evidence that they knew how it is pronounced?
3. **Dating the Sources That Support His Position (and they’re pretty old) while Omitting Dates for the Ones that Don’t Support His Position (oops, those sources turn out to be even older than the ones used in support of his position!).** Note: Contrary to Brian Allen’s notation, Josephus never wrote out the Tetragrammaton, not even as “IAUE.” Clement of Alexandria lived from 150 CE until 215 CE (there is some debate as to whether he wrote the Tetragrammaton as “Iaoue” or “Iaou”). Epiphanius lived from 320 CE until 403 CE. Theodoret lived from 393 CE until 457 CE. Brian Allen’s most ancient source, Sabbathkeepers on the island of Iona, goes back to the 7th century CE. However, in reading his booklet entitled “Ioua Iona,” he does not offer evidence supporting how he came up with this time frame. Also, you may have noticed that Brian doesn’t provide dates for the opposing position; he only supplies dating for the position that he supports.



This is the cover to the study “Ioua Iona,” which Brian gave us in the late ‘90’s.

4. **(Falsely) Associating “Yahweh” with Baal Worship** (“How long halt ye between two opinions? If YHWH be Almighty, follow Him: but if Baal, *then* follow him!” I Kings 18:21). This approach constitutes drawing the proverbial “line in the sand,” which Brian Allen has drawn. By pitting

“Yahuwah” against “Yahweh” while asking, “How long halt ye between two opinions?” Brian equates “Yahweh” with idol worship! Until June and I learned of this categorization, we were



content to “agree to disagree” with those who are more persuaded that the Creator’s name is pronounced *Yahuwah*, *Yahuah*, etc. It is only because of this unjust association that we decided to put our reasons for believing as we do in writing.

14. References (Mis-)Used Against the Pronunciation “Yahweh”

A. The *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*

Every now and then we are challenged regarding our persuasion that the Tetragrammaton is pronounced *Yahweh*. In 2010, a visitor to our home presented us with his reasoning for believing that the most correct pronunciation is *Yahuwah*. He shared much of the same information that Brian Allen offers in his study, but he also produced a reference offering a conclusion that we had not seen or heard of before. His new-found evidence came from the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, a reference that we did not have in our home at that time.

Before we proceed with addressing the argument presented in the *Theological Word Book of the Old Testament*, we would like to remind our readers to exercise great caution whenever perusing references, paying especially close attention to remarks that, even though they are made by scholars, amount to opinions that aren't offered with supportive evidence. In other words, we need to beware of men's opinions. An example of what we are referring to is the remark found in *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, where the author writes, “The New Moon is still, and the Sabbath originally was, dependent upon the lunar cycle.”¹⁰³ Was the Sabbath originally dependent on the lunar cycle? Even though the author offered no supportive evidence for his assertion, a group of believers known as Lunar Sabbatarians took his claim to heart and began observing what is known as “Lunar Sabbaths.” What makes the author's unsupported, undocumented statement especially interesting is the fact that in a separate encyclopedia article, he states that he doesn't know how the Sabbath actually originated. He wrote, “The origin of the Sabbath is obscure.”¹⁰⁴ Certainly, then, we need to beware of accepting the validity of assertions, regardless of how authoritative and scholarly the source may seem to be.

Having said this, we realize that someone may argue that June and I “just accept” without question the opinion of Wilhelm Gesenius, who presents the original Tetragrammaton pronunciation as being *Yahweh*. However, those who examine our reasoning a little more carefully will understand that we do not agree with Gesenius based on his credentials; rather, we understand and agree with his reasoning for assigning credibility to the pronunciation as offered by Epiphanius and Theodoret, who explained that the Samaritans pronounced the Tetragrammaton as *Iabe*. Since Judaism pronounced condemnation upon the Samaritans for pronouncing the divine Name “as it is spelled out,” it seems reasonable to conclude that the Samaritans were pronouncing the divine Name correctly. If anyone can produce information demonstrating that the Samaritans actually pronounced the Tetragrammaton in a different manner than the one explained by Epiphanius and Theodoret, we would like to examine that evidence. Until then, we agree with Gesenius' reasoning for concluding that the most likely original pronunciation is *Yahweh*. We believe, then, that anyone who might accuse us of “just accepting” the conclusion of Wilhelm Gesenius based on his level of scholarship is not looking at all the facts.

¹⁰³ Source: *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. 5, Edited by Isaac Landman, The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, Inc., New York, 1941, article “Holidays,” by Max Joseph, p. 410.

¹⁰⁴ Source: *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. 9, Edited by Isaac Landman, The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, Inc., New York, 1943, article “Sabbath,” by Max Joseph, p. 295.

This brings us to the reference that was presented to us back in 2010, the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*.¹⁰⁵ Let’s take a look at the excerpt that was used in an attempt to dispel *Yahweh* as being the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton:

An alternative possibility for the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton should be mentioned. **Actually, there is a problem with the pronunciation "Yahweh."** It is a strange combination of old and late elements. The first extra-Biblical occurrence of the name is in the Moabite Stone of about 850 BC. At that time vowel letters were just beginning to be used in Hebrew. If YHWH represents a spelling earlier than 900 BC (as would seem likely), the final "h" should have been pronounced. The pronunciation *Yahweh* assumes the ending of a lamed he verb, but these verbs in Moses' day ended in a "y" (cf. for *bānā* the Ug. impf. *ybn̄y*). So the ending "eh" is a late form. But in Hebrew in late times a "w" that began a word or syllable changed to "y" (as in the pe-waw verbs and the verb *hāyā* itself). So the "w" of *Yahweh* represents a pre-mosaic pronunciation but the final "eh" represents probably a post-davidic form.¹⁰⁶

The information supplied above by late professor and author J. Barton Payne is missing a vital explanation as to how he *knew* that “Yahweh” is a combination of “old and late elements.” He seems to have made an attempt to explain his reasoning by referencing the Moabite Stone and how vowel letters at that time (850 BCE) were just beginning to be used in Hebrew. How could Dr. Payne have known that, prior to 850 BCE, vowel letters were not used in Hebrew? It is our understanding that vowel letters, i.e., the characters used to denote vowels, have *never* been used in Hebrew, but that four letters (the *aleph*, *he*, *waw* and *yod*) are also employed to represent long vowels. Did Professor Payne believe these four Hebrew characters were not used to represent vowels prior to 850 BCE? If so, how could he have known this to be true, especially since the Hebrew alphabet prior to the Babylonian Captivity consisted of Paleo-Hebrew characters? How can anyone point to the Paleo-Hebrew words that were written in 850 BCE (and earlier) and state with certainty, “There! See that? Those Paleo-Hebrew characters prove that the *aleph*, *he*, *waw* and *yod* were not used as vowels during those days!” Dr. Payne offered no explanation for how he knew that his information is correct – and how he knew that Paleo-Hebrew words written *after* 850 BCE did contain vowel letters.

Professor Payne ends his paragraph by concluding that the *—eh* ending “probably” represents a post-Davidic form. His use of the word “probably” betrays his own uncertainty about his conclusion, and his explanation doesn’t really make any sense (e.g., how does he know the verbs in Moses’ day ended in a “y,” and how would this prove that YHWH couldn’t have ended with an

¹⁰⁵ This same reference is used as supportive evidence against the pronunciation *Yahweh* in Richard Lattier’s study, “Do We Really Know the Pronunciation?” which may be accessed at the following link: <http://yahushua.net/YHWH.htm>. Mr. Lattier, in citing the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, does not explain how Professor Payne could have known how Paleo-Hebrew was pronounced during the days of either Moses or King David.

¹⁰⁶ From *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, Vol. 1, R. Laird Harris, Editor, Moody Press, Chicago, IL, 1980, p. 210. This excerpt is found within the listing for word #484, which was authored by J. Barton Payne, Ph.D., Professor of Old Testament, Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, MO.

—eh sound?). Again, how can anyone look at the Paleo-Hebrew characters, without any additional reference to guide them, and know with certainty how the words they formed were pronounced?

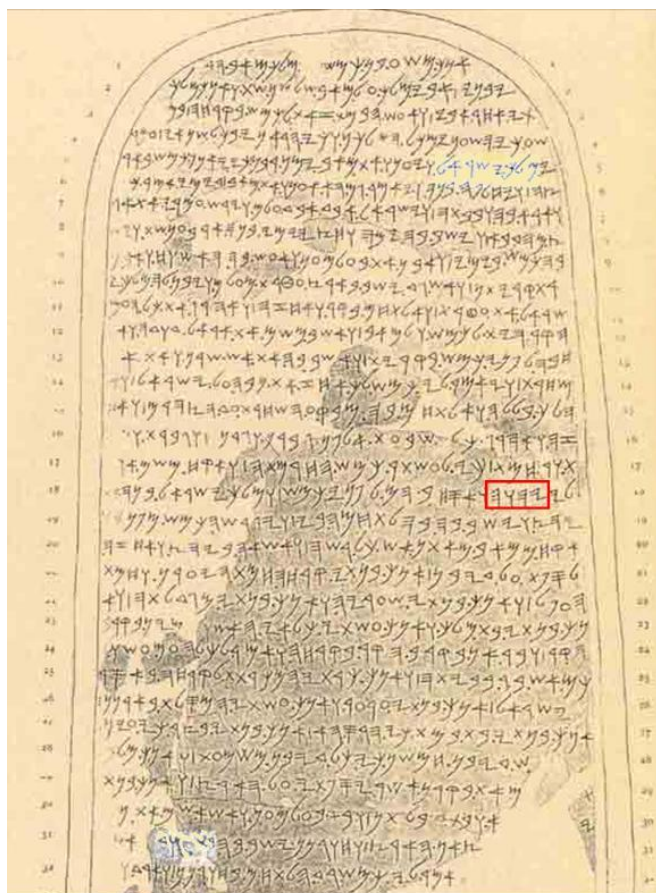


Illustration of the Moabite Stone, taken from the May/June 1994 issue of *Biblical Archaeology Review*. The Tetragrammaton (יהוה) is highlighted in red.

How can anyone look at the Paleo-Hebrew rendering of the Tetragrammaton (יהוה) and authoritatively state, “During the days of King David, that final ending was not pronounced —eh”?

In spite of Professor Payne’s authoritative, albeit unsubstantiated, comments, he elsewhere concedes that he doesn’t really know how the Tetra-grammaton was originally pronounced:


Therefore we may well hold that YHWH does not come from the verb *hāwā* which is cited in the first person *’ehyeh* “I will be,” but is an old word of unknown origin which sounded something like what the verb *hāwā* sounded in Moses’ day. In this case we do not know what the pronunciation was; we can only speculate. However, if the word were spelled with four letters in Moses’ day, we would expect it to have had more than two syllables, for at that period there were no vowel letters. All the letters were sounded.¹⁰⁷

While we agree with Professor Payne’s conclusion that ultimately we can only speculate as to the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton, he seemed to be bent on eliminating the form *Yahweh* as a possibility. Not only did he not explain to his readers how he could have known that the Tetragrammaton could not have ended with an —eh sound, but in the above paragraph, he also failed to explain his authoritative remark that “all the [Hebrew] letters were sounded” in Moses’ day. How could he have known this to be true? Unless he or anyone can provide proof that each and every letter of the Paleo-Hebrew alphabet had to be pronounced when placed within a word, we will continue to believe that certain letters were not necessarily pronounced, just as it is today.

Dr. Payne’s commentary on the Tetragrammaton continues:

At the end of the OT period the Elephantine papyri write the word YHW to be read either *yāhû* (as in names like Shemayahu) or *yāhō* (as in names like Jehozadek). The pronunciation *yāhō* would be favored by the later Greek form *iaō* found in Qumran Greek fragments (2d or 1st centuries B.C.) and in Gnostic materials of the first Christian

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, p. 211.



centuries. Theodoret in the fourth century A.D. states that the Samaritans pronounced it *iabe*. Clement of Alexandria (early 3d century A.D.) vocalized it *iaoue*. These are quite late witnesses and seem to contradict the much earlier Jewish witness of Elephantine and the name elements, none of which end in “*eh*.”¹⁰⁸

The above commentary certainly offers no support for pronouncing the Tetragrammaton with either the *-eh* or the *-ah* ending. Indeed, it would suggest that the discussion he proposes should be over whether the Tetragrammaton should end with a *-hu* sound or a *-ho* sound. Of course, the Elephantine Papyri were composed in Aramaic with the “YHW” (יהו) spelling for the Almighty’s name, so the final letter of the Tetragrammaton is missing from these papyri. Even if the Tetragrammaton had been written out in full, the lack of vowels in the Aramaic text would leave us to question how those 5th century BCE Jews pronounced the Tetragrammaton. Thus, the Elephantine Papyri offer us no substantial evidence as to the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. Hebrew scholar A. Cowley, in his book *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.*, expressed the view that the form יהו should be pronounced *Yau’*:

The colonists [of 5th century BCE Elephantine Island] were not better than their fathers—nor perhaps much worse. To begin with, they regarded themselves as specially devoted to the worship of the national God, whom they call יהו. This name, as I have argued elsewhere, is not an abbreviation of יהוה, but an earlier form, and only another way of writing the earliest form יו. As the ה seems to be a mere vowel-sign, or perhaps *hamza*, I have adopted here the transliteration *Yau’*, as an approximate pronunciation, rather than the customary *Yahu* or *Yeho*, which are no forms.¹⁰⁹

Please understand that we are not necessarily endorsing A. Cowley’s view that the form יהו should be pronounced *Yau’*; rather, our point is that the lack of vowels from the Aramaic documents lends to speculation, even among the most eminent scholars, as to how יהו was pronounced in ancient times. Notice that Dr. Payne, in his commentary, observed that the Qumran Greek fragments provide evidence as to how יהו was transliterated (*yāhō*). Would Brian Allen have the same regard for ancient Greek fragments?

With regard to the “late witnesses” referenced above by Dr. Payne, Greek theologians such as Theodoret and Epiphanius may be late witnesses, but the Greek *iabe* rendering of the Tetragrammaton represents the only known transliteration outside of the Hebrew language, and as we demonstrated in chapter 10, this form offers us evidence as to how the Samaritans pronounced the Tetragrammaton, much to the annoyance of Judaism.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ From *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.*, by A. Cowley, Oxford at the Clarendon Press, London, England, 1923, Introduction, p. xviii.

We find it interesting that *Yahuwah* proponents are quick to offer select quotes from the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, but they omit quoting a paragraph from page 211 of the same article. On that page, Dr. Payne issued a statement that could be construed as a scholarly testimony against the pronunciation *Yahuwah*:

In the post-biblical period, reverence for the ineffable name “Yahweh” caused it to be supplanted in synagogue reading (but not in writing) with the noun *’ādōnāy*, “my master,” or Lord. **Next, when medieval Jewish scholars began to insert vowels to accompany the consonantal OT text, they added to YHWH the Masoretic vowel points for *’ādōnāy*; and the actual writing became an impossible *YăHōWāH*, the asv “Jehovah.”**¹¹⁰

We realize the “impossible *YăHōWāH*” is not *quite* the same as the pronunciation offered by proponents of the form *Yahuwah*, but it is nevertheless very close and we highly doubt that the author would have recognized the form *YăHūWāH* in place of *YăHōWāH*. Thus, while it is certain that Professor Payne was not satisfied with *Yahweh* as representing the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton, at the same time, he didn’t really offer any clues that he supported the pronunciation upheld by *Yahuwah* advocates.

If we were to engage ourselves in a “tit-for-tat” battle of scholarly references supporting the form *Yahuwah* versus those that support the form *Yahweh*, we could just as easily parade the following “Yahweh” article found in *Unger’s Bible Dictionary*:

Yahweh (yă’wê). The Hebrew tetragrammaton (YHWH) traditionally pronounced Jehovah (*q.v.*) is now known to be correctly vocalized *yahwê*. New inscriptional evidence from the second and first millennia B. C. point toward this fact. The old view of Le Clerc, modernly propounded by Paul Haupt and developed by W. F. Albright, has commended itself in the light of the phonetic development and grammatical evidence of increased knowledge of Northwest Semitic and kindred tongues. This thesis holds *Yahwe* to be originally a finite causative verb from the Northwest Semitic root *hwy* “to be, to come into being,” so that the divine name would mean “he causes to be, or exist,” i. e., “he creates.” Amorite personal names after 2,000 B. C. lend support to the Haupt-Albright view, demonstrating that the employment of the causative stem *yahwe* “he creates” was in vogue in the linguistic background of early Hebrew. Another recent etymology is that of Sigmund Mowinckel and James Montgomery. This suggests that *Yahu* (an abbreviated form of *Yahwe* current in personal names) is a compound formation of *ya* (O!) and *hu* or *huwa* (he), “O He!” The name *Yahwe* has been found to be unique to Israel and has not been verified as the name of any deity outside Israel. See *Jehovah, Elohim*.

Bibliography. Julian Obermann, “The Divine Name YHWH in the Light of Recent Discoveries,” *Jour. Bib. Lit.* 68 (1949), 301-323; B. Alfrink, *Theologische Zeitschrift* V (1949) pp. 72ff; B. Alfrink, B.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.



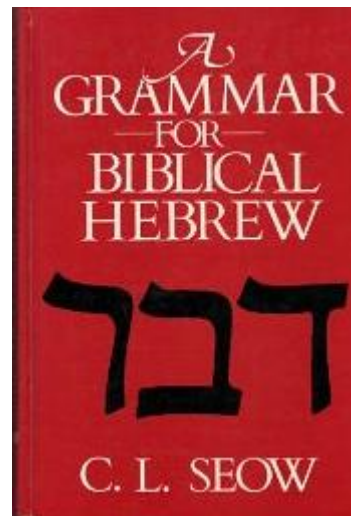
D. Eerdmans and G. J. Thierry *Oudtestamentische Studien* V (1948),
1-62.¹¹¹

As authoritative as the above article is, it, like the *Theological Word Book of the Old Testament*, falls short of actually proving how the Tetragrammaton was pronounced in ancient times. We can find Hebrew linguistic arguments supportive of both the pronunciation *Yahuwah* and the pronunciation *Yahweh*, but we don't really achieve clarity until we examine the evidence from transliterations into other languages.

¹¹¹ From *Unger's Bible Dictionary*, by Merrill F. Unger, Moody Press, Chicago, IL, 1967, p. 1,177.

B. Misrepresenting C. L. Seow's *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*

There are bound to be scholarly references whose authors do not believe that the Tetragrammaton was originally pronounced Yahweh. Invariably, the author will state his opinion regarding how words and letters were sounded in ancient Hebrew. The only thing is, we have already addressed our concern about this type of scholarship in our review of Dr. Payne's article in the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. How do these scholars know, just by looking at a word spelled out in the Paleo-Hebrew language, that it had to be pronounced a certain way? It is by transliterating the word or name in another language, such as Greek, that we are able to confirm such pronunciations. Otherwise, as exhibited previously by Wilhelm Gesenius, we can come up with eight different possible pronunciations of such a word as קטל, all of which would be classified as "linguistically correct." In the same way, the multiple pronunciation options offered by various individuals and groups can each be classified as "linguistically correct"; the question, then, is not so much how "linguistically correct" our pronunciation of choice is, but rather which pronunciation matches the transliteration as recorded in other languages.




According to *Yahuwah* proponent Richard Lattier, the author of a Hebrew grammar book titled *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew* apparently knew something that Wilhelm Gesenius did not – that in ancient times words with an *-eh* ending did not end with the Hebrew ה. Here is what Mr. Lattier has to say:

In the book, "A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew" by C.L. Seow, it states that nouns with an "eh" ending originally ended with a (w) or a (y). Since we do not believe that the name of the Almighty has changed in spelling or pronunciation, we do not believe that his name can have the pronunciation of yahweh. In other words, even though words in the Hebrew language have changed or evolved, we do not believe that this is true of the Heavenly Father's name. Also, even if it were possible for the spelling of the tetragrammaton to have changed, the pronunciation still would not have originally been yahweh.¹¹²

Our first concern about the above commentary involves the fact that author Richard Lattier did not provide a direct quote from the reference which he claims supports his view. Where in his book did author C. L. Seow write that Hebrew nouns that (currently) have an *-eh* ending originally ended with a "w" or a "y" and why didn't Mr. Lattier take the time to offer his readers the precise page where the actual quote can be found?

¹¹² From the article "Do We Really Know the Pronunciation?" by Richard Lattier. This study may be read in its entirety by accessing the following link: <http://yahushua.net/YHWH.htm>.



We are reminded of the sort of propaganda that is commonly used by high-profile companies to advertise their products. It's known as the “celebrity bandwagon.”¹¹³ They have found that gullible consumers are more apt to purchase products that are promoted by celebrities, such as movie stars and athletes, even though other companies may offer products of the same or higher quality. This same principle applies to the way in which some agenda-driven believers, unable to restrain an overzealous passion to promote their teachings, attempt to persuade their readers. They will cite high-profile theologians as a means of persuading naïve readers that their view is correct. Please don't misunderstand: We support citing scholarly references for supportive evidence validating our views, but we have to be careful about how we go about it. We have already seen where Brian Allen made some wrong turns in his attempt to use *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* as justification for his belief that the Tetragrammaton must consist of three syllables; nevertheless, we can at least give Mr. Allen credit for correctly citing the page number where he obtained his information. Richard Lattier, however, seems to expect his readers to “just accept” his paraphrasing from Seow's *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*. Certainly, if he tells his readers that his view has the support of a respected author's Hebrew grammar book, then his view must be the correct one, right? Author C. L. Seow, as it turns out, is a highly-respected Hebrew scholar, and as of this writing, he is a Professor of Old Testament Language and Literature at Princeton Theological Seminary.

At the time when we read Richard Lattier's article, we didn't own a copy of *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*; however, we were able to obtain an inexpensive used copy of the book and we are glad we took the time to get it. The advantage to owning a used copy of a Hebrew textbook, at least in this case, is that of reviewing all the handwritten notes in the book, courtesy of its previous owner. C. L. Seow did not offer his view of how the Tetragrammaton should be pronounced. Instead, he consistently wrote it out as “YHWH.” The previous owner of the textbook apparently had a professor who offered his view that “YHWH” is vocalized “Yahweh.” This is because the student scribbled “Yahweh” next to the C. L. Seow's explanation of the Tetragrammaton. Regardless of how the student's professor explained the vocalization of יהוה, C. L. Seow did not venture an opinion. In fact, he describes the Tetragrammaton as “not precisely vocalized”:

יהוה YHWH (the name of Israel's God). Not pronounced by pious Jews and, hence, not precisely vocalized. In the Hebrew Bible, the vowels of **אֲדֹנָי** “my Lord” are superimposed on the “Tetragrammaton” (thus, **יְהוָה** or **יְהוֹה**). When the consonantal text has **אֲדֹנָי יְהוה** “my lord YHWH,” the text is pointed with the vowels for **אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהִים** “my lord, God” (i.e., **יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים**)¹¹⁴

¹¹³ Cf., for example, the article “Celebrity Ad Bandwagon a Costly Trend,” by Astrid Wendlandt and Antonella Ciancio, Reuters Friday, June 4, 2010. In the article, one of the chief executives who was interviewed commented, “The problem with using celebrities [in advertising campaigns] is that it works, that is why everybody is doing it.” This article may be read in its entirety by accessing the following link:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/06/04/us-luxury-summit-celebrities-idUSTRE6533XK20100604>

¹¹⁴ Choon Leong Seow, *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*, Abingdon Press, Nashville, TN, 1987, p. 37.

Some folks may protest our presenting the above commentary by C. L. Seow because it makes our study overly repetitive. After all, we previously mentioned the fact that the Masoretes deliberately “mis-vowel-pointed” the Tetragrammaton back in chapter one. Nevertheless, the above quote serves to demonstrate that C. L. Seow is not “precisely” certain of how the Creator’s name was originally pronounced. We will also see, later in this study, that some authors are persuaded that the Masoretes correctly vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton as *Yehowah*. In view of the above commentary, it hardly seems likely that author C. L. Seow would embrace any pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton as necessarily being “the original pronunciation.” June and I searched through Professor Seow’s grammar book in a vain attempt to locate the information that *Yahuwah* proponent Richard Lattier attributes to him, but this one commentary in and of itself demonstrates that Lattier misrepresented the book’s author.

As we further examined Professor Seow’s Hebrew grammar book, we saw the signs of how Richard Lattier came to misinterpret the information presented therein. As it turns out, Seow backs up Gesenius’ comments that (a) the missing vowels in the original writings effectively opens the door for many pronunciation possibilities and (b) we can best understand how Hebrew words were originally pronounced by transcriptions into other languages. First, let’s review Seow’s commentary about the pronunciation possibilities:

a. In the earliest phase of the development of Hebrew, vowels were not indicated at all. Thus, for example, **שֶׁדֶק** could be vocalized and translated in numerous ways: *šāḏēqā* (she is righteous), *šāḏēqū* (they are righteous), *šiddēqā* (she proved righteous), *šāddēqō* (his being righteous), *šēdeq* (righteousness), *šidqī* (my righteousness), *šidqō* (his righteousness), *šēḏāqā* (righteousness), *šaddīq* (righteous), etc. In the premonarchic period of Israel’s history, all these words would have been written simply with the three consonants, *šdq*.

b. In the monarchic period, the alphabetic signs **ה**, **י**, and **ו** were introduced at the end of words to indicate final long vowels in the three vowel classes. The signs used in this way are not real consonants; they are merely markers indicating long vowels. Hence, they are called *matres lectionis* (mothers of reading).

The addition of these *matres* greatly reduces the options for translation. For example, if we consider again the forms of *šdq*, adding **ה** would limit the possibilities to words with final ā. Thus, **שֶׁדֶקה** may be either *šāḏēqā* (she is righteous), *šiddēqā* (she proved righteous), or *šēḏāqā* (righteousness).¹¹⁵

In the above commentary, author C. L. Seow not only reiterates the same point brought out by Gesenius – that the lack of vowel points presents numerous pronunciation possibilities – but he also explains that Hebrew characters were used as “alphabetic signs” to indicate pronunciation long before vowel points were introduced by the Masoretes. The alphabetic signs were not used to **change** an original pronunciation, but rather to **indicate** original pronunciation and “reduce the pronunciation options.” In other words, they were designed to help the reader to better determine how the word should be pronounced. It appears that Richard Lattier, in his article, may have come away with the impression that the addition of the **ה** at the end of words during the monarchic period

¹¹⁵ Ibid, pp. 8-9.

changed the final syllable of words from an “original *-ah*” sound to an “*-eh*” sound. However, that is not what Professor Seow wrote.

Based on the commentary above from Seow’s book, we are persuaded that he would agree that, in the case of the Tetragrammaton, *if* the final ה was added during the monarchic period, it was to reveal to the reader that the final syllable of the Name has an “*-eh*” (ā) sound.

The actual place in C. L. Seow’s book where we believe Richard Lattier either misread or misinterpreted information is found on page 24:

Nouns and verbs that originally ended in ך or ך will normally appear with final ה. In the lexica, such roots are listed as III-ה, together with roots that are genuinely III-ה. For simplicity sake, we will call original III-ך roots III-ה (to be distinguished from original III-ה). III-ה nouns frequently end in ה. (e.g., שדה field, חזה seer). A few nouns retain the III-ך (e.g., פרי fruit, כלי vessel).¹¹⁶

Please note that author C. L. Seow did *not* write (as claimed by Richard Lattier) that “nouns with an ‘eh’ ending originally ended with a (w) or a (y).” However, he *did* write that nouns and verbs originally ending with ך or ך will normally appear with a final ה. His point was, the “*-eh*” ending (ה.) was used to help the reader in determining how the original word was pronounced. Thus, *if* the Tetragrammaton was originally spelled יהוה, the final ה was added to assist the reader with pronouncing the Name. Nowhere in Seow’s book did he mention that the addition of the final ה served to alter the original pronunciation.

We therefore see that Richard Lattier’s remark that the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton “would not have originally been yahweh” – while touting C. L. Seow’s Hebrew grammar book to prove his point – is without any foundation or substance. From our perspective, this is an example of a non-Hebrew scholar asserting himself as though he is one (at the expense of naïve readers). We would certainly like to know on what basis Mr. Lattier is qualified to authoritatively state that the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton would not have been *Yahweh*. Based on our own independent research, which includes the testimony of renowned Hebrew scholars Wilhelm Gesenius and Franz Delitzsch, the original pronunciation certainly *could* have been *Yahweh*. Nothing from Professor C. L. Seow’s book leads us to believe it couldn’t have.

Finally, in reviewing C. L. Seow’s book *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*, we found that he agrees with Wilhelm Gesenius and Edward Horowitz that the best way to determine how Hebrew words were anciently pronounced is by learning how those words were transliterated in other languages:

Hebrew is an ancient Semitic language. Thus it is not easy for the modern English speaker to reproduce, or even know, the exact sounds

¹¹⁶ Ibid, p. 24.



of the Hebrew phonemes. Nevertheless, we are able to reconstruct from tradition, and from transcriptions of Hebrew in other languages, the approximate pronunciation of each consonant.¹¹⁷

Notice that Professor Seow didn't advise his students that the best way to determine the pronunciation of ancient Hebrew words is by learning all the Hebrew "grammar rules." We have already determined that both *Yahuwah* and *Yahweh* vocalizations follow the Hebrew grammar rules; the question is, "How was the Creator's name transliterated into other languages?"

C. Paradox of the Anonymous Name – Examining the Conclusion of Gérard Gertoux

¹¹⁷ Ibid, p. 1.

Richard Lattier, in his study “Do We Really Know the Pronunciation?” also cites an article by French researcher Gérard Gertoux:


The following is taken from an article entitled, "Paradox of the Anonymous Name" by Gérard GERTOUX, a Hebrew scholar in France, a specialist of the Tetragram; He has been president of the Association Biblique de Recherche d'Anciens Manuscrits since 1991...

Flavius Josephus, who understood the priesthood of this time very well, made it clear that at the time the Romans attacked the Temple, the Jews called upon the fear-inspiring name of [Elohim] (The Jewish War V:438). He wrote he had no right to reveal this name to his reader (Jewish Antiquities II:275), however he did give information of primary importance on the very pronunciation he wanted to conceal. However, in his work The Jewish War V:235 he stated: «The high priest had his head dressed with a tiara of fine linen embroidered with a purple border, and surrounded by another crown in gold which had in relief the sacred letters; these ones are four vowels» This description is excellent; moreover, it completes the one found in Exodus 28:36-39. However, as we know, there are no vowels in Hebrew, but only consonants. Regrettably, instead of explaining this apparent abnormality, certain commentators (influenced by the form Yahweh) mislead the readers of Josephus by indicating in a note, that this reading was IAUE. Now, it is obvious that the ‘sacred letters’ indicated the Tetragram written in paleo-Hebrew, not Greek. Furthermore, in Hebrew these consonants Y, W, H, do serve as vowels; they are in fact called ‘mothers of reading’ (matres lectionis). The writings of Qumrân show that in the first century Y used as vowel served only to indicate the sounds I and É, W served only for the sounds Ô and U, and a final H served for the sound A. These equivalences may be verified in thousands of words. Additionally, the H was used as a vowel only at the end of words, never within them. So, to read the name YHWH as four vowels would be IHUA that is IEUA, because between two vowels, the H is heard as a slight E.

The preceding was taken from an article entitled "Paradox of the Anonymous Name", located at:

<http://digilander.libero.it/domingo7/Gertoux.htm>¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ From Richard Lattier’s study “Do We Know the Pronunciation?” (citation from Gérard Gertoux’s study “Paradox of the Anonymous Name”). Mr. Lattier’s web site may be accessed at the following URL: <http://yahushua.net/YHWH.htm>. We are uncertain as to why Mr. Lattier embraces the research of Gérard Gertoux, in



We do not normally like to point out the religious affiliation of the authors whom we cite because, after all, we are more interested in facts than in what religious organization an author is associated with; however, the fact that Gérard Gertoux has a Jehovah's Witness background is of interest here because, in the above writing, he in essence takes a jab at commentators who were "influenced by the form *Yahweh*" while omitting the fact that he himself is clearly "influenced by the form *Jehovah*," a detail that is made all the more obvious by virtue of his affiliation with the Jehovah's Witness organization.¹¹⁹ Thus, although Gertoux attributes modern commentators' favoring Josephus' four-voweled explanation of the Tetragrammaton as "IAUE" to their having been "influenced by the form *Yahweh*," one could just as easily inform Mr. Gertoux that his own *Yehovah* conclusion is obviously based on his having been influenced by the form "Jehovah." The fact is, Josephus did not inform his readers how the Tetragrammaton is pronounced, so for us to assume that it *must* have been "IAUE" or that it *must* have been "IEUA" is very premature and presumptuous at best.

We would like to think that Gérard Gertoux reached his conclusion that the Tetragrammaton is pronounced *Yehovah* after having conducted solid research. However, based on what we have read from his writings, his research was tainted with a bias against the form *Yahweh*. This same bias leads Gertoux, in other writings, to state – without offering any supportive evidence – that the form *Yahweh* is a "barbarism."¹²⁰

It wasn't until we were introduced to Richard Lattier's web site that we were in turn directed to additional contributions from author Gérard Gertoux. Mr. Gertoux is presented as quite a scholar and even as the president of the Association Biblique de Recherche d'Anciens Manuscrits, which in French means the Biblical Association of Ancient Manuscript Research. We can only wonder what contributions this association has made to world knowledge of ancient manuscripts. We have searched and searched for information about this "association," but we come up empty-handed at each turn. We have conducted several "Google" searches, both for *Gérard Gertoux* and *Association Biblique de Recherche d'Anciens Manuscrits*, but all we can find are *Yehovah* or *Yahuwah*-proponent web sites, all of which hail Mr. Gertoux as the president of this mysterious and unsearchable "association" since 1991. Needless to say, we are very skeptical of the credentials of both *Gérard Gertoux* and his "association." There is actually a *Wikipedia* article for Mr. Gertoux, but there is no mention of the *Association Biblique de Recherche d'Anciens Manuscrits*.¹²¹ We do not question that Mr. Gertoux is a researcher and he has very likely been given access to documents and other artifacts that the common, everyday Bible student can only hope to examine in his or her lifetime. However, in spite of this advantage, Mr. Gertoux does not

view of the fact that Mr. Gertoux supports the first syllable pronunciation *Ye*, whereas Mr. Lattier supports the pronunciation *Yah*. Mr. Lattier does not explain this obvious disagreement in his study.

¹¹⁹ We make this point in spite of the fact that the Jehovah's Witness organization is already on record stating that, in their estimation, the form *Yahweh* is "the more correct way" of pronouncing the Tetragrammaton. The following comes from page 23 of the Foreword to the Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures (the section titled "The Divine Name"): "While inclining to view the pronunciation 'Yah-weh' as the more correct way, we have retained the form 'Jehovah' because of the people's familiarity with it since the 14th century." This quote was produced by the New World Bible Translation Committee, February 9, 1950, New York, N.Y.

¹²⁰ Gertoux writes, "The name *Yahweh* (which is a barbarism) has only been created to battle with the true name *Jehovah*." Cf., his article, "The Name of God," which may be read in its entirety by accessing the following URL: <http://www.lifepurpose.net/divinename/NameofGod2.htm>.

¹²¹ Wikipedia contributors, "Gérard Gertoux," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/G%C3%A9rard_Gertoux (accessed November 6, 2011).

offer anything that we consider to be “new” in terms of understanding the ancient pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton.

Most significantly, insofar as our premise is concerned, Gérard Gertoux does not address the fact that the Samaritans, whom Theodoret quoted as vocalizing the form *Iabe*, were regarded by the Jewish rabbis as pronouncing the name “as it is spelled out.” This is information that any layperson can easily obtain; yet researcher Gérard Gertoux either never came across it in his research or else his predisposition in favor of the form *Yehovah* subconsciously led him to omit this information in his commentaries.

One thing that Gertoux *does* address in his study is his conclusion that Wilhelm Gesenius, among other “brilliant theologians,” was mistaken in supporting *Yahweh* as the original pronunciation:

It is amusing to note that the form of Yahweh, which was supported by some of the most brilliant theologians, the most competent grammarians, the most eminent biblicists, the most prestigious dictionaries, is known finally to be false.¹²²

Our first reaction to the above commentary is that of bewilderment over how it should be considered amusing that the form *Yahweh*, presuming that Mr. Gertoux’s conclusion is correct, is proven to be false. If it should one day be universally agreed that *Yehovah* is false, should we consider such a revelation to be “amusing”? This remark, in and of itself, bears evidence of Gerard Gertoux’s extreme bias, which only succeeds in compromising the quality of his work, his research methods and his conclusions. Moreover, since even the most brilliant theologians, such as Wilhelm Gesenius, and the most competent grammarians weren’t able to determine that the form *Yahweh* is “false,” it’s rather obvious that Gertoux fancies himself more “brilliant” than they. This, of course, reflects *arrogance*. The great baseball pitcher Dizzy Dean once said, “It’s not bragging if you can do it.” Is Gertoux able to validate his “brilliance”? As we are about to demonstrate, the answer is no; nevertheless, in spite of this and other critical shortcomings from his research contributions, we recommend a careful, cautious, reading of Gérard Gertoux’s entire article. Another author whose commentary we review in this study is *Yehovah* proponent Keith E. Johnson, in his book *His Hallowed Name Revealed Again*. Regrettably, Johnson exhibits the same smug bias against the form *Yahweh*:

I remember how excited I was when Nehemia [Gordon] explained the grammatical principles that demonstrate why יהוה cannot be pronounced “Yahweh.”¹²³

In other words, Keith Johnson is saying, “Since I was already biased against the form *Yahweh*, I remember how excited I was when Nehemia Gordon explained that from a grammatical

¹²² From “Paradox of the Anonymous Name,” by Gérard Gertoux. This study may be read in its entirety by accessing the following URL: <http://digilander.libero.it/domingo7/Gertoux.htm>.

¹²³ Keith E. Johnson, יהוה: *His Hallowed Name Revealed Again*, Biblical Foundations Academy, Minneapolis, MN, 2010, p. 138 of the revised edition.

perspective, it *cannot* be correct.” That’s the basic thought process either intentionally or unwittingly displayed by both Gérard Gertoux and Keith Johnson in their writings. The only thing is, as we have already demonstrated from qualified Hebrew scholars such as Wilhelm Gesenius, the form *Yahweh* is indeed *grammatically* possible. If Gesenius were the only qualified Hebrew scholar who ever supported the pronunciation *Yahweh* as being “grammatically possible,” I might understand the concern. However, we are able to produce a host of other heavyweight scholars who share Gesenius’ conclusion. We have already mentioned Franz Delitzsch (1813–1890) in a previous chapter, but we will later supply quotes from the late Anson Rainey, who was Professor of Ancient Near Eastern Cultures and Semitic Linguistics at Tel Aviv University in Israel. Consider also the following testimony from famous Israeli archaeologist Yigael Yadin:

These four Hebrew letters, like the entire contents of the Bible, were written in the old texts without vowels. Thus, we do not know how they were pronounced. **It is most probable, however, that they constituted the Hebrew word Yahveh (or Yahweh), the Creator.**¹²⁴

Would *Yehovah* proponents Keith Johnson, Nehemia Gordon and Gérard Gertoux scoff at Yigael Yadin’s “most probable” original pronunciation of יהוה? Is their knowledge of Hebrew grammar more extensive than his was?


We could go on and on with qualified Hebrew scholars who at the very least recognized the validity of the pronunciation *Yahweh*. To at least name just a few, there’s the late John Edgar McFadyen (1870 – 1933), professor of Old Testament Language, Literature and Theology, Trinity College in Glasgow, Scotland (author of *Key to the Exercises in Introductory Hebrew Grammar*), the late Paul Joüon (1871 – 1940) in *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, p. 23, and Bonnie Pedrotti Kittel, Vicki Hoffer and Rebecca Abts Wright in *Biblical Hebrew: A Text and Workbook*, where they write:

The vowels of the second word יהוה have been omitted intentionally. This is the sacred four-letter name for God. For religious reasons this word sometimes appears in the Hebrew Bible with the vowel markings for another divine name. Some think that an approximation of the original sound of the name is “Yahweh.” If you do not wish to say the name, you may substitute “Adonai” (“Lord” in English) whenever you see יהוה.¹²⁵

The above authors were careful to not express their own personal views of how the Tetragrammaton was originally pronounced; however, it is interesting that the form they offered as a potential candidate is *Yahweh*. This would have been an excellent opportunity for them to have explained the grammatical principles of why יהוה cannot be pronounced “*Yahweh*” – but they didn’t. If the form *Yahweh* is not grammatically feasible, then why offer it to your reading

¹²⁴ Yigael Yadin, *The Temple Scroll: The Hidden Law of the Dead Sea Sect*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1985, p. 67.

¹²⁵ Bonnie Pedrotti Kittel, Vicki Hoffer and Rebecca Abts Wright, *Biblical Hebrew: A Text and Workbook*, Lesson I, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 1989, p. 6.



audience? We may not be 100% certain of how the above authors themselves regard the original pronunciation of יהוה, but we should at least agree that they, unlike *biased* authors such as Keith E. Johnson, Nehemia Gordon and Gérard Gertoux, recognize the legitimacy of the pronunciation *Yahweh*. Please keep in mind we're not claiming that *Yahweh* is or must be the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton – we *are* claiming that it is *grammatically possible*. Claiming otherwise only succeeds in simultaneously exhibiting arrogance *and* ignorance.

A fundamental shortcoming that we feel needs to be pointed out, in view of Gérard Gertoux's expressed conclusion that the form *Yahweh* “is known finally to be false,” is the fact that he nowhere *demonstrates* that the pronunciation *Yahweh* is “false.” His comment, without any supportive evidence to justify its accuracy, appears to be the result of having been influenced via his affiliation with Jehovah's Witnesses. Gertoux's article primarily consists of his presentation of the Tetragrammaton's historical journey as expounded upon by scholarly sources from before the “Common Era” all the way to our modern day. Since the article's thrust centers on the historical aspect as opposed to which pronunciation is correct, we find it strange that Mr. Gertoux would conclude his article with an unwarranted, unsubstantiated denunciation of the form *Yahweh*.

Gérard Gertoux also authored a book titled *The Name of God Y.eH.oW.aH which is Pronounced as it is Written I_Eh_oU_Ah: Its Story*. We found the following excerpt from his book, composed in a Q & A format:

A9 - Today, is the pronunciation Yahweh widely accepted ?

Those who believe that Yahweh is the correct vocalization of the Name usually quote Clement and Theodoret. The testimony of Clement of Alexandria appeared very late (around 200 CE), furthermore as he explained that God's name Iaoue may be translated into “the one who is and who will be”, it appears that Iaoue is more a theological pronunciation than philological (A. Caquot - **Les énigmes d'un hémistiche biblique** in: Dieu et l'être 1978 Paris Ed. Études Augustiniennes C.N.R.S. p. 24 note 23). Clement's Iaoue can not represent an original God's name for the following reason: In spite of his claim about God's name, Clement did not believe that God had a proper name. For him Iaoue was only a word (not a name) which means ‘the one who is and who will be.’ (**Stromateon V:6:34**), because God is ineffable (**Stromateon V:10:65**), without name (**Stromateon V:12:81,82**). For him the real name of God was the “Son” (**Stromateon V:14:136**). Another example of the same confusion comes from Irenaeus of Lyons (130-202) who believed that the word IAÔ (Iαω in Greek, [Iah] in Latin) meant ‘Lord’ in primitive Hebrew (Against Heresies II, 24:2) and he esteemed that the use of this Hebrew word IAÔ to denote the Name of the unknown Father, was intended to impress gullible minds in worship of mysteries (Against Heresies I, 21:3).

A remark from the book of Theodoret (**Quaestiones in Exodum cap. XV**) is very often quoted to support the pronunciation Yahweh, because of the following sentence: “the name of God is pronounced Iabe”. This remark is true, but Theodoret specified that he spoke about



Samaritans and he added that the Jews pronounced this name Aïa. In another book (**Quaestiones in I Paral. cap. IX**) he wrote that "the word Nethinim means in Hebrew 'gift of Iaô', that is the God who is". According to Theodoret there were three different forms, but as Theodoret probably ignored that there were several substitutes for the Name, at his time. The intervening period which preceded the destruction of the Temple, the Talmud (**Sotah 7,6 Tamid 33b**) makes it clear that substitutes of the Name were used in Palestinian liturgy. These substitutes were numerous, as one can notice in the literature of this time (2M 1:24 , 25; 15:3; Si 23:4; 50:14-19).


The Greek Iaô (which comes from the old Hebrew Yahu) and the Samaritan Iabe (which comes from the Aramaic Yaw) are not the pronunciation of the only name YHWH. The name Aïa (probably) represents a transcription of 'ehyeh form.

Even if the name Yahweh is widely used its bases are very uncertain and that is why most of scholars prefer the form YHWH. At the present time there are two main trends among scholars. The first ones are those who think that the form YHWH is equivalent to its etymology "He is" and they obtain the forms Yahve, Yahwoh, etc. The second ones are those who try to read this name only owing to the philology. For example, the French erudite Antoine Favre d'Olivet used Ihôah in his translation of the Bible (1823), the Jewish translator Samuel Cahen used Iehovah in whole his Bible (1836), the Jewish doctor J.H. Levy preferred the name Y'howah (1903), and so on.¹²⁶

In spite of what may appear, on the surface at least, to be a scholarly dissertation, Mr. Gertoux's work, as displayed above, offers remarkably weak and undisciplined logic. Notice his commentary that Clement of Alexandria cannot be considered as having transliterated the name of the Creator because Clement did not believe the Creator had a proper name. So if Clement overheard someone utter a name that sounded like *iaoue* (Yahweh) while proclaiming it to be the name of the Jews' Sovereign, and then Clement wrote that the name of the Creator is *iaoue*, should we reject his report on the basis that he had previously written that the Creator doesn't have a proper name? This is an unreasonable argument and would be akin to rejecting a Palestinian's pronunciation of "Israel" on the basis of the fact that he doesn't believe Israel has the right to exist. On another level, I don't believe the mysterious creature known as "Bigfoot" exists; if I'm proven wrong, does that mean its name cannot be pronounced "Bigfoot"?

Gertoux goes on to dismiss Theodoret's rendering of the Tetragrammaton with reasoning that simply defies all logic: Apparently, if we follow Gertoux's reasoning properly, since Theodoret used more than one form in referring to the Almighty (*Aïa*, *Iaô* and *Iabe*), he must have been too confused to know how the Name is really pronounced. This poke at Theodoret's scholarship may seem to be a matter of little consequence to many Bible students; however, if you are among those who have ever referred to the Almighty as *Yah* and *Yahu*, in addition to either *Yahuwah* or *Yahweh*, you might not be too comfortable with Mr. Gertoux assessing your level of credibility on the basis of your having referred to the Almighty by more than one name. If Theodoret's pronunciation is

¹²⁶ From *The Name of God YeHoWaH – Its Story*, by Gérard Gertoux. This excerpt was found at the following URL: <http://www.lifepurpose.net/divinename/NameofGod2.htm>



wrong, why not simply demonstrate the error? Gertoux makes no such effort. Gertoux also omits mentioning the fact that those same Samaritans who Theodoret claims vocalized the form *Iabe* were condemned by Judaism for saying the Name “as it is spelled out.” Apparently Judaism felt that Theodoret came a lot closer to getting the pronunciation right than Gertoux is willing to admit; otherwise, why would they care about how the Samaritans pronounced the Name? And what about Gertoux’s comment, “Theodoret probably ignored that there were several substitutes for the Name ...”? Theodoret *probably* ignored? Does Gertoux know this for sure? Can anyone say, “*Bias*”? And how would ignoring substitutes affect how Theodoret overheard the pronunciation *Iabe*?

Did Egyptians know the Creator’s name?

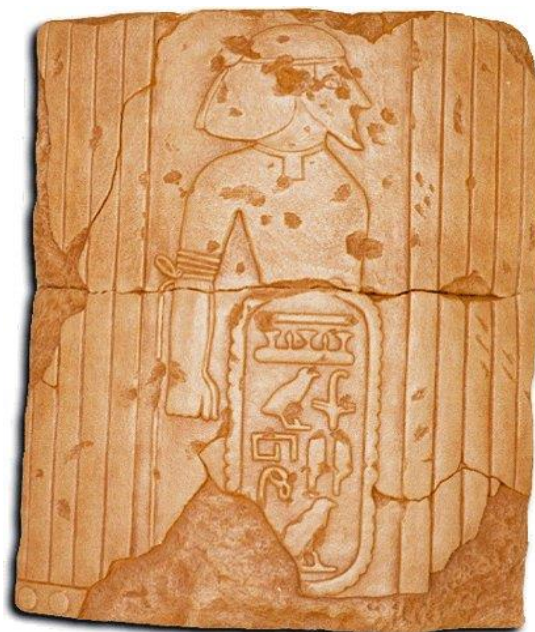
While we disagree with many who, like Brian Allen, have a colossal aversion for anything associated with the Greek culture, at the same time, we can somewhat understand their reasoning because we cannot deny that the overall Greek culture embraced idol worship. What we don’t understand, however, is why believers like Brian Allen are so willing to balance their revulsion of anything *Greek* with a resolute acceptance of the *Egyptian* model.

Yehovah proponent John D. Keyser, in his article “The *True Pronunciation* of the Sacred Name,” cites what he feels is ancient Egyptian evidence supporting the form *Yehovah*, even though the source from which he derives his information states that this ancient pronunciation is *Yehua*, not *Yehovah*, and even though the Egyptian evidence of the Tetragrammon’s pronunciation consists of carvings of two feathers, a sideways “9,” a noose and a bird. As we are about to see, Gérard Gertoux plays a role in providing Mr. Keyser with this “evidence”:

The Egyptian Evidence

The oldest archaeological evidence favors the pronunciation “YEHOVAH.” In the Amun-temple in Soleb (Sudan) can be found sculptures from the time of Amenhotep III. These sculptures date from circa 1382-1344 B.C.

On one sculpture is an Egyptian hieroglyph with the Divine Name -- this being the OLDEST archaeological occurrence of the Divine Name that we are aware of. Following is an illustration from a reconstruction of the sculpture in question:



The pronunciation of the hieroglyph has been determined by Gerard Gertoux, professor at Association Biblique de Recherche d'Anciens Manuscrits in France, and reads as follows:



Transcription of the hieroglyph:

t3 i3-sw-w-y-h-w3-w (Shneider's transcription)

ta sha-su-w-y-eh-ua-w (conventional vocalization)

The text is easy to decipher -- it sounds "ta' sha'suw yehua'w", which means in English "land of the bedouins those of **Yehua**." It was common practice to name lands after the names of the gods -- for example in Genesis 47:11 we read about "the land of Rameses."

We know little about the vowels of ancient Egyptian words, but for FOREIGN WORDS (like Yhw3), Egyptians used a form of *matres lectionis*. In this system the vowel letters were like this: 3 = a, w = u, y = i. Mr. Gertoux points to the Merneptah stele, dated 13th century B.C., where the name "Israel" is transcribed in hieroglyphs Yysri3l as "Yisrial." Gertoux draws the valid conclusion that Yhw3 can technically be read as **YEHUA'**.

Writes professor Jean Leclant -- "It is evident that the name on the name-ring in Soleb that we discuss corresponds to the 'tetragram' of the god of the Bible YHWH [YHVH]." He adds: "The name of God appears here in the first place as the name of a place." In a footnote he explains that place-names often are derived from the names of gods. (Jean Leclant, Le "Tetragramme" a l'epoque d'Amenophis III, in *Near Eastern Studies dedicated to H.I.H. Prince Takahito Mikasa on the Occasion of His Seventy-Fifth Birthday*, pages 215-219, 1991, Wiesbaden).

The oldest archaeological testimony where you can see the Divine Name is from about the 14th century B.C. Professor Gertoux states that the Egyptian text shows us that the Name was pronounced **YEHUA** -- from which we get **YEHOVAH**.¹²⁷

Our first observation is Mr. Gertoux's statement that the hieroglyph "text" is easy to decipher. Speaking strictly from a layman's perspective, I find it puzzling as to how anyone would be able to look at carvings of feathers, nooses and birds and determine that it is "easy" to decipher those images, let alone determine that one of the words is properly vocalized "Yehûa." Keep in mind that there is a difference between deciphering a word and determining how that word is pronounced. "Decipher" means to translate a word or phrase (such as a writing in code) into ordinary, understandable language. Deciphering a word does not mean you are able to determine how that word is pronounced. Nevertheless, Mr. Gertoux writes that the text is not only easy to decipher, but he was also able to determine that two feathers, a sideways "9," a noose and a bird is pronounced *Yehûa*. If deciphering this name and its pronunciation from those symbols is so easy to do, why doesn't Gertoux (or Mr. Keyser) explain the process to us?

Secondly, let's focus our attention on the first syllable of the Tetragrammaton as cited by Gérard Gertoux. He says the hieroglyph transliteration of the Tetragrammaton is *Yehûa*, so the first syllable consists of *Ye*. This pronunciation most assuredly flies in the face of those who insist that the first syllable of the Tetragrammaton must be pronounced *Yah*. *Yahuwah* proponents such as Brian Allen, Richard Lattier and John Hawkins, then, would certainly reject the Egyptian hieroglyph pronunciation as advocated by Gérard Gertoux. We have previously seen that even the ancient Greek sources are at odds with this first-syllable pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton.

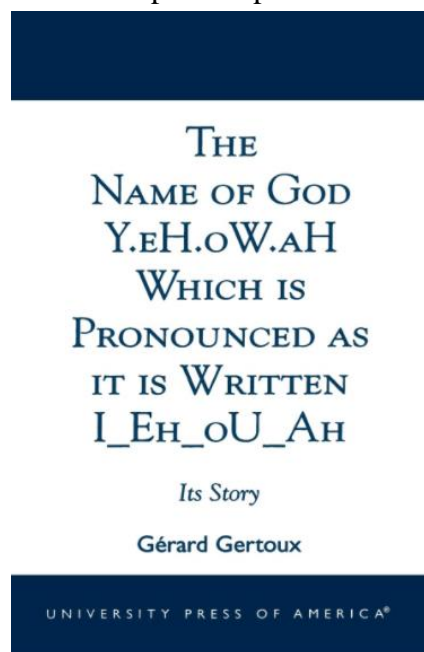
Moreover, if we can trust the reports of ancient cuneiform writings from Babylon, they, too, rendered the first syllable of the Tetragrammaton as *Yah*. The following information comes from A. H. Sayce's book *The "Higher Criticism" and the Verdict of the Monuments*:

The name of Yahveh, which is united with Elohim in the second account of the creation in Genesis, and by which the national God of the Hebrews was distinguished from the gods of the heathen, is a name upon which oriental archæology has as yet shed but little light. Even its meaning and origin are obscure, though we now know that the full form Yahveh, or rather Yahāvah, and the shorter form Yeho, Yô, or

¹²⁷ From "The True Pronunciation of the Sacred Name," by John D. Keyser. This article may be read in its entirety by accessing the following URL: <http://hope-of-israel.org/tetragram.html>.

rather Yahu, existed side by side from an early date. **In the cuneiform texts Yeho, Yô, and Yah are written Yahu**, as for example in the names of Jehu (Yahu-a), Jehoahaz (Yahu-khazi), and Hezekiah (Khazaqi-yahu). But there are also contract-tablets found in Babylonia on which the names of Jews occur, and these names are compounded, not with Yahu, but with Ya(h)ava(h). This was first pointed out by Dr. Pinches, we have Gamar-Ya'ava or Gemariah, and Ya'ava-natanu or Jonathan.¹²⁸

Please bear in mind that we do not put a whole lot of trust in reports that scholars are able to determine precise pronunciations from either hieroglyphs or cuneiform writing. Nevertheless,



according to the ancient Babylonian cuneiform writings as reported by A. H. Sayce, the Tetragrammaton was pronounced, *not* with a *Ye*, but with a *Yah* sound. Of course, one can argue that the cuneiform writings only encode three vowels, *a*, *i* and *u*, which would indicate that they *couldn't* have indicated the *Ye* pronunciation even if they had wanted to.¹²⁹ As we can see, then, the cuneiform writings don't really provide much of an affirmation of how the Tetragrammaton was anciently pronounced.

We are on record as stating that we do not put much trust in the reports of pronunciations based on ancient hieroglyphs or cuneiform writing. Nevertheless, if we did, we would likely find ourselves embroiled in a controversy over whether the first syllable of the Tetragrammaton is vocalized *Ye* or *Yah*. Do we trust the report of a scholar who looks at a string of images carved in the shapes of feathers, a sideways “9,” a noose and a bird and exclaims, “That’s the Tetragrammaton and it’s pronounced *Yehua!*”? Or do we trust the report of a scholar who reports that ancient Babylonian cuneiform writings confirm the pronunciation *Yahāvah*? We know they can’t *both* be right. Could both be *wrong*?

There’s an additional concern with basing our conclusion of how to pronounce the Tetragrammaton on Egyptian writings or inscriptions, but we’ll address that concern in chapter 17.

As we close out our review of Gérard Gertoux’s conclusion of the Tetragrammaton’s pronunciation, we are persuaded that it is fair to presume he offers his most compelling arguments in his Internet articles and that his 338-page book, *The Name of God Y.E.H.O.W.A.H which is Pronounced as it is Written I_Eh_oU_Ah: Its Story*, published in 2002, only offers additional commentary on those pro-*Yehouah* arguments. We have not read his book, nor do we have

¹²⁸ A. H. Sayce, *The "Higher Criticism" and the Verdict of the Monuments*, 7th Edition, Society For Promoting Christian Knowledge, London, England, 1910, pp. 87-88.

¹²⁹ C.f., Wikipedia contributors, “Old Persian cuneiform,” *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Persian_cuneiform, (accessed November 12, 2011). We call the reader’s attention to the following information found in this article: “The script encodes three vowels, *a*, *i*, *u*, and twenty-two consonants, *k*, *x*, *g*, *c*, *ç*, *j*, *t*, *θ*, *d*, *p*, *f*, *b*, *n*, *m*, *y*, *v*, *r*, *l*, *s*, *z*, *š*, and *h*. Old Persian contains two sets of consonants: those whose shape depends on the following vowel and those whose shape is independent of the following vowel.”

immediate plans to do so, at least not based on the non-compelling arguments we have read in his Internet commentaries. The fact that the current listed price for his book on Amazon.com is \$86.99 effectively removes any motivation I might otherwise have for purchasing it.¹³⁰ Moreover, those who *have* shelled out for Gertoux’s book have only given it mixed reviews. We would like to post a couple of the reviews here, not only because we found them to be interesting, but also because one of them reflects *precisely* what we would expect to find if we were to read the book. To be fair, we are posting both a “pro” and a “con” review:

Plato taught that God has no name (Timaios 28 b.c). Philo, the Gnostics, Justin Martyr, and Clement of Alexandria likewise considered God nameless or unnameable. However, Jerome, translator of the Latin Vulgate, wrote in his Prologus Galeatus: “And we find the name of God, the Tetragram, in certain Greek volumes even to this day expressed in ancient letters.” Due to the fact that these Hebrew letters were consonants, and there were originally no written characters for the vowels, it is held that the pronunciation of God’s name is lost to us. Or it is thought God’s name should be pronounced “Yahweh” due to the weight attached to the evidence of the Egyptian Elephantine Papyri. Gerard Gertoux in quite convincing fashion demonstrates the inaccuracy of these concepts in the light of compelling linguistic and historical evidence. Gertoux asks (p.114), “Was there really a prohibition on pronouncing the Tetragram in the first century? The answer is no, as, according to the Talmud this prohibition appeared from the middle of the second century.” Gertoux readily exposes a solidly entrenched factoid (p.3): “that Jehovah is a barbarism originating from a wrong reading. As unbelievable as it may seem, this last affirmation is known to be false among scholars. This crude error has been denounced by Hebraists of all confessions, and with the support of the Vatican’s Congregation of propaganda, but without result.” Worthwhile reading, for as Gertoux quotes Maimonides, “it is impossible to have a deep relationship with a nameless God.”¹³¹

Although the above review is supportive of Mr. Gertoux’s position, at the same time it confirms our suspicion about the thrust of his premise: To prove that the Masoretes didn’t actually mis-vowel-point the Tetragrammaton. Based on the above review, it appears that Gérard Gertoux expended considerable effort attempting to disprove the notion that the Masoretes purposely mis-vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton. In other words, even though Judaism admits to having done this, according to Gertoux they must have deliberately lied about vowel-pointing יהוה with the vowel points from the Hebrew title *adonai* (and occasionally the vowel points from the title

¹³⁰ The listed price for Gertoux’s book when we originally composed our study (2012) was \$50.00.

¹³¹ Review of *The Name of God Y.eH.oW.aH which is Pronounced as it is Written I_Eh_oU_Ah: Its Story*, University Press of America, 2002, submitted on 11/29/2003 by George L Pullman. All reviews of the Amazon.com listing for this book may be read by accessing the following URL (see next page): http://www.amazon.com/Y-eH-oW-aH-Which-Pronounced-Written-I_Eh_Ou_Ah/product-reviews/0761822046/ref=cm_cr_dp_all_helpful/178-3919117-5776666?ie=UTF8&showViewpoints=1&sortBy=bySubmissionDateDescending.

Elohim) as a means of preventing the reader from accidentally voicing the Creator's name while reading Scripture. According to Mr. Gertoux, they vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton correctly in the first place.

If Mr. Gertoux's proposal is correct, it only creates more problems than it resolves. First, if Judaism correctly vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton, but fibbed about it, then they are collectively dishonest and cannot be trusted (which is already a fairly common, albeit unjust, perception). Secondly, if they correctly vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton, then they issued an open invitation to Hebrew readers everywhere to vocalize the Tetragrammaton "as it is spelled out," something that Judaism believes prevents such people from making it to "the world to come." From a Jewish perspective, this deliberate act would embody the desire to prevent as many Hebrew-reading/speaking believers as possible from having a part in the "world to come" – a downright sinister plot. We find it difficult to believe that Judaism would devise such a scheme, especially knowing that it would primarily impact their own Hebrew-reading members. While we are interested in knowing what evidence Mr. Gertoux has of such a callous plot, at the same time, we are very skeptical, especially when we read the following additional book review at Amazon.com:

Note: the stars [3 out of 5 rating] do not match the rating with how I currently feel about this book!

Gerard Gertoux goes from the beginning of time til the present and explains (in his opinion) why Jehovah is the "closest in form" to the original pronunciation.


However, it is written from a scholar's point of view, and therefore very hard to understand. The man is obviously a Frenchman and expresses his thoughts in a French style. Even when someone credits his research at the start, if it's a Frenchman, he keeps the quote written in French! I assumed the book was written in English...

He obviously doesn't understand that "Yah" and "Yahu" are abbreviations (shortened forms) for the divine name Jehovah. He gets the term "abbreviation" confused with substitutes! Lord and God are substitutes, but certainly not "Yah" or "Yahu!"

I think if this book had a pronunciation key of the various forms of the divine name in Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic, that would make it a lot easier to understand what he meant.

However, I don't want to "push all the negatives," because not all the information in this book is incorrect. He does cover a lot of territory, goes into a lot of depth into the languages with their grammar (speakers of various semitic languages would probably find this book a gem in that regard and would get the most out of it), uses a few diagrams and so forth, so in that respect, maybe I am saving this review for 3 stars from my earlier more positive review.

I did research on the early Church Fathers and apparently their form is more like Yahweh which he touches on in his book but seems to disguise the evidence from his audience. However, the more you read it the more (I believe) his arguments for Yehowah are flawed.



This would probably be one of the most difficult books to understand and needs to be put in more layman’s terms... I read this book 2-3 times and the more I read it the more I misunderstood and disagreed with him, as crazy as that sounds. Ironically, the form Yehowah (Jehovah) does not seem to go on a lot of evidence. I now believe that “Yahweh” is more accurate than “Jehovah.” And I no longer believe this notion that the original Hebrew had a “J” in it and I think even though “Yahweh” is more acceptable, I think like most people that NO ONE REALLY KNOWS THE TRUE PRONUNCIATION!¹³²

If June and I were to read Mr. Gertoux’s book, with which of the above book reviews would our conclusion most closely parallel? It goes without saying that it would most likely be the latter. We would like to believe that the driving force behind Gérard Gertoux’s research was the desire to learn the most approximate original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. Regrettably, it appears that his primary motivation was to justify his pronunciation of choice, i.e., he builds his premise on an already-biased foundation. We understand that, in view of the fact that June and I are personally persuaded that the original pronunciation is *Yahweh*, some folks will regard us as “the pot calling the kettle black” and that our primary motivation in composing this study is that of justifying our own “pronunciation of choice.” While it is true that we are currently persuaded that the preponderance of evidence supports the pronunciation *Yahweh*, we only reached this understanding based on our own personal research. In fact, as we plan to reveal in our next section, we were briefly persuaded that *Yahuwah* may be correct – until one of the arguments presented by the scholar who promoted this form imploded. Moreover, not only are we persuaded that our book review would most closely align with the above reviewer’s conclusion, but we also lean towards agreeing with his final comment – *that no one really knows the true pronunciation*. All we can hope to do is come as close as we can in the name of scholarly research.

¹³² Review of *The Name of God Y.eH.oW.aH which is Pronounced as it is Written I_Eh_oU_Ah: Its Story*, University Press of America, 2002, submitted on 01/07/2005 by Neburo. All reviews of the Amazon.com listing for this book may be read by accessing the following URL:
http://www.amazon.com/Y-eH-oW-aH-Which-Pronounced-Written-I_Eh_Ou_Ah/product-reviews/0761822046/ref=cm_cr_dp_all_helpful/178-3919117-5776666?ie=UTF8&showViewpoints=1&sortBy=bySubmissionDateDescending.



D. Examining George Wesley Buchanan's Commentary in *The Biblical Archaeology Review*

In our previous section, we mentioned that we were briefly persuaded that *Yahuwah* is correct – until the argument used by the scholar who promoted this form fell apart. Certainly, if his argument nearly persuaded us of his position, it is an argument that is worth addressing in our study. The scholar to whom we are referring is the late George Wesley Buchanan, Professor Emeritus of New Testament, Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, DC (1921-2019). With his respected title, which we are certain he earned through many hours of diligent study and research, we would expect Professor Buchanan to offer compelling evidence to support his arguments in favor of the form *Yahowah*. In a commentary that he submitted to *Biblical Archaeology Review*, Buchanan almost swayed us to his position, even though he never mentioned the Samaritans or Theodoret.

We have previously explained that our primary reason for leaning towards the pronunciation *Yahweh* is partially attributed to the fact that Judaism condemned the Samaritans for speaking the Name “as it is spelled out,” which strongly implies that they were vocalizing it correctly; the fact that theologian Theodoret wrote that the Samaritans pronounced the Tetragrammaton *Iabe*, which is very close to the form *Yahweh*, serves as compelling evidence that this is the Samaritan pronunciation that drew the ire of Jewish rabbis. This piece of information, which we feel is significant, apparently did not appear on Buchanan's radar screen.

The main gist of Buchanan's commentary, it seems, was that of proving that the Tetragrammaton consists of three syllables. We have previously agreed with the possibility that the Tetragrammaton can indeed be vowel-pointed so as to be pronounced as a three-syllable proper noun; however, it can *also* be vowel-pointed so as to be a two-syllable name, which is how both Theodoret and Epiphanius wrote that the Samaritans pronounce the Creator's name. In view of the fact that we agree that the Tetragrammaton *can* be vowel-pointed as a three-syllable proper noun, the question becomes, “Is that how it was originally pronounced?” Theodoret and Epiphanius answered, “No.”

The lone argument from George Wesley Buchanan that caught our attention has to do with Hebrew rhyme scheme and the “Song of Moses.” Here is what he wrote:

There is still one other clue to the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton—Hebrew poetry. For example, from the poem of Exodus 15, read aloud verses 1, 3, 6, 11, 17 and 18, first pronouncing the Tetragrammaton as “Yahweh” and then read it again, pronouncing the same word as “Yahowah.” Notice the rhyme and poetic beat of the two. In this way the reader can judge which one is the more likely pronunciation used in antiquity.¹³³

¹³³ Excerpt from George Wesley Buchanan's letter to the editor of *Biblical Archaeology Review*, “Queries and Comments,” March/April 1995, Vol. 21, No. 2, p. 31. Note: We address what may be a more compelling argument from Buchanan in chapter 16.

We are surprised that a scholar of Mr. Buchanan’s apparent ability wasn’t interested in providing his readers with a specific example of the Hebrew “rhyme and poetic beat” as found in Exodus 15. Since the majority of readers don’t own a copy of the Hebrew text of Scripture and are much less able to follow his instructions, it stands to reason that the professor, in true teaching style, should have offered his reading audience a sample illustrative text with transliteration to facilitate understanding and appreciating his point. On the other hand, if he wanted to be intentionally vague in the hope that no one will bother checking out his claim, he most likely succeeded, at least with the majority of readers.

Since we have access to a copy of the Hebrew text, we attempted to follow Mr. Buchanan’s instructions. It wasn’t an easy task, but then again, we have never claimed to be Hebrew scholars. Nevertheless, it is possible that we found one of his proposed rhyme matches in Exodus 15:3. This is the verse that says, “YHWH is a man of war; YHWH is His name.” In this verse, *Yahowah* would seem to rhyme with the Hebrew word for “war,” which is pronounced “milchamah.” Here is the Hebrew text in question:

Exodus 15:3:

שְׁמוֹ	יְהוָה	מִלְחָמָה	אִישׁ	יְהוָה
.shemoh	Yah <u>owah</u>	milcham <u>ah</u>	ish	Yahowah
.name	Yahowah	war	man	Yahowah

←

The apparent rhyme scheme with Exodus 15:3, if we follow it correctly, reads like this: *Yahowah ish Milchamah Yahuwah shemoh*. We will grant that if we render the pronunciation of YHWH as “Yahweh,” it does not rhyme with “milchamah.” Of course, the rhyme would work even better if the last word in the sentence also had an *-ah* ending.

Of course, the “Song of Moses” isn’t the only poetry found in Scripture. The Psalms must also be considered. As it turns out, with our very first attempt in examining one of the Psalms (Psalms 127:1), we found a situation in which *Yahweh* rhymes with a word pronounced “yibneh.” This verse reads, “Shir hama’alot li-Shlomoh: Im-Yahweh lo yibneh ...,” which means “Song of ascents to Shlomoh: If Yahweh does not build” Here is how the opening words of this verse appear in the Hebrew text:

Psalms 127:1

יִבְנֶה	לֹא -	יְהוָה	אִם -	לְשִׁלֹּמֹה	הַמַּעֲלוֹת	שִׁיר
yibne <u>h</u>	- lo	Yahwe <u>h</u>	- im	li-shlomoh	hama’alot	Shir

←

In the above verse, the word “hama’alot” ends with the same vowel sound as “Shlomoh” (Solomon) and the pronunciation “Yahweh” ends with the same sound as the word “yibneh.” We also couldn’t help but notice that in verse three of this same psalm, the word “hineh” (pronounced *hee-neh*) rhymes with “Yahweh”:



Psalms 127:3

הַבָּטֶן	פְּרִי	שָׁכָר	בָּנִים	יְהוָה	נַחֲלַת	הִנֵּה
.habatehn	phri	shakar	banim	Yahweh	nachelat	Hineh
						←

The above Hebrew phrase, transliterated, reads, “Hineh nachelat Yahweh banim shaker phri habatehn,” which means, “Behold, children [are] a heritage of YHWH [and] the fruit of the womb [is His] reward.”

On the surface, explaining to others that our pronunciation of choice rhymes with other Hebrew words seems like neat and even plausible rationale for accepting that pronunciation as the “correct one.” However, we once again quote the late journalist H. L. Mencken: “There is always an easy solution to every human problem – neat, plausible, and wrong.” We need to be careful that our “solutions” are based on facts, not on rhyme schemes.

15. Does Leningrad Codex B19A Prove Yehovah To Be the Correct Pronunciation?

This chapter was composed in response to the book [His Hallowed Name Revealed Again](#) by Keith E. Johnson. Mr. Johnson has, to date, published two editions of this book. When I composed this chapter, I only had access to his first edition, which I purchased in May 2010. I have since obtained the second edition, which I feel needs to be addressed separately. As time allows, I plan to eventually add a separate chapter as a response to Keith Johnson's second edition. In the meantime, we stand by this response to his initial venture into the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton.

A. The Pitch: Leningrad Codex B19A is the Oldest Complete Vocalized Hebrew Manuscript in the World

Some folks turn to a text known as Leningrad Codex B19A as evidence supporting the pronunciation “Yehovah” or “Yehovah.” Several years ago, we met a gentleman named Joseph Dumond, who operates a ministry up in Canada, and we found ourselves on Joseph’s e-mail distribution list. For several years, Joseph referred to the Almighty as Yahweh. However, he eventually began referring to Him as “Yahovah,” then later as “Yehovah.” Joseph explained that he arrived at this new understanding after having met a certain believer and subsequently reading his book. Here is Joseph’s explanation, as found on his web site:

MOSES RIGHT HAND AND HOW NOAH KNEW OF THE FLOOD

BY JOSEPH DUMOND

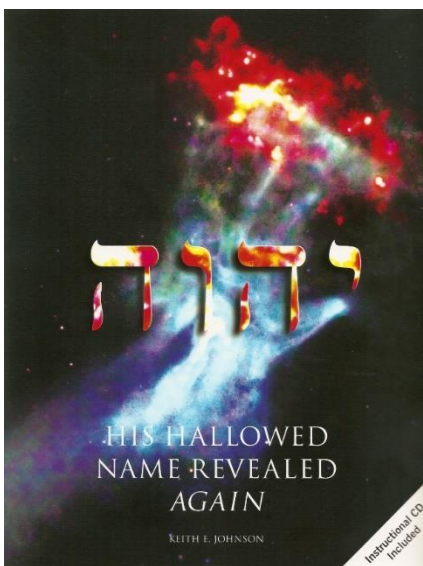
Some of you have been commenting on my use of the name Yahovah¹³⁴ instead of Yahweh as I have been using. First of all I am not going to get into any huge discussions about the name of our Creator. Each of you decides what you want to use. But I have come to my decision after listening to Keith Johnson explain it to me in both a personal face to face meeting and then in his book about the name. You can learn more about this at <http://www.biblicalfoundationsacademy.com/>. Do I know for sure what the name is? No. But I do the best I can based on the knowledge I have gained. I do not judge anyone for how they pronounce it either.¹³⁵

We may not agree with Joseph Dumond’s understanding regarding the pronunciation of the Creator’s name, but we certainly admire and appreciate his respectful approach, which is certainly different from that of many pronunciation advocates, including a few whose writings we have examined in this study. Joseph informs his readers that he arrived at his current understanding after having met Keith Johnson and reading his book. What is the name of the book that Keith Johnson authored and how did he arrive at the understanding that the Creator’s name is pronounced “Yehovah”? Well, we have actually referenced Keith’s book previously in our study

¹³⁴ As of this writing, Joseph Dumond refers to the Almighty as *Yehovah* instead of *Yahovah*.

¹³⁵ From the article “Moses Right Hand and How Noah Knew of The Flood,” by Joseph Dumond, dated April 17, 2010. His article can be read in its entirety by accessing the following link: http://www.sightedmoonnl.com/?page_id=629.

(chapter 10); it is titled *His Hallowed Name Revealed Again*. We also referenced in our previous chapter (ch. 14, part B) that some authors are persuaded that the Masoretes correctly vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton as *Yehowah*, and this is precisely the view promoted by Keith Johnson. While we respect the view of these individuals, we are persuaded that a careful examination validates the statements of those scholars who express the understanding that the Masoretes deliberately *mis*-vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton so as to assist the reader in not accidentally vocalizing the Creator's name.



It needs to be remembered and emphasized that Judaism teaches that the Creator's name is "too holy to pronounce," and they therefore go to great lengths to keep their members from speaking it. It also needs to be remembered that the same pious underpinnings that keep Judaism from speaking the Name also keep Jewish scholars from changing its Hebrew spelling whenever they copy the text of Hebrew Scripture (Deut. 4:2, Proverbs 30:6). In spite of this near-universal understanding, some folks are promoting the belief that the Masoretes *correctly* vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton (or at least they did in fifty select places of Scripture). Thus, the corresponding vowel-pointed rendering *Yehowah*, according to these adherents, is correct.

Within a month of reading Joseph Dumond's article, I had the opportunity to attend Keith Johnson's presentation titled "יהוה: His Hallowed Name Revealed Again."¹³⁶ I found him to be a very personable, energetic man with a motivational drive that captivated my interest throughout his presentation. Keith describes himself as a "box *breaker*" versus a "box *maker*," adding that he is "too charismatic for the 'Is anybody breathing in there' box" and "If the Father gives you a vision, he *always* gives you PROvision." In spite of Keith Johnson's inspiring message, he nevertheless withheld from his audience any reasoning for supporting the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton that he proposes (*Yehovah*). Instead, he suggested that we wait until the Sabbath ended to purchase his book. Although I had private reservations about the purchase, including the fact that his presentation was featured in conjunction with a travel tour headed by Nehemia Gordon (a known advocate of the pronunciation *Yehovah*), I decided to follow Keith's suggestion. I should point out that during the course of his presentation, Keith described his book as a "work in progress," and he publicly invited everyone to send him suggestions for improvement. Over the course of the next several months, Keith and I had a very amicable e-mail exchange, as well as a pleasant phone conversation, in which I addressed the many positive attributes of his book as well as suggested improvements. In spite of our differences, I felt that Keith was very receptive to my suggestions.

I found that much of Keith Johnson's book mirrors his presentation. It radiates excitement and passion, captivating the attention of those who take the time to read it. However, once again, in keeping with the tenor of his presentation, we are left in suspense as to what he feels is the correct pronunciation – until the closing chapters. The book consists of ten chapters, but we don't find out how Keith feels the Tetragrammaton should be pronounced until chapter eight. This is

¹³⁶ This presentation was given at Wild Olive Branch Ministries in Tool, Texas on May 15, 2010.

not to say that the first seven chapters, which he calls “building blocks,” are a waste of space. Indeed, I consider them to be fundamental reading for those who have not been previously introduced to the issue of the importance of our Heavenly Father’s name. For the most part, I wouldn’t mind borrowing Keith’s first seven chapters as an introduction to our own study! It is true that those who, like June and me, have spent over 35 years of our lives studying this and other topics, are eager to “get to the point”; nevertheless, the energy, zeal and reasoning that resonated in chapters 1-7 made reaching chapter 8 worth the time and patience it took to get there.

Regrettably, once we leaped the hurdle of reading the first seven chapters, everything else was anticlimactic. On the very first page of chapter eight, Mr. Johnson leaves us with a clue that he supports the form *Yehovah* by providing his readers with the following vowel-pointed Tetragrammaton: יהוהֲ. With the exception of that tiny dot over the ה (the *holem*), this is the same vowel-pointing that the Masoretes used to vowel-point the Tetragrammaton, which, as we have already shown, was done so as to prevent the reader from accidentally vocalizing the correct pronunciation of the Name.¹³⁷ It goes without saying, then, that Keith Johnson doesn’t believe the Tetragrammaton was *really* mis-vowel-pointed by the Masoretes, at least not in 50 places where he found the tiny dot over the ה (יהוהֲ). In fact, he refers to this specific vowel-pointing as “the preachers of the name”:

Hopefully by now you are familiar enough with seeing יהוהֲ that you noticed that there are some very small but important dots and symbols associated with the name. These are the keys to knowing how to pronounce the name. I call these dots and symbols, which are called vowel points, “the preachers of the name.”¹³⁸

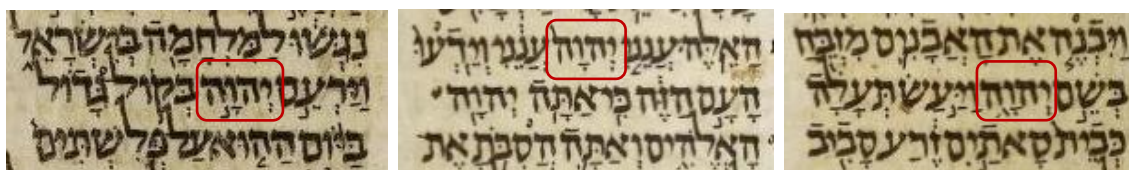
Before we proceed any further with our examination of Mr. Johnson’s argument, we need to remind our readers of some very important facts. We apologize for appearing redundant, but for emphasis purposes, these facts need to be brought to the forefront:

1. The Hebrew vowel points weren’t devised by the Masoretic scribes until long after the Jews had already imposed a ban on pronouncing the Tetragrammaton. We have seen that at least by the second century CE, Jews taught that those who speak the Name “as it is written” have no part in the world to come. It was five centuries later – during the seventh century CE – that the vowel points were invented.
2. In view of the above information, it does not follow that Judaism would deliberately insert the *correct* vowel points within the revered name יהוהֲ in select locations, much less proceed to deceitfully spread the word that they had, in fact, “mis-vowel-pointed” it. Even among their own ranks, such a falsehood would have soon been exposed for the lie that it would have been. Eventually, word would have inevitably leaked that the vowel-pointing had been correct (in certain places) all along. If the Masoretes *truly* vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton correctly, this would have to be regarded as one of the best cover-ups of all time.

¹³⁷ We will see later in this chapter that Hebrew scholar Page H. Kelley, in his book *Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Grammar*, writes that the Masoretes vowel-pointed יהוהֲ with the *holem* over the ה (יהוהֲ).

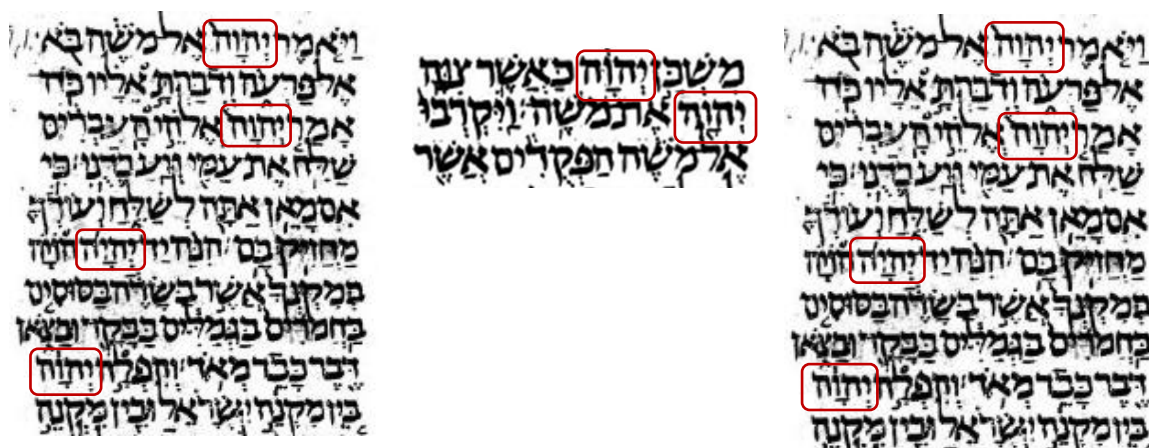
¹³⁸ Keith E. Johnson, יהוהֲ: *His Hallowed Name Revealed Again*, Biblical Foundations Academy, Minneapolis, MN, 2010, p. 100 (p. 129 of the revised edition).

3. Regardless of whether or not the Masoretes correctly vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton in 50 select places, the fact that the superstition they contrived against vocalizing the Almighty's name had already begun centuries earlier demonstrates that the vowel pointing found in Hebrew manuscripts should *at best not* be relied upon as the key for determining which vowels should appear in the divine name. By this we mean, if the Masoretes correctly vowel-pointed יהוה while all along teaching that we shouldn't speak it, then how can we really trust that they truly *did* vowel-point יהוה correctly in 50 "hidden in plain sight" locations of Scripture? Conversely, if they deliberately mis-vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton while explaining that they did so because they don't want anyone to vocally express the true pronunciation, then how much sense does it make to believe that they *lied* about mis-vowel-pointing the Tetragrammaton (in 50 places)? What would have been their motivation for correctly vowel-pointing יהוה while telling the world that they didn't? An even bigger question is, "Were they okay with readers inadvertently expressing the Name in 50 select places?" In view of what we know to be true about their universal teaching that we should not speak the Creator's name, it seems highly unlikely that Judaism's Ineffable Name doctrine is actually an elaborate scheme, nor does it follow that they would have inadvertently vowel-pointed that name correctly, even if they had 50 "Freudian slips."
4. As we mentioned earlier, the vowel-pointing יהוה supported by Keith Johnson as representing the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton is one of several vowel-pointing methods carried out by the Masoretic scribes. In fact, Hebrew scholar Page H. Kelly, in his work *Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Grammar*, frankly lists the full vowel-pointing, *with the holem above the ה*, (יהוה) as the vowel-pointing used by the Masoretes,¹³⁹ even though the vowel-pointing most often, but not always, seen in the Hebrew Masoretic text is יהוה. The form יהוה is obviously missing the *holem* over the ה (as well as over the ו). Here are some examples taken directly (at random locations) from the [Aleppo Codex](#):



Displayed below are some examples taken directly (at random locations) from the [Leningrad Codex](#):

¹³⁹ For the full quote from Kelley's book please read section C, "Other Sources Validate our Understanding that You Can't Go by the Points!"




As displayed above, the way the Tetragrammaton is vowel-pointed in the Masoretic Text is simply inconsistent – too inconsistent to lead us to believe the Masoretic scribes were mysteriously led to “correctly” vowel-point it in 50 places. Regardless of how many instances in which the *holem* dot is visible over the ה, we find it highly unlikely that those scribes would have intentionally or otherwise left any “clues” to the true pronunciation, whether it be in 7, 12, 50 or 70 places. Nor is it likely they would have left 50 “stumbling blocks” for their reading audience to vocalize the Sacred Name. Such an explanation – going so far as to call the vowel points “the preachers of the name,” is highly speculative at best, all the while expecting his readers to believe *we’re* the ones doing the guessing.

We would like to think, in view of the above reasoning, that no one would attempt to persuade others that we should use the Masoretes’ vowel-pointing as evidence of how to pronounce the Tetragrammaton. Nevertheless, Keith Johnson, along with others who follow the teachings of Nehemia Gordon, advocates doing this very thing. We will follow along with Keith Johnson as he continues his exposé:

The most important discussion, for our purposes, has to do with how the scribes of the Masoretic text handled vowel points for the four Hebrew letters יהוה. They had to make a decision on this name 6,828 times. They had a deep reverence for the name יהוה, yet they also were under the rabbinical ban not to speak or write the name. This does not mean that they did not know the pronunciation or the “*full spelling*” of the name. In fact, we find that in the oldest, dated, and complete vocalized Hebrew manuscript, that the Masoretes actually added the spoken vowel points into the name of our Heavenly Father 50 times! This can be seen in the Leningrad Codex B19A.¹⁴⁰ There is fascinating history behind the discovery of this ancient Hebrew manuscript. I strongly encourage you to further research the origins of this very important Hebrew manuscript.¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ Keith Johnson's footnote: “The Leningrad Codex is an ancient Hebrew manuscript of the entire Old Testament that is housed in Russia. It was not made available to be photographed until the summer of 1990.”

¹⁴¹ Keith E. Johnson, יהוה: *His Hallowed Name Revealed Again*, op. cit., pp. 102-103 (cf. p. 133 of the revised edition).



We have a few concerns about the above commentary. Our first concern lies with Mr. Johnson's *assumption* that the Masoretes correctly vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton fifty times in Leningrad Codex B19A. Does he produce an admission from Judaism or an historical writing where the Masoretes admit that they vowel-pointed the Name correctly in fifty instances? No, he does not. Nevertheless, he expects us to believe that this is what happened. In commenting that the Masoretes added the "spoken vowel points" into the Creator's name fifty times, Mr. Johnson conveys the understanding that the Masoretes *correctly* added those vowel points, even though Judaism answers that they did not. In essence, Judaism is saying, "We admit that we mis-vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton, but it was only to prevent folks from inadvertently vocalizing the Creator's name, which we believe is too holy to pronounce."

However, Keith Johnson, in so many words, replies, "Well, no, that's not quite correct because we found fifty instances in which we are persuaded that the Masoretes 'forgot themselves' and unintentionally put in the *correct* vowel points." From Mr. Johnson's perspective, such an inadvertent, careless act is not a stretch of the imagination. For us, it is. In fact, if Keith Johnson is persuaded that *Yahweh* is to be rejected because it's a "scholarly guess," then based on the reasoning he here presents for upholding the pronunciation *Yehovah*, it should be rejected as an "unscholarly guess."

Secondly, Mr. Johnson assumes that there is a prophetic significance to there being fifty instances in which these "correct" vowel points were added. During the presentation that I attended, when he brought up his conclusion that the Tetragrammaton was correctly vowel-pointed fifty times in Leningrad Codex B19A, Mr. Johnson jubilantly exclaimed, "Can someone say, 'Shavuot (Pentecost)'? Can someone say, 'Jubilee'?" Please understand that we're not about to argue that the number fifty isn't a special number; it certainly is a special number, but that doesn't mean it must always carry a prophetic or even a righteous significance. For example, in the 2 Kings account of the captains and their companies of fifty men who were consumed by fire from heaven, should we consider the two companies of soldiers who followed their captains, only to be consumed by fire, to be righteous or prophetic? Also, should we consider the fact that the United States of America consists of fifty states to be prophetic or that it serves as an indication that this is a righteous nation? In the same way, if we find fifty instances in which the Tetragrammaton is vowel-pointed differently than it is on 6,773 other occasions, does this mean that those fifty instances should be understood as validating the correct vowel-pointing? If we follow Keith Johnson's reasoning, the answer would appear to be yes.

Third, when Keith Johnson refers to the Leningrad Codex B19A as an "ancient Hebrew manuscript," we need to ask ourselves, "*How old is 'ancient'?*" Remember, the Masoretes invented the art of vowel-pointing in the 7th century CE, which in and of itself must be considered to be at least 500 years *after* the ban on speaking the Name had already been imposed. To put this number in better perspective, please consider the fact that the United States of America didn't even exist 500 years ago. In fact, many United States citizens' ancestors were still living in Europe 500 years ago and this land was known to them as "the New World."



This was how Keith Johnson's web site advertised his original study יהוה: *His Hallowed Name Revealed Again* in May 2010.

To be sure, 500 years is a very long time. With all this in mind, if you knew that vowel-pointing wasn't invented until the seventh century CE, how would you feel if we were to let you know that Leningrad Codex B19A wasn't produced until three hundred years *after* the invention of vowel-pointing? Would that bolster your confidence in the authority of such a manuscript? Frankly, we are not impressed. This means that some 800 years after the ban was certainly in place, the manuscript known as "Leningrad Codex B19A" was produced. That's right, Lenin-

grad Codex B19A wasn't produced until the year 1008 or 1009 CE, but we didn't learn the dating of this manuscript from Keith Johnson's book; rather, we had to perform an online search to obtain this information. *Why didn't Keith reveal the dating of Leningrad Codex B19A to his reading audience?*

Before we answer the above question, we need to point out that presenting such a relatively modern manuscript as an "ancient Hebrew manuscript" – without letting the reader know how old "ancient" is – subtly and somewhat deceptively belies its age. To be sure, anything that is 1,000 years old is very old; but in terms of Biblical manuscripts, it has to be considered relatively *modern*, not ancient. Of course, we can expect Mr. Johnson to disagree with our reasoning, so to better assist you with understanding things from our perspective, please consider the following definition of "ancient," as found in *The Reader's Digest Great Encyclopedic Dictionary*:

an·cient¹ (ān'shənt) *adj.* **1.** Existing or occurring in times long past, especially before the fall of the Western Roman Empire, in A.D. 476.

2. Having existed from remote antiquity; of great age: *ancient* relics.

3. Very old: said of persons. **4.** *Archaic* Venerable; sage. Abbr. *anc.*

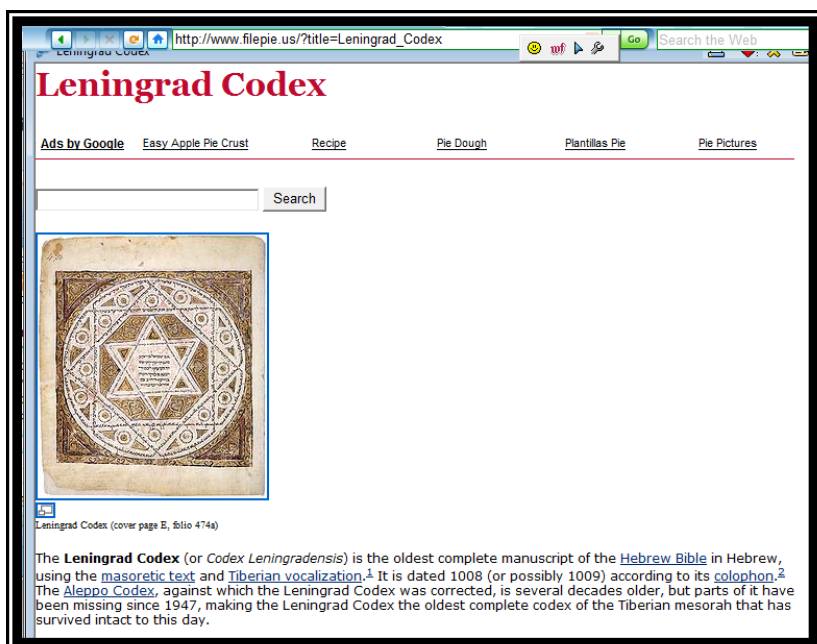
— *n.* **1.** One who lived in ancient times. **2.** An aged or venerable person — **the ancients** **1.** The ancient Greeks, Romans, Hebrews, or other civilized nations of antiquity. **2.** The ancient authors of Greece and Rome. [ancient < LL *antianum*, ult. < L *ante* before]

— **an'cient·ness** *n.* — **an'cient·ly** *adv.*

—**Syn.** (*adj.*) **1.** *Ancient*, *old*, *archaic*, and *antique* refer to a long time ago. Something *ancient* existed at such a time and does not exist now: the *ancient* peoples of Asia. *Old* must often be qualified to avoid ambiguity, as it sometimes means *ancient*: cowrie shells and other *old* forms of currency; and sometimes aged: Oxford is an *old* university. The *archaic* flourished in the past, but may still have a limited existence: *archaic* words and phrases. That which is *antique* is in the style of a former period, and may be greatly valued for its age: *antique* pottery. — **Ant.** modern, recent.


an·cient² (ān'shənt) *n.* *Archaic* **1.** An ensign or flag. **2.** One who bears an ensign or a flag. [Alter. Of ENSIGN]¹⁴²

Keith Johnson's dubbing Leningrad Codex B19A an "ancient Hebrew manuscript," while possibly correct (depending on your definition of the word "ancient"), is nevertheless misleading because it creates the impression that the manuscript is at least as old as the dating of the fall of the Western Roman Empire. If Keith truly desires to present such a relatively modern document as an "ancient" document – without creating any false impressions – he really needs to qualify the term "ancient," preferably by providing his readers the year in which it was published. However, the reader is instead left to guess the actual age of the document, trusting that when Mr. Johnson says "ancient," he means well before the fall of the Western Roman Empire. This is because, as we explained earlier, Keith Johnson does not disclose the actual date of Leningrad Codex B19A, at least not in chapter eight, nor does he point the reader to where he or she might go to find out the age. I consider this approach to be borderline scholastic dishonesty. During my reading of Mr. Johnson's book, I was so curious about the age of Leningrad Codex B19A that I turned to the Internet for some private research, and when I found that it is dated 1008 or possibly 1009 CE, I was simply *amazed* that Keith would describe such a relatively modern manuscript in "ancient" terms to his readers. Here is a screen capture from one of the web sites where I obtained my information about this manuscript's age:



It is interesting that when we look up information about Leningrad Codex on the Internet, we are immediately presented with the dating of this manuscript. However, within the pages of Keith Johnson's book, the dating is not found anywhere within the chapter where Keith offers information about Leningrad Codex B19A. You may well imagine that I addressed my frustration with Keith Johnson's dating of this manuscript during my e-mail exchange with him. Keith, in his reply, explained that in Appendix B of his book he *did* mention that Leningrad Codex B19A is one thousand years old. I found that, indeed, he did supply this information in his appendix. I

¹⁴² From *The Reader's Digest Great Encyclopedic Dictionary*, The Reader's Digest Association, Inc., Pleasantville, NY, 1977, p. 54.



missed this piece of information partly because I never read the appendix and partly because nowhere in chapter eight was there a note directing the reader to access the appendix for additional information about this manuscript.

For his part, Keith committed to taking “a very serious look at adding more info in the text of the book rather than the appendix.” When this chapter of our study was originally composed, we did not have access to Keith’s revision, but in January 2012, a friend mailed us a copy for review. To our disappointment, Keith opted to *not* supply his readers with the actual dating of Leningrad Codex B19A, nor does he at any time in the text of his book refer his readers to Appendix B for details about this manuscript. Why does Keith Johnson lead his readers to believe that Leningrad Codex B19A is an ancient document without making it abundantly clear exactly how old “ancient” is? Could it be that Keith is hopeful that he will succeed in persuading his reading audience that Leningrad Codex B19A is a very old, antiquated manuscript, but concerned that they may “catch on” to the fact that it really isn’t all that “ancient” when he reveals its actual age? Would Keith prefer that his readers not ask too many questions?

In spite of our concerns about Keith Johnson not providing his readers with the actual year in which Leningrad Codex B19A was published, our greater concern lies with how anyone could trust that such a modern document could somehow hold the key to how the Tetragrammaton was originally pronounced. Knowing that the vowel-pointing system wasn’t even invented until some 500 years after the ban against speaking the Name was imposed, and then knowing that Leningrad Codex B19A was published yet another *300 years after the invention of vowel-points* serves up a huge red flag for us when it comes to deciding which evidence best validates the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. To suggest that such a late manuscript holds the “pronunciation key” is, from our perspective, more a case of wishful thinking than sound reasoning. Believing that the Masoretes correctly vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton when even Judaism admits that they deliberately mis-vowel-pointed it would be akin to believing that Benedict Arnold acted in the best interests of the United States during the Revolutionary War, even though he switched sides. We simply need additional information to persuade us that Leningrad Codex B19A holds the key to the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton; regrettably, Keith Johnson does not provide us with any.



B. The Vowel-Points are from “Adonai” ... or are they?

There is a “point” that we have not covered in this study (until now) that Keith Johnson very deftly addresses: The vowel points that were used to vowel-point the Tetragrammaton do not precisely match the vowel points from *Adonai*, or so it might seem to a novice student of the Hebrew language. As he brings to light, the fact is, the precise symbols that were used to vowel-point יהוה are not *entirely* the same vowel points that are used to vowel-point *Adonai*:

Now I will address the long-standing “opinion” of the majority of scholars. If you look in most commentaries, Bible dictionaries, or the introductions of most Bibles, you will find a uniform answer to this question of pronunciation of the name. Let's look at my Ordination Bible:

To the four consonants YHWH of the Name, which had come to be regarded as too sacred to be pronounced, they attached vowel signs indicating that in its place should be read the Hebrew word *Adonai* meaning “Lord” (or *Elohim* meaning “God”).¹⁴³

I cannot begin to count how many times I have read this same explanation in books, articles, and Bibles. I even heard that there was a sixteenth-century German Christian scribe who, while translating the Bible into Latin for the Pope, wrote the name out as it appeared in his texts, with the consonants of YHWH and the vowels of *Adonai*, and basically manufactured a Hebrew word that has lasted ever since. There is only one major problem with this statement and story; there are no examples in the oldest and complete vocalized Hebrew manuscript where the Masoretes added all of the vowels of *Adonai* into the consonants of יהוה.

At this point I have to go a little deeper to get to the root of the confusion. The argument that the vowels of *Adonai* were placed into the consonants of יהוה is incorrect. Look at the following example for yourself. Remember, the symbols below and above the Hebrew letters represent vowel sounds:

The vowels of אֲדֹנָי (*Adonai*) are *hatef patach* אֲ (ah), *holem* הֹ (do), and *qamets* נִ (nai):

אֲדֹנָי

The vowels placed within the consonants of יהוה that are used 99 percent of the time in the Leningrad manuscript are *sheva* וְ (Ye) and *qamets* וֹ (vah):

יְהוֹה

¹⁴³ Keith Johnson's footnote: “Metzger, p. xii.”

If the vowels of *Adonai* were placed into יהוה, then we should expect to see a *hatef patach* ׃ under the *yod*, not a *sheva* ׃

There is only one place in our entire Hebrew manuscript where we can find a witness close to this argument. In Psalm 144:15 we find יהוה with a ׀ (׀יהוה) which is a relative particle before the name. This is the only time a *hatef patach* vowel is used with a *yod* ׃ in the name! Even this one example does not have the complete vowels of ׀יהוה *Adonai*. The most important thing about this one witness is that it proves that if the Masoretes wanted to place the vowels of *Adonai* into the name, as the majority of scholars claim, they certainly could have done it. Rather, we have well over 6,000 times that they use the *sheva* ׃ under the first letter of the name.¹⁴⁴

We need to interrupt Keith Johnson's commentary, but not because he has made any mistakes that we are aware of; indeed, we are persuaded his observation that the Masoretes did not *precisely* vowel-point יהוה with the vowels from *Adonai* is correct. His line of reasoning, in a nutshell, is this: We keep reading from various sources that the Masoretes incorporated the vowel points from the title *Adonai* into the four letters of the Tetragrammaton, but it turns out the very first vowel point that we come across in the Masoretic Text's rendering of the Tetragrammaton is not a (׃), but rather ׃ (a *yod* with the *sheva* a.k.a. the *shêwâ*). The *shêwâ* vowel point is not actually found within the title *Adonai* (׀יהוה), although it can be argued that the *shêwâ* symbol (׃) is contained within the *hatef patach* (׃) symbol [(׃) + (׃) = (׃)]. Nevertheless, at first glance it appears that scholars are mistaken with their claim that the Masoretes inserted the vowel points from *Adonai* into the Tetragrammaton. We touched on this observation back in chapter one of our study and June further explains things in layman's terms in section C of this chapter.

Of course, the way June and I reason is not always going to jibe with the way others reason, and it is clear that we are just not "wired" the same way Keith Johnson is wired. In fact, we essentially presented the above reasoning to Keith during our four-month e-mail discussion about the spring 2010 edition of his book. Here is one of the questions I posed:

How can we trust the people who mis-vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton to "inadvertently" do it correctly in a few places? Is there a "key" where they ever admit that in a certain verse they did it correctly?¹⁴⁵

Keith never answered the above question. From our perspective, it seems that Keith is willing to trust that the same people who admit to mis-vowel-pointing the Tetragrammaton got it right in a few places in spite of themselves.

¹⁴⁴ Keith E. Johnson, יהוה: *His Hallowed Name Revealed Again*, op. cit., pp. 103-105 (pp. 134-135 of the revised edition).

¹⁴⁵ This question was posed in response to Keith Johnson's commentary on page 111 of his book, יהוה: *His Hallowed Name Revealed Again*, Biblical Foundations Academy, Minneapolis, MN, spring 2010. Keith had requested that I scribble notes/suggestions on each of the pages, which I then scanned and e-mailed to him.

Okay, we are finished with our interruption and we will now allow Keith to continue with his discourse:

We do find that the Masoretes consistently left out the middle vowel [the *holem*] of the name 6,778 times. We already have learned the rabbis “commanded” that the name was not to be pronounced, so they wrote it 99 percent of the time so that it could not be pronounced. However, as I have shown, there is only one time the scribe uses a *hatefpatach* in the place of a *sheva* in the name. In other words, there is no evidence in the Leningrad manuscript that supports the theory that the full vowels of *Adonai* were ever placed into the consonants of יהוה. The scholars are right in saying that the Jews say “*Adonai*” when they come to the name, but they are wrong in saying that “*it is written this way*” in the oldest complete vocalized Hebrew manuscript.¹⁴⁶

Once again, Keith Johnson seems to be accurately relating the facts regarding the vowel-pointing of the Tetragrammaton, but the conclusion he reaches in response to these facts is simply not reasonable. When we look up the Tetragrammaton in a Hebrew interlinear, we do not see the middle vowel point (the *holem* [˙]), so Keith is right in noting that this vowel is missing. Nevertheless, it seems clear that the *holem* dot was intended to be placed over either the letter *heh* (ה) or the letter *waw* (ו). For example, James Strong, in his *Strong’s Concordance*, conveys the understanding that the *holem* does belong in the Tetragrammaton (at least that’s the way the Masoretes intended for it to be), but he places it over the *waw*:

3068. יהוה [˙] **Y^ehōvâh**, *yeh-ho-vaw'*; from 1961;
(the) self-*Existent* or Eternal; *Jehovah*, Jewish national name of God:—Jehovah, the Lord. Comp. 3050, 3069.
3069. יהוה [˙] **Y^ehōvîh**, *yeh-ho-vee'*; a var. of 3068;
[used after 136, and pronounced by Jews as 430, in order to prevent the repetition of the same sound, since they elsewhere pronounce 3068 as 136]:—God.

You may recall that we produced the above listing from *Strong’s Concordance* back in chapter three. We are displaying it again in this chapter, not only to illustrate the vowel point “dot” above the *waw* in יהוה [˙] (י), but we would also like for you to take another look at the next listing (word #3069). This is the Tetragrammaton, but this time it is vowel-pointed in such a way that it would be pronounced *Yehowih*. We say this even though we need to bear in mind that, within Judaism, it was understood to vocalize the Tetragrammaton as “*Elohim*” when it was vowel-pointed this way. For those who do not remember why anyone would want to vowel-point the Tetragrammaton so as to be read two different ways, we’ll explain it for you in layman’s terms. There are times when the actual Hebrew title *Adonai* precedes the Tetragrammaton, and it is awkward to say, “*Adonai Adonai*” in place of “*Adonai YHWH*,” so the Masoretes would vowel-

¹⁴⁶ Keith E. Johnson, יהוה: *His Hallowed Name Revealed Again*, Biblical Foundations Academy, op. cit., p. 105 (pp. 135-136 of the revised edition).



point the Tetragrammaton so as to be read as “Elohim” in those instances. In other words, instead of saying “Adonai Adonai,” they created a special signal to help the reader to know to say, “Adonai Elohim” instead. Thus, the word vowel-pointed as “Yehowih” wasn’t actually vowel-pointed for the purpose of pronouncing it that way; rather, it was vowel-pointed as a “flag” to alert the reader to say “Elohim” instead of inadvertently uttering the Creator’s name.

The fact that this special vowel-point “signal” was devised for the purpose of alerting the reader to say *Elohim* instead of YHWH, in and of itself, serves as evidence that whoever did it was out to prevent the Tetragrammaton from being pronounced “according to its letters,” not only after reading the word “Adonai,” but in other instances as well. Consequently, this also serves as strong evidence that whoever vowel-pointed יהוה in the Masoretic Text did *not* intend for his vowel points to be used as the means for determining how to correctly vocalize the Tetragrammaton. Rather, it was intended as a means of guiding the reader to say something else *instead of* uttering the Sacred Name. Our “point” is, you simply should not go by the points!

C. Other Sources Validate our Understanding that You Can't Go by the Points!

We have already stated that it makes sense to believe that the Masoretic scribes would mask the sound of the “Yah” in the first syllable of the Name. We find it interesting that other sources express the same general understanding that we have about how and why the Tetragrammaton was vowel-pointed in both the Masoretic Text and Leningrad Codex B19. The following information comes from the extended definition “Yahweh” listed in *Webster's Online Dictionary*:

The vocalizations of יְהוָה and אֱלֹהֵי are not identical

The schwa in YHWH (the vowel under the first letter, ם) and the hataf patakh in 'DNY (the vowel under its first letter, ם), appear different. One reason suggested is that the spelling יְהוָה (with the hataf patakh) risks that a reader might start pronouncing “Yah,” which is a form of the Name, thus completing the first half of the full Name. Alternatively, the vocalization can be attributed to Biblical Hebrew phonology, where the hataf patakh is grammatically identical to a schwa, always replacing every schwa naḥ under a guttural letter. Since the first letter of אֱלֹהֵי is a guttural letter, while the first letter of יְהוָה is not, the hataf patakh under the (guttural) aleph reverts to a regular schwa under the (non-guttural) yodh.¹⁴⁷

Let's try putting the above information in layman's terms. To best assist you with grasping the significance of the above explanation, I enlisted the assistance of June, who is more studied in the Hebrew language than I am:

What I make out of the above explanation is this: We are discussing the first vowel point of two words יְהוָה and אֱלֹהֵי. One word has a *schwa* [*sheva*] for its first vowel point and the other a *hataf patakh* (which is a *patakh* and *schwa* put together). The *hataf patakh* is also known as a “compound schwa”. It is important to understand that the vowel *schwa* is a vowel point that makes no sound. When you see a *schwa*, you are to only pronounce the sound of the letter that it is under. Let's put this understanding into perspective by giving an example from our English language: If we put the *schwa* under the first letter of the English letters *blk*, it would be pronounced “b-lock” because the letter *b* carries the *b* sound and is not accompanied by a vowel when the *schwa* is used. Once we say the “*b*” sound, we can say the rest of the word. Here is an illustration of my point:

בְּlk = b-lock

Notice that the vowel point combination of the *schwa* and the *patakh* causes the above word to be pronounced nearly the same as the word *block*.

¹⁴⁷ From *Webster's Online Dictionary*. The complete listing of the extended definition of “Yahweh” can be read online by accessing the following link: <http://www.websters-online-dictionary.org/definitions/Yahweh>.

The other vowel point that we need to address is the *hataf patakh*. The *hataf patakh* is a vowel point that has an “aw” sound, just like a *patakh*. This is the vowel sound that we hear in the English word “caught.”

The *schwa* (as found within the Masoretic vowel-pointing of YHWH) is located under the “yod.” A “yod” is pronounced like the English letter “y” and carries the basic sound of the “ye” in the word *yellow*. Here’s an English example of a “y” with both a *schwa* and a *hataf patakh*, using only the first syllable of this word:

ỵllow = yellow
 ỵllow = yahlow

The other Hebrew word in question is 'DNY (commonly rendered *Adonai*), which starts with an “alef.” An “alef” is a Hebrew letter that has no sound of its own. It takes on the sound of the vowel that is under it. Thus, when an “alef” has a *hataf patakh* under it, you pronounce “aw.” When an “alef” has a *schwa* under it you pronounce ... oops, that’s right, a *schwa* has no sound, so you cannot put it under a letter that has no sound. This is why the *patakh* was added to the *schwa* – to produce the “aw” sound. Here is a comparative illustration of why the word we know as *adonai* – in Hebrew – cannot have a *schwa* under the *alef*:

אֲדֹנַי = Ah-donai

אֲדֹנַי = Donai [the

first syllable of this word cannot be pronounced because the aleph doesn’t actually carry a sound and when you see a *schwa*, you are to only pronounce the sound of the letter that it is under.]

In view of the above information, from a linguistic perspective, the word *adonai* cannot be vowel-pointed with a *schwa* (*sheva*) because that would render the first syllable unpronounceable. It is for this reason that a *hataf patakh* is used. Applying the ineffable name doctrine from a phonetic perspective, if the first syllable of YHWH is correctly pronounced “yah,” the *hataf patakh* from *adonai* should not be carried over to this name because it might cause the reader to accidentally blurt out the first syllable of the Tetragrammaton. By

simply removing the *patakh* portion of that symbol, only the *schwa* remains and this vowel point suffices to prevent the reader from saying “yah” when he comes across the Tetragrammaton during his reading. Note the difference:

יהֿ = Yahu

יהּ = Yehu

Given the fact that Judaism teaches and practices the *ineffable name* doctrine, if it is true that the first syllable of the Tetragrammaton is pronounced *Yah*, then it makes sense to believe that the Masoretes intentionally took an extra precaution to prevent readers from accidentally vocalizing that sound while simultaneously signaling them to say “*Adonai*.”¹⁴⁸

June’s explanation serves to simplify and clarify why we cannot rely on vowel-pointing to determine the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. We are persuaded that the combination of Judaism’s drive to coerce the reader to say *Adonai*, while simultaneously taking measures to prevent the accidental utterance of *Yah*, led them to substitute the *sheva* (schwa) for the *hataf patakh* under the *yod* in our Heavenly Father’s name.

Interestingly, after reading June’s simplified explanation of how and why the Masoretes didn’t *exactly* match the vowel-pointing of the Tetragrammaton (יהוה) with the vowel-pointing of *Adonai*, I came across this same basic explanation in an introductory Hebrew grammar book. Please notice how Page H. Kelley, in his *Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Grammar*, explains the vowel-pointing of יהוה:

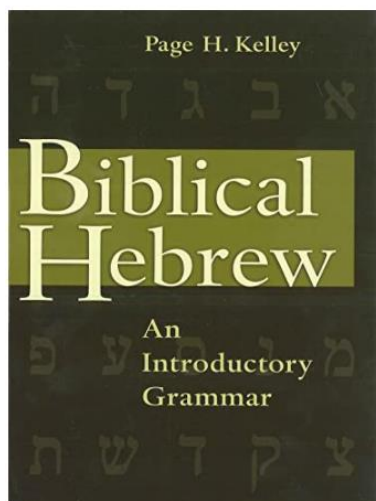
יהוה is the covenant name for Israel’s God. At a very early date in Jewish history, it came to be regarded as too sacred to be pronounced. Pious readers avoided pronouncing it by substituting for it the word אֲדֹנָי *’ā-dō-nāy*, meaning “my Lord.” When Masoretic scholars began to supply vowel points to the consonantal text of biblical books, they applied the vowels of אֲדֹנָי to the consonants of יהוה. With the modification of compound sheva to simple sheva under the non-guttural yod, the resultant form was יהֿוה (or simply יהוה), which was always pronounced as *’ā-dō-nāy*.

¹⁴⁸ Some may question why we are giving the y a “-yē” sound for the word “Yehu” when we previously mentioned that this vowel point has no vowel sound. The best way to answer such a question is to produce a reminder from a source that we quoted back in chapter two: “A Sheva is a very short e (rapidissimum). When seen, it is two dots resembling a colon (:) placed under a letter. As it has been before said to be often invisible, and consequently not then sounded by the Masorites; so when it is seen, silence is frequently imposed on it.” -- *An Easy Introduction to the Knowledge of the Hebrew Language*, by James P. Wilson, Farrand, Hopkins, Zantzinger and Co., Philadelphia, PA, 1812, p. 267.

If there had been no need to avoid pronouncing יהוה, it would most likely have been pointed as יהוה, and thus read as *Yāhvēh*. The curious attempt to transliterate the hybrid form יהוה as “Yehovah” (or “Jehovah,” since “y” was missing in the German language) was not made until the time of the Protestant Reformation.

Occasionally the two divine names אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה appear together in the Hebrew text (see Amos 1:8). Since it would have been awkward to read the pair of names as ^ʾ*dō-nāy* ^ʾ*dō-nāy*, Masoretic scholars chose to point יהוה with the modified vowels of אֱלֹהִים. This resulted in the form יהוה, later simplified to יהוה, which should be pronounced as though it were written, ^ʾ*lōhīm*. Thus יהוה (pointed with the modified vowels of אֱלֹהִים) is translated in English versions as “LORD” (note the capital letters), while יהוה (pointed with the modified vowels of אֱלֹהִים) is translated as “GOD” (again with capital letters), and אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה is translated as “Lord GOD.” Translators, therefore, consistently render any form of יהוה with capital letters, thereby alerting readers to its presence in the Hebrew text.¹⁴⁹

We would like to call special attention to Page H. Kelley’s explanation that “with the modification of compound sheva to simple sheva under the non-guttural yod, the resultant form



was יהוה (or simply יהוה), which was always pronounced as ^ʾ*dō-nāy*.” He is here offering a linguistic explanation as to why the “compound sheva” (ְ) found with *Adonai* is modified to a simple sheva (ֿ) when vowel-pointing the *yod* in the Tetragrammaton. The modification was for a linguistic reason, not a scholar’s whim or “slip.” Without having read Page H. Kelley’s linguistic rationale, June offered the same basic explanation, in layman’s terms, that he presented in his grammar book.

And now, a note about the late Page H. Kelley. Page H. Kelley (1924-1997) was a Professor of the Old Testament at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY, where he taught Hebrew for forty years. With these credentials, he should rank as having been a “credible Hebrew scholar.” We probably wouldn’t bring Page H. Kelley’s biographical sketch to your attention if it weren’t for the fact that Keith Johnson, in his book *His Hallowed Name Revealed Again*, offers Kelley’s book *The Masorah of Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* as a reference tool that explains the scribal annotations in the Masoretic Text. Is Keith Johnson aware of the fact that the scholar whose work he offers as an aid to learning taught his students that the form *Yehovah* is the result of a “curious attempt” to transliterate the Tetragrammaton? Here is Keith Johnson’s recommendation of Page H. Kelley’s book:

¹⁴⁹ Page H. Kelley, *Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Grammar*, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, MI, 1992, p. 32.

יה חס י מנה בתור. These Hebrew letters are full of information that will give me an explanation on an aspect of Rashi's argument. I have given you a reference book in Appendix C if you would like to learn how to read these notes (Kelly, Paige H. and Daniel S. Mynatt. *The Masorah of Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*).¹⁵⁰

In view of the fact that Keith Johnson misspells Kelley's first name (it is Page, not Paige), I am curious as to how thoroughly he has examined this scholar's writings. For the record and for emphasis purposes, we are repeating Page H. Kelley's summary of Keith Johnson's findings:

If there had been no need to avoid pronouncing יהוה, it would most likely have been pointed as יהוה, and thus read as *Yāhvēh*. The curious attempt to transliterate the hybrid form יהוה as "Yehovah" (or "Jehovah," since "y" was missing in the German language) was not made until the time of the Protestant Reformation.

Are we supposed to believe that Page H. Kelley understood the scribal annotations, yet he didn't have a clue that יהוה represents the correctly vowel-pointed pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton? Keith Johnson's answer has to be, "Yes."

We should also point out that other scholars maintain that the reason the medieval scribes vowel-pointed the first syllable of the Tetragrammaton as "-yeh" instead of "-yah" was to prevent the reader from inadvertently expressing what they regarded as being the correctly-vocalized first syllable of the Sacred Name. The late Anson Rainey, who was Professor of Ancient Near Eastern Cultures and Semitic Linguistics at Tel Aviv University in Israel, wrote the following in a letter that he sent to *Biblical Archaeology Review* magazine:

The Anglicized form, Jehovah, is a "ghost word" based on the four consonants, *YHWH*, with the vowels of another word, *adonai*, meaning "my Lord." The Hebrew scribes of the Middle Ages put those vowels in to remind the reader to say *adonai* rather than pronounce the sacred Name. But in the first syllable, they nevertheless put in an *e* rather than an *a* so as not to cause anyone to see the syllable *ya-* and inadvertently blurt out the sacred Name! This is just further proof of the correct first syllable, which in any case is confirmed by Greek spellings and the evidence of Hebrew linguistics. So *Yahweh* is not just some sort of "scholarly convention."¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ Keith E. Johnson, יהוה: *His Hallowed Name Revealed Again*, Biblical Foundations Academy, op. cit., p. 88. Note: This quote is found on pp. 116-117 of Keith Johnson's revision.

¹⁵¹ Anson F. Rainey, quoted from the "Queries & Comments" section of the July/August 1985 issue of *Biblical Archaeology Review*, p. 78. This section contains a letter / editorial titled "How Was the Tetragrammaton Pronounced?" contributed by Rainey, who was Professor of Ancient Near Eastern cultures and Semitic Linguistics at Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv, Israel.

D. Who Plays the Guessing Game?

By now we hope it is obvious that any attempt to determine the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton should *not* be based on any vowel-pointing supplied by Judaism—unless we can at the very least produce an admission from those same scribes that they intentionally added the vowel points that would guide the reader to correctly pronounce the Tetragrammaton. Although Keith Johnson, in his book יהוה: *His Hallowed Name Revealed Again*, makes it very clear that he believes the vowel points are the “preachers of the Name,” he doesn’t provide us with any admissions from those ancient copyists that they supplied vowel-pointing to cause the reader to speak the Sacred Name “according to its letters.” Without any such concessions from the scribes who produced Leningrad Codex B19A, what Mr. Johnson is in essence saying is, **“There are 50 places where the Masoretes vowel-pointed the name the way I think it should be pronounced.”** Keith Johnson is certainly entitled to his opinion, but without a single admission from the ranks of Judaism that they supplied the correct vowel-pointing to represent the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton, the best he is able to offer anyone is his own speculation.

For anyone to make such a bold claim about what they believe to be correct vowel-pointing in a relatively modern copy of Scripture without supplying any evidence to back it up is a giant leap of faith combined with a super-sized assumption. In spite of this, we are about to see that Mr. Johnson proceeds to present those who support the pronunciation *Yahweh* as “playing a guessing game.”

For Keith Johnson to portray those who believe that the available evidence supports the pronunciation *Yahweh* as playing a “guessing game,” this in turn presupposes that his own conclusion is 100% correct. June and I continue to maintain that we do not believe *anyone* can be 100% certain of the correct pronunciation and, sadly, some believers will pounce on this concession and present it to others as a weakness and an indication that we just haven’t studied things out as thoroughly as they have. We are sorry to report that this is the approach that Keith Johnson takes in his book:

I can say with confidence that the hotly debated opinions about the pronunciation of the name יהוה is worthy of the time and energy it takes to get this right. At the very least we should base our argument on solid evidence. Would you agree that with everything you have learned up to this point that the name יהוה deserves more than our best guess? Unfortunately, when it comes to the most popular opinion on the pronunciation of this magnificent name, a guess is the best most scholars can give you. Here are *two* opinions of many that you can see.

While it is almost if not quite certain that the Name was originally pronounced “Yahweh,” this pronunciation was not indicated when the Masoretes added vowel sounds to the consonantal Hebrew text.

I personally really appreciate the honesty of the Anchor Bible Dictionary, which explains:



The pronunciation of *yhwh* as Yahweh is a scholarly guess.

Do you believe that the Father wants his people to guess how to say His name? The majority of scholars have played the guessing game and passed down their “*guess*” to us.¹⁵²

Like Keith Johnson, I also appreciate the honesty of the author of the article found in the *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, only in a different way. Not only does Keith Johnson think they’re playing a game by treating the pronunciation *Yahweh* as a “guess,” but he also assumes that the “guess” must be wrong. Of course, this presupposes that Keith has done all the proper research and homework, while apparently (according to his reasoning) the scholars who compiled the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* “threw caution to the wind” in deciding upon the pronunciation *Yahweh*. June and I know better and we hope you do as well. If we had to criticize anything about the statement found in the *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, we would suggest that the author phrase his conclusion a little differently. Something like the following might have appeared more authoritative without conveying an overconfident approach, which we should all avoid: “The pronunciation *Yahweh* is based on what we believe to be the best available linguistic and historical evidence; however, since we are unable to produce an actual recording of the Name as enunciated by the Almighty at the Burning Bush, our best research should not be regarded as conclusive.”

¹⁵² Ibid, pp. 105-106 (pp. 136-137 of the revised edition).

E. Examining Keith Johnson's Research Methods

Although I am persuaded that we have successfully demonstrated that we should not rely on the Masoretes' vowel-pointing to guide us to the original pronunciation of YHWH, we will provide a few additional quotes from Keith Johnson's book to further cement our personal conviction in this matter. On page 111 of his book, after having taken a jab at the pronunciation *Yahweh* for merely being a "scholarly guess," Mr. Johnson ventures some guesswork of his own:

If we compare יהוה (Yehovih) with יהוה (Yehvah) the evidence points toward the ה *holem* which is the dot over the *hey* as being the missing vowel. This would mean that the scribes knew that the name was pronounced יהוה **Yehovah**, but they dropped the *holem* so that the name could not be pronounced correctly. This is a holy moment. If the earliest vocalized manuscripts are correct, then you have just read the holiest name in the universe.¹⁵³

Our first question, in response to the above commentary, is, "What evidence?" Keith is saying that since one form of the Tetragrammaton is vowel-pointed in such a way as to produce the pronunciation *Yehovih* (which has a dot over the *heh*), whereas the other one that's vowel-pointed as *Yehvah* does not have a dot, this means the "missing piece of the puzzle" is the *holem* (i.e., the dot over the *heh*). In other words, if the scribes who vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton as *Yehovih* (יהוה) had only put a *kamatz* (ֿ) under the *waw* (ו), they would have provided the correct vowel-pointing to produce the original pronunciation of the Almighty's name. How can Keith Johnson know this to be true? How does he know the specific instances (if any) where the Tetragrammaton was correctly vowel-pointed? Did the scribes provide us with notes guiding us to specific instances where they supplied the vowel-points indicating the original pronunciation of the Name? Or is Mr. Johnson's conclusion a "scholarly guess"? Based on the fact that we really should not rely on Masoretic vowel-pointing to guide us to the correct pronunciation, it might well be more accurate to describe Keith Johnson's conclusion as an "unscholarly guess."

In the final analysis, we believe that we have demonstrated that Mr. Johnson's conclusion is indeed an "unscholarly guess." Let's face it: he doesn't know whether or not the vowel-pointing that he embraces as the "correct" vowel-pointing is *really* correct or not because he writes, "If the earliest vocalized manuscripts are correct" Keith Johnson's less-than-confident use of the word "if" tells us that he doesn't really know for sure whether or not the Masoretes EVER vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton in such a way to produce the original pronunciation of the Almighty's name (intentionally or otherwise). Nevertheless, he expects us to believe that his vowel-pointing of choice represents the original pronunciation. If this is Mr. Johnson's method of determining the original pronunciation, then all we can say is, we admire his faith, even though we do not admire his methods, nor do we agree with his conclusion.

Before we jump to any conclusions about Keith Johnson's research methods, he asks us to "hear him out," so for the sake of fairness, we will allow him to continue:

¹⁵³ Ibid, p. 111 (pp. 145-146 of the revised edition).

Before you make a judgment, hear me out. If I am merely creating a theory with no Hebrew manuscript evidence then I would understand if you disqualified my presentation. Great news! I have found evidence to support my presentation on the pronunciation of the name **יְהוָה**.

I do not know if it was intentional or a scribal “slip,” but there are fifty examples of the name **יְהוָה** Y^hovah written with the complete consonants and vowels in the Leningrad manuscript.¹⁵⁴

I feel I need to “slip in” an observation at this juncture: Keith does not know for sure if the fifty examples he’s about to describe are intentional or “scribal slips,” but if they “slipped,” they slipped right? Is Keith being factual here or is this a “scholarly guess”? He continues:

The specific number of occurrences and places in Scripture these “*holems* from heaven” are used in the name **יְהוָה** Y^hovah may be revelatory. The number fifty is used in Scripture for some very important things. Some examples are fifty cubits as one of the measurements of Noah’s ark; fifty days the waters of the flood were abated; fifty loops of gold for the curtain of the tabernacle; fifty cubits as the length of the curtain; fifty as a measurement for the Temple that Ezekiel saw, which is mentioned fourteen times. Every fifty years there is to be a jubilee in Israel. The most important fifty to me is found in Leviticus 23 regarding the biblical holiday Shavuot/Pentecost.

You shall count until the day after the seventh Sabbath for yourselves fifty days; then you shall present an offering of new grain to Y^hovah.

LEVITICUS 23:16

The Hebrew word Shavuot refers to the seven Sabbaths plus one day that equal fifty! If you have had the opportunity to read *A Prayer to Our Father; Hebrew Origins of the Lord’s Prayer* you know about my testimony regarding *Shavuot*. Y^hovah requested my presence in His city on the Holy Holiday of Fifty! The Torah Scroll that I received in Jerusalem opened up to this very passage about Shavuot when I asked Nehemia Gordon to read it for me. Maybe now you might be able to understand why I am so convinced about this name in light of how I have been led throughout this journey.¹⁵⁵

Here we encounter the same approach that I observed during Keith Johnson’s presentation: *Surely*, if there are precisely fifty examples of the vowel-pointing that he believes is correct, this should serve as a prophetic “green light” or validation from the Almighty that Keith is on the right track. We are reminded of how Seventh-Day Adventists (then known as “Millerites” after founder William Miller), between the years 1831 and 1844, preached that the Messiah would return on October 22, 1844. Their reasoning seemed to perfectly align with the prophecy found

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 112 (p. 146 of the revised edition).

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 112 (pp. 146-147 of the revised edition).

in the eighth chapter of Daniel, especially verse 14: “Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.” Basing his reckoning on the “day for a year” method, William Miller became convinced that the 2,300-day period started in 457 BCE with Artaxerxes I of Persia’s decree to rebuild Jerusalem. Counting forward 2,300 years from that date, Miller and his followers determined that this period would end—and hence the Messiah’s return occur—in 1843. They eventually settled on October 22, 1844. When nothing happened on that date, the account of this experience became known as “The Great Disappointment.” Nevertheless, to this day, Seventh-Day Adventists believe that the prophecy was fulfilled on that date, but they now interpret things in a different light: Instead of the Second Coming, the Messiah moved to the “Holy of Holies” of the heavenly sanctuary, where He began what is known as the “Investigative Judgment.” Certainly both interpretations of the Daniel prophecy cannot be correct; can both be wrong?

Over the years, countless individuals have come up with what they felt were undeniable “prophetic” interpretations of Scripture. Their subsequent interpretations have persuaded throngs of believers that they were on to something. You may recall Edgar Whisenant’s [*88 Reasons for Why the Rapture Will Be in 1988*](#). In our local area, a group predicted Yeshua’s return on March 31, 1998 because $666 \times 3 = 1998$. The year 1998 was also sealed as the year of the Messiah’s return because that year marked the 50th anniversary of the new nation of Israel. We once associated with a man who dedicated his website to his prediction that Yeshua would return in either 2015 or 2016. He apparently had quite a few who supported his cause, but once 2016 passed, his website was taken down and he has now completely disappeared from the limelight. Only today we received an e-mail inviting us to watch a YouTube video validating the belief that Yeshua will return “[sometime around 2061-2062](#).” This type of “prophetic rationalizing” will likely continue until the day of Yeshua’s actual return, but it seems that those who do the rationalizing miss the mark every time (but don’t tell *them* that!). I realize I have cited the late journalist H. L. Mencken throughout our study, but once again, his words ring true as we examine Keith Johnson’s proposal that fifty “Masoretic slips” reveal the correct vowel-pointing of the Tetragrammaton: “There is always an easy solution to every human problem – neat, plausible, and *wrong*.”

This, then, is the summary of Keith Johnson’s argument. In Mr. Johnson’s estimation, fifty apparent “slips” by the Masoretes “*accidentally on purpose*” reveal the correct vowel-pointing of the Tetragrammaton. From our perspective, the addition of the *holem* over the ה is simply an option that the Masoretes chose to use fifty times, while omitting it in the other instances. As we have seen, this is also how Page H. Kelley, in his *Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Grammar*, understands the vowel-pointing of יהוה. Mr. Johnson continues to elaborate about the “fifty examples”:

For all who are willing, I have given the reference verses for all fifty places where the name is vowel pointed יהוה? Yehovah in Appendix B in the back of this study. I have come up with all sorts of “coincidences” based on where the fully vowel-pointed name occurs. For example, the first time it appears in Genesis 3:14, where there is a curse against the serpent and the second time it appears is in Genesis 9:26, where there is a blessing on Shem (name). Check them out and have fun guessing why the scribe intentionally or accidentally fully



vocalized the name so that it could be spoken when read by you and me!

Was this a coincidence? Did the scribe decide to go against the rabbinical command? Did the scribe secretly hide the name? We do not know, but we do have these fifty witnesses to the correct pronunciation of the name יהוה Y^ehovah!¹⁵⁶

Please note that, once again, Keith Johnson's only "evidence" is the number fifty. We can imagine that Keith would feel the same way about his "coincidences" if there had been *seven* instances of his vowel-pointing of choice, since seven is considered the number of perfection. Keith concedes that he doesn't even know if the scribe supplied his preferred vowel-pointing accidentally or intentionally. Could it be that the scribe did it intentionally, knowing that he was successfully alerting the readers of the Hebrew text to say "Adonai" instead of attempting to pronounce the Name? The answer, of course, is yes.

Keith continues with what he feels is yet *another* validation that he has discovered the correct vowel-pointing of the Tetragrammaton:

Two years after I returned from Israel, my very good friend, the late Reggie White traveled to Israel and brought back for me a priceless gift from Jerusalem. He purchased a copy of the Aleppo Codex¹⁵⁷ for my personal use. It is worth your time to do some research on the background of this amazing Hebrew manuscript.

Even though the Aleppo Codex is not complete, it is considered the most accurate of all vocalized Hebrew manuscripts and about one hundred years older than the Leningrad manuscript. In the significant portion checked, there were several places where the name is vowel pointed exactly like the Leningrad manuscript as יהוה Y^ehovah! One very important example in the Aleppo Codex of the full vowels being placed in the name is found in Ezekiel 28:22 where we read the following:


Thus says אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה (Adonai Y^ehovah)

Here you can see a clear example from the Aleppo Codex that the vowels of *Adonai* are not placed into the name Y^ehovah. This is only one of many examples of the scribe giving the reader a chance to read and pronounce the name right after saying the word *Adonai*! This means that I have found *two* different witnesses in actual Hebrew manuscripts to the full vocalized spelling of the name Y^ehovah!¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 119 (p. 147 of the revised edition).

¹⁵⁷ Keith Johnson's footnote: "The Aleppo Codex is an incomplete ancient vocalized Hebrew manuscript of the Old Testament attributed to the scribe Aaron Ben Asher."

¹⁵⁸ Keith E. Johnson, יהוה: *His Hallowed Name Revealed Again*, Biblical Foundations Academy, op. cit., p.113 (pp. 148-149 of the revised edition).



As explained above, Keith's other "witness" to what he feels is the correct vowel-pointing of יהוה involves instances in which the scribes' not-so-exact duplication of the *Adonai* vowel points within יהוה follows the actual title *Adonai*. As Keith has acknowledged, the scribes would not typically vowel-point the Tetragrammaton with the vowel points from *Adonai* when the Name followed *Adonai* because of how awkward it is to say something like, "Thus saith Adonai Adonai." Therefore, since (a) the vowel points are slightly different between the way יהוה and יהוה are vowel-pointed and (b) the Tetragrammaton follows *Adonai*, which makes for an awkward reading, the only reasonable explanation, in Keith Johnson's estimation, is that the scribes correctly vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton in those instances. At least this is Keith Johnson's perspective.

For our part, we continue to maintain that it is highly unlikely that the scribes would have *accidentally* placed the correct vowel points within the Tetragrammaton. Moreover, we have already explained how, if it is true that the first syllable of the Tetragrammaton is pronounced "yah," it follows that a loyal adherent of the ineffable name doctrine would not have reproduced that "yah" sound; this is achieved by placing a *sheva* instead of a *hataf patakh* under the first letter *yod*. Using the *sheva* works grammatically to carry across the same vowel points of *Adonai* while simultaneously converting the "yah" sound to a "yeh" sound. Why, then, did the scribe vowel-point the Tetragrammaton with the vowel points from *Adonai* in a few instances wherein the Tetragrammaton followed *Adonai*? In other words, why did the scribe use vowel-pointing that would cause the reader to say "Adonai Adonai"? Like Keith, we can only speculate, but it is certainly possible that the scribe, in a few instances, simply forgot to apply the vowel-pointing from *Elohim* in those few instances. After all, he was only human.

Whose speculation is correct? Is Keith Johnson's speculation correct when he suggests that the Masorete scribe "accidentally" supplied the correct vowel points or is our speculation correct when we suggest that the scribe "accidentally" vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton so as to effect the reading "Adonai Adonai"? Could both speculations be wrong? Either way, our "point" remains the same: We should not go by the vowel points!



F. Does the Talmud Provide the Original Pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton?

As we bring this chapter to a close, we would like to point out yet another rash speculation on the part of Keith Johnson. He hypothesizes that the Jews, in the Talmud, provided the correct pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton, and – hold on to your hat – it just happens to be *Yehovah*:

You can debate with me about why the name is Y^ehovah if you would like. I would ask you to give me any other biblical witness that would refute the manuscript witnesses to this Holy name. I have read more pages of information on the name than I can count, and I must admit I have been disappointed by the assumptions, guesses, and theories. I have been encouraged to actually see evidence!

I find it interesting that even in the Talmud there is acknowledgement of both the writing and pronunciation of this most holy and hidden “secret” name. There is even the acceptance that eventually the “rabbinic ban” will be lifted and the name will be spoken by all!

This world is not like the world to come. In this world the name is written Yeho[vah] and read Ado[nai] but in the world to come it will be one, written Yeho[vah] and read Yeho[vah].

Babylonian Talmud, Pesachim 50a¹⁵⁹

Before we examine Mr. Johnson’s claim that the Jews actually provided the correct vocalization of the Tetragrammaton in the Talmud, we really should address his offer to debate him about why the pronunciation is Y^ehovah. He says he has read more pages of information on the Name than he can count. Unless Keith is terrible at math, this is most likely an exaggeration. Nevertheless, we understand his point: He has read lots and lots of pages of information about the Name. However, June and I can make the same claim and we can attest that reading volumes of information on any subject does not necessarily mean that the reader will reach the correct conclusion.

Keith adds that he is disappointed by assumptions, guesses and theories. Well, to be frank, June and I are disappointed by *his* assumptions, guesses and theories. He has apparently found fifty instances in which the Tetragrammaton is vowel-pointed with a *holem* (הֶהוּהִי) instead of the common vowel-pointing (הֵהוּהִי) and he *assumes* that this proves that those fifty instances represent the correct vocalization, even though the vowel-pointing form that he supports (הֶהוּהִי) actually comes closer to containing the same vowels of *Adonai* (אֲדֹנָי) than the common vowel-pointing. We should also add that the common vowel-pointing (הֵהוּהִי) is actually grammatically incorrect, since the first ה *must* be pronounced and is therefore required to be vowel-pointed.

¹⁵⁹ Keith E. Johnson, הֵהוּהִי: *His Hallowed Name Revealed Again*, Biblical Foundations Academy, op. cit., p.119 (pp. 157-158 of the revised edition).


In addition to assuming that the fifty instances of יהוה represent the correct pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton, Keith *guesses* that the scribe who supplied this vowel-pointing *may* have done so on purpose – or maybe he slipped? Keith in essence applies his personal preference to his assumption and guess in order to produce a theory that not only contradicts the very admission of Judaism, but is at variance with Judaism's *ineffable name doctrine*. In other words, if Keith's theory is correct, the scribe either *intentionally* violated the ineffable name doctrine by supplying the correct pronunciation of יהוה on fifty occasions, or he *unintentionally* violated it when he "slipped" fifty times. The only evidence Keith has to go by is buoyed by his assumptions, guesses and theory as to how and why the Masorete scribe vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton with vowel-points that are nearly identical to the vowel-points of *Adonai*.

Finally, Keith apparently believes that the author of the Talmudic Pesachim 50a supplied his readers with the correct pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton, and that pronunciation is none other than *Yehovah*. Let's consider Keith's proposal. First, please understand that the Babylonian Talmud was composed in Hebrew or Aramaic, *not* English. In fact, when the Talmud was written, the English language didn't even exist! This means that when the author wrote the Almighty's name, he wrote it out "יהוה," not "Yeho[vah]." We are thus brought back full circle to the original question, "How was יהוה originally pronounced?" Another thing to remember is the fact that the Babylonian Talmud was completed in the 5th century CE. Since vowel points weren't invented until the 7th century CE, this in turn means that the Creator's name as it appeared in Pesachim 50a of the Babylonian Talmud was not vowel-pointed. It is therefore anyone's guess as to how the Talmud's author believed that the Tetragrammaton should be pronounced. Was it "Yehowah"? Was it "Yahweh"? Was it "Yahuwah"? Or could it have been "Yihuwoh"? All are linguistic possibilities, but since the Hebrew text was not vowel-pointed, Pesachim 50a leaves us without a pronunciation guide. Thus, when some translator came along and translated the Hebrew text into English, the decision was made to render the divine name as "Yeho[vah]." Did the original author of the Talmud write out the Tetragrammaton in such a way that would lend any clues as to its original pronunciation? No, he did not. Here is another English translation of Pesachim 50a, but note that the rendering of the Almighty's name doesn't even come *close* to sounding like "Yehovah":

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said, "The World to Come does not resemble this world. [In] this world, [Hashem's Name] is written with [the letters] *yud, hey*, but is pronounced with *aleph, dalet*. But in the World to Come, it will all be one."¹⁶⁰

What a difference an alternate translation can make! According to the above rendering of Pesachim 50a, not only does the author not produce Keith Johnson's preferred pronunciation *Yehovah*, but the Tetragrammaton doesn't even appear in its full form.

¹⁶⁰ Pesachim 50a as rendered by Rav Yisrael Shachor, Torah MiTzion, Issue 262: Parshat Haazinu, 10-11 October 2008, 12 Tishrei 5769. Their web site is <http://www.torahmitzion.org>.



We cannot deny the fact that Keith Johnson brings a lot of energy and zeal to the table when it comes to the issue of how to pronounce the Almighty's name. However, we are not persuaded that Keith's zeal has led him in the right direction. His energy and charisma will certainly attract a following, but if his zeal is misdirected, he will lead his followers down the wrong path. We do not feel it is wise to base our conclusion of how the Tetragrammaton is pronounced on how the Masoretic scribes vowel-pointed it, especially when all authorities recognize that they deliberately *mis*-vowel-pointed the Almighty's name so as to prevent readers from accidentally vocalizing its pronunciation. In the same way that *Yahuwah* proponents misapply Hebrew rules from *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* in a misguided attempt to validate their pronunciation of choice, Keith Johnson proceeds to explain his view of why *Yehovah* is correct from the perspective that the Jews didn't *really* vowel-point יהוה with the vowel points from *Adonai*. On the surface, his argument will undoubtedly appear valid to those who do not have a general understanding of the Hebrew linguistics rules governing vowel-pointing. A deeper examination reveals that Judaism would not have wanted to vocalize the first syllable of the Tetragrammaton as "Yah" by using the first vowel point from *Adonai* if it is true that the Name is correctly pronounced *Yahweh* – and if they are determined to abide by the Ineffable Name Doctrine.

Keith also regards the *holem* (the dot over the *heh*) to be the key in determining the pronunciation, even though this same vowel point is shown to be one of the vowel points in *Adonai*, which the Masoretes apparently carried over to the Tetragrammaton. Finally, Keith is persuaded that an English translation from the Babylonian Talmud produces the correct transliteration of the Tetragrammaton, even though the original Hebrew Talmud wasn't vowel-pointed, making it no easier to determine how its author pronounced the Tetragrammaton than it is to make the same determination from the Hebrew text of Scripture. In fact, other English translations of the Talmud reveal that the full form of the Tetragrammaton didn't appear in the passage cited by Mr. Johnson. In spite of his expressed concern that those who support the form *Yahweh* rely on "scholarly guesses," Keith Johnson's own conclusions are founded on guesswork and assumptions.

16. Did Wilhelm Gesenius Reject the Pronunciation “Yehowah”?

It has now been over ten years since I delivered my original presentation on this topic. Since that time, additional information has emerged that I would be negligent in omitting. If I had known then what I know now, I would have incorporated this information when I first composed our study; however, like much of the information I’ve uncovered over the years, what I’m presenting here has been “hidden in plain sight” all along.

Looking back over the years since we compiled this study, it’s been brought to our attention that some readers were expecting a dissertation on the correct pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. Some of the feedback we’ve received involves criticism over our not having “definitively” proven that *Yahweh* is the correct pronunciation. In retrospect, even though our study was subtitled “Why We Are Persuaded that יהוה is pronounced Yahweh,” I don’t think our goal was *ever* to prove that the pronunciation we personally use is absolutely “100% iron clad,” so if that is anyone’s expectation, I can see why they may be disappointed. Rather than this study serving as an exposé on how to correctly pronounce the Tetragrammaton, much of it has been a response to those who insist that *Yahweh* cannot be correct. And I believe we’ve successfully demonstrated that their premises against the pronunciation *Yahweh* – *all of them* – are mistaken. But we’re not out to prove others wrong – our aim is to prove *all things* while honoring our Heavenly Father the best we can. To that end, if you’ve read the first part of this study, you know we’ve made some pretty significant concessions. We’ve conceded that in addition to the pronunciation *Yahweh*, *Yahuwah* and *Yahuah* are also linguistic possibilities; We’ve conceded that proper nouns ending in *-ah* may be either masculine or feminine, and although the Hebrew word *hova* means “ruin” or “disaster,” this does *not* mean the Creator’s name cannot be pronounced *Yehowah* or even *Yahuwah*. *None* of these concessions invalidates the possibility that *Yahweh* may well be the original pronunciation of our Heavenly Father’s name. *All* of them demonstrate that we aim for *balance*, not dogma.

I think the most bizarre error made by those who uphold the pronunciation *Yahuwah* is that of flaunting Wilhelm Gesenius’ Hebrew grammar book in an attempt to prove that *Yahweh* cannot possibly be correct, even though that’s the pronunciation Gesenius upheld as being his personal choice. To hold up Gesenius’ grammar book and say it proves that *Yahweh* cannot be correct would be like saying, “What a terrific Hebrew grammar book you published, Dr. Gesenius! However, it’s obvious you don’t follow one of the rules you teach!” The last time I checked, various individuals and groups are *still* teaching that the Tetragrammaton *must* consist of three syllables, not two – even though Gesenius himself leaned towards the two-syllable form *Yahweh*.

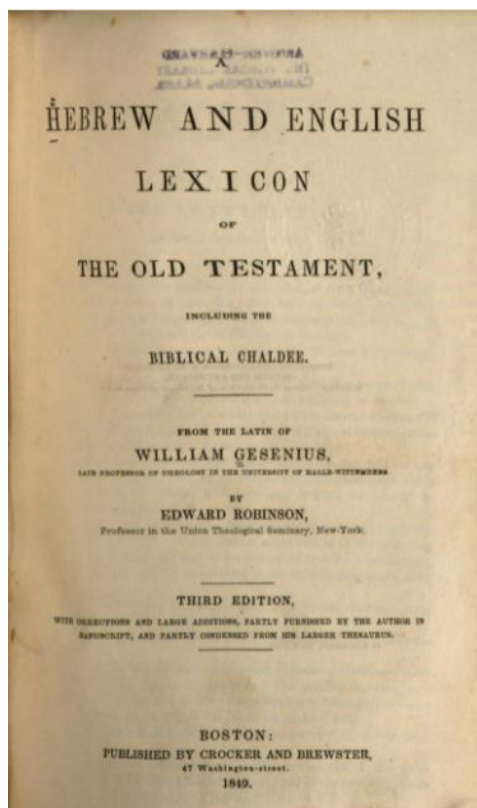
Please notice I did not make the claim that Gesenius expressed 100% certainty that *Yahweh* is the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. He may have *leaned* towards *Yahweh*, but this doesn’t mean he utterly rejected any other pronunciation. This may seem like a dangerous claim for someone like me to make, in view of the fact that, like Gesenius, I *lean* towards the form *Yahweh*. I may have been looking in all the wrong places, but it seems that every Sacred Name Movement author who writes on this topic expresses 110% certainty that the pronunciation they come up with is the true and original one. That does not describe June and me at all and it never has. Does it describe Wilhelm Gesenius? Not according to Edward Robinson, who first

translated Gesenius' lexicon from German to English in 1844. Of Gesenius, Robinson had the following to say:

And it is perhaps, at the present day, a singular merit in Gesenius, that he was among the first to admit and adopt, with full acknowledgment, every valuable suggestion, from whatever quarter it might come; and also every result which would bear examination, however contrary it might be to his own previous views.¹⁶¹

In other words, Gesenius was an unbiased scholar.

Wilhelm Gesenius is without question one of the most respected Hebrew scholars of the modern era, which is why even those who promote *Yahuwah* as the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton cite his works in their efforts to justify their conclusion. Editors of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* refer to him as "... a pioneer of critical Hebrew lexicography and grammar."¹⁶² This pioneer of critical Hebrew lexicography and grammar expressed his personal view that the Tetragrammaton, with its original vowels, is vowel-pointed יהוה in Hebrew, which is vocalized *Yahweh*. Here's what he wrote in his *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, which was published only a few years after his death:



My own view coincides with that of those, who regard this name as anciently pronounced יהוה, like the Samaritans; since from this all the apocopated forms can be more readily derived (יהו, יה, יהו, for יהו); and because allusion is made in the O. T. to such an etymology; e. g. Ex. 3, 14 אֲנִי אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה *I shall be what I am*, (comp. Rev. 1, 4.8, ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ᾔς καὶ

ὁ ἐρχόμενος,) the name יהוה being derived from the verb יהוה *to be*, and regarded as designating God as *eternal, immutable*, who will never be other than the same.¹⁶³

Thus, Gesenius' "own view," as expressed above, dovetails with the way it was pronounced by the Samaritans. But does that mean he was 100% sold on the notion?

¹⁶¹ *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, from the Latin of Wilhelm Gesenius, translated by Edward Robinson, Boston: Published by Crocker and Brewster, 1849, Preface, p. v. Gesenius passed away in 1842.

¹⁶² Cf., *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Wilhelm Gesenius," <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Wilhelm-Gesenius>.

¹⁶³ *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, from the Latin of Wilhelm Gesenius, translated by Edward Robinson, Boston: Published by Crocker and Brewster, 1849, p. 384.



Misrepresenting Gesenius

The answer to the above question may surprise you, much as it apparently surprised the leaders of a group known as Yahweh’s Restoration Ministry (YRM). I happened across a study on their web site, which has been widely distributed, and is decidedly in opposition to the form *Yehowah*, which some groups render *Yehovah*, or in its most common form these days, *Jehovah*. The study I’m referring to is titled “The Yehovah Deception: Reinventing a Misnomer.”¹⁶⁴ Overall, I found the study to be well-written, with cohesive arguments that are clearly presented and

explained. The anonymous author supplies several supportive quotes from reputable sources to the extent that if I had access to no additional resources, I would have considered his presentation to be a “slam dunk.” I was engrossed as I followed the chronological path down which he takes the reader as we go from the inception of the ineffable name doctrine to the use of vowel points from *Adonai* to conceal the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton, on down to the mistaken hybridization *Jehovah*. Scholarship as a whole seems to regard the form *Yehowah* to be, as suggested by the title of their study, a “misnomer.” But not *everyone* considers *Yehowah* to be a misnomer, and certainly *not* Wilhelm Gesenius.

I came to a section of YRM’s study subtitled “Retracting Yehovah,” and that’s when the dynamics of the study began to change in terms of accuracy. The section starts out in truthful fashion, mentioning the fact that Franz Delitzsch changed his mind regarding “Jehova” and “Jahavā,” eventually coming to regard “Jahve” as the original pronunciation. By now, we all hopefully know that the “J” was originally a “Y” sound in Hebrew and we have already covered the fact that the letter “v” is more accurately a “w”; thus, Franz Delitzsch, another eminent 19th century scholar, eventually upheld the form *Yahweh* as the most likely candidate. However, when the author of “The Yehovah Deception” brought up Wilhelm Gesenius as being *another* “retractor” of the form *Yehowah*, I knew something was amiss.

Retracting Yehovah

There are at least two instances where scholars accepted Yehovah but then later retracted their support in favor for Yahweh. After supporting Yehovah in its first edition, the *Keil & Delitzsch Old Testament Commentaries* removed it from later printings. They stated, “. . . it must be conceded that the pronunciation Jahve [Yahweh] is to be regarded as the original pronunciation. The mode of pronunciation Jehova [Yehovah] has only come up within the last three hundred years; our own ‘Jahava’ [in the first edition] was an innovation” (Nehemiah to Psalm LXVII, p. 827).

Gesenius also initially accepted the Tetragrammaton with the vowel points from Adonai, but then later retracted his support for this hybrid and was noted within *Gesenius Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, “This opinion Gesenius afterward thoroughly retracted,” p. 337. Upon rejecting Yehovah, he supported the pronunciation Yahweh.

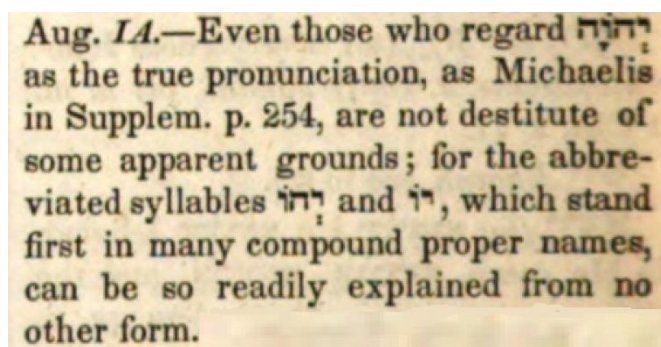
Both Keil and Delitzsch and Gesenius, perhaps the most renowned linguistic scholar of his day and even in modern scholarship, rejected the inaccurate form Yehovah in favor of Yahweh. This withdrawal offers additional evidence for the erroneous nature of Yehovah.

¹⁶⁴ Yahweh’s Restoration Ministry, “The Yehovah Deception,” anonymous author, posted January 20, 2017, <https://yrm.org/yehovah-deception/>.

As with any misrepresentation, describing where an author makes a wrong turn can be a little complicated. It doesn't help matters that the scholar who edited Gesenius' *Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon* interspersed his comments and corrections throughout Gesenius' work. The scholar/editor I'm referring to is Samuel P. Tregelles, who published an updated version of Gesenius' lexicon in 1859, seventeen years after Gesenius' death. In Gesenius' listing for the Tetragrammaton, he presents the basic information about how the scribes vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton so as to not say the Name when reading the text due to "some old superstition," and how they supplied the vowel-points from *Adonai* or *Elohim*, depending on whether or not *Adonai* preceded the Tetragrammaton in the text (i.e., it would be rather awkward to say, "Adonai our Adonai"). Gesenius goes on to address the "true and genuine vowels," citing various ancient writers, many of whom are mentioned elsewhere in this study. Interestingly, the most common ancient rendering of the Tetragrammaton seems to be *Iao*, as transliterated by several Greek authorities. Of course, other authorities have sound reasoning to support *Yahweh*, based on hearsay from Samaritans. This, too, has already been presented within the scope of our study. But what we *didn't* mention is the fact that Gesenius actually offered leeway for the pronunciation *Yehowah*. That's because we didn't know this fact until several years after composing our first edition.

On page 384 of Gesenius' extensive coverage of the Tetragrammaton, he writes, "Even those who regard יהוה [Yehowah] as the actual pronunciation, as Michaëlis in Supplem. p. 524, are not destitute of some apparent grounds; for the abbreviated syllables יה and ה, which stand first in many compound proper names, can be so readily explained from no other form."¹⁶⁵ Please bear in mind that these words appear in a work that was published after Gesenius' death, and there is no evidence that he ever retracted them. Regardless of how any of us may feel about the rendering *Yehowah*, Wilhelm Gesenius wrote that those who defend such an opinion are "not destitute of some apparent grounds" to do so.

This brings us back to the study "The Yehovah Deception: Reinventing a Misnomer." The online edition of this study was posted on January 20, 2017, so it had been available for reading for over five years when I stumbled across it in 2021. A few years ago, while working on a separate and unrelated study (2018-2019), I inadvertently and unexpectedly encountered the above quote from Gesenius in which he acknowledged the possibility that *Yehowah* might be the original pronunciation. At the time, I was too preoccupied with my other project to do much more than express surprise at this unexpected finding. After all, virtually *everyone* holds Gesenius in high esteem, so if a scholar of his reputation says those who believe the Tetragrammaton was originally pronounced *Yehowah* are "are not destitute of some apparent grounds," that's *huge*. If *Gesenius* says it's a possible transliteration, who am I to



Aug. 1A.—Even those who regard יהוה as the true pronunciation, as Michaelis in Supplem. p. 254, are not destitute of some apparent grounds; for the abbreviated syllables יה and ה, which stand first in many compound proper names, can be so readily explained from no other form.

Excerpt from Gesenius' *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. 1849. p. 384.

¹⁶⁵ *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, from the Latin of Wilhelm Gesenius, translated by Edward Robinson, Boston: Published by Crocker and Brewster, 1849, p. 384.

say he didn’t know what he was talking (or writing) about? But when I read the following in “The Yehovah Deception: Reinventing a Misnomer,” I knew something wasn’t right. Here’s what I read on page 24 of their booklet:

Gesenius also initially accepted the Tetragrammaton with the vowel points from Adonai, but then later retracted his support for this hybrid and was noted within *Gesenius Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, “This opinion Gesenius afterward thoroughly retracted,” p. 337. Upon rejecting Yehovah, he supported the pronunciation Yahweh.

I’ll be frank here: When I came across Gesenius’ admission in his lexicon, it was something I ran into while doing some unrelated online research, so the best I could do at the time was make a mental note of his remark. Two years later, when I read the above contradiction in “The Yehovah Deception,” my first question was, “Had I misunderstood something from my previous reading of Gesenius’ lexicon?” I wanted to find out, so I purchased my own copy of the lexicon referenced above¹⁶⁶. As you may have guessed by now, I had *not* misunderstood my initial reading of Gesenius based on the online edition of his lexicon that I had initially perused. And since he had passed away seventeen years before Tregelles’ translation was originally published, and since there is no record that he ever retracted his acknowledgment of the *Yehowah* pronunciation, I found it highly unlikely that the author of the YRM study knew something that the rest of the world does not.

I will give YRM credit: They offer a section at the end of their study for Comments, and I took advantage of it. With over four years of allowing readers this accommodation, let’s just say the comments are by now extensive. But none of the detractors to YRM’s study pointed out the miscue regarding Gesenius, so I decided to exercise my own freedom of speech. Here’s what I wrote:

Shalom, Thank you for sharing this exposé on the pronunciation of the Creator’s name. I appreciate well-researched studies and I consider this study to be well-researched, **EXCEPT** for one item.

Ultimately, I hope our mutual love for the Almighty, regardless of how His name is pronounced, supersedes our insistence of how His name “must” be pronounced. Sadly, I don’t get that impression from some of the folks who have posted here, some of whom who obviously post without actually having read what was written, yet I’m sure it’s our love for Him and His Son that truly drives us all and guides us – i.e., our love for Him and our desire to live our lives as His obedient children.

The author of the article (YRM) wrote, “Gesenius also initially accepted the Tetragrammaton with the vowel points from Adonai,

¹⁶⁶ The edition I purchased is: Gesenius, Wilhelm, *Gesenius’ Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures*, translated and edited by Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, LL. D., Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, MI, 1949, originally published in 1859, p. 337.

but then later retracted his support for this hybrid and was noted within *Gesenius Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, ‘This opinion Gesenius afterward thoroughly retracted,” p. 337. Upon rejecting Yehovah, he supported the pronunciation Yahweh.”

I am sorry to report that the above summary is a **misrepresentation** of what Gesenius actually wrote. Please reread what Gesenius wrote on page 337. First, please remember that it was Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, LL.D who wrote that Gesenius retracted any opinions at all. Samuel Tregelles edited Wilhelm Gesenius’ Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon in 1857 and within Gesenius’ exposé of the Tetragrammaton on p. 337, **Gesenius** had initially written, “To give my own opinion, I suppose this word [YHWH] to be one of the most remote antiquity, perhaps of the same origin as Jovis, Jupiter, and transferred from the Egyptians to the Hebrews.” **THAT** particular opinion from Gesenius is what Samuel Tregelles says Gesenius later retracted, **not** Gesenius’ comment that “Yehowah” may well be the original pronunciation. The retracted statement was in reference to Gesenius’ initial opinion that the Name was transferred to the Hebrews from the Egyptians. **That** is what Gesenius LATER retracted, according to Tregelles. Gesenius came to understand that YHWH was not borrowed from a heathen nation, such as Egypt.

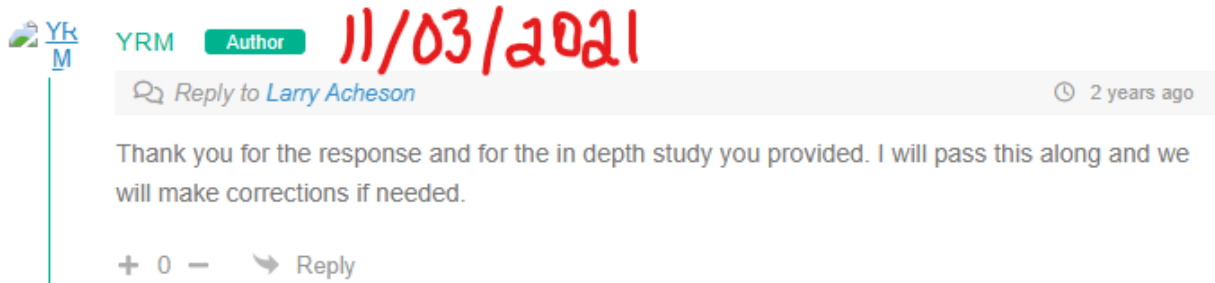
Here’s what Gesenius actually wrote (using the Hebrew characters with corresponding vowel points): ***“Also those who consider that [Yehowah] was the actual pronnciation (Michaëlis in Supplem. p. 524), are not altogether without ground on which to defend their opinion. In this way can the abbreviated syllables [Yeho-] and [Yo-], with which many proper names begin, be more satisfactorily explained.”*** To this remark, editor Tregelles interjected, “This last argument goes a long way to prove the vowels [producing the pronunciation Yehowah] to be the true ones.”

In other words, Samuel Tregelles maintained agreement with the above commentary from Gesenius, i.e., that those who uphold the pronunciation “Yehowah” **ARE NOT ALTOGETHER WITHOUT GROUND ON WHICH TO DEFEND THEIR OPINION**. That was Gesenius’ opinion (upheld by Samuel Tregelles), and with all due respect I see no evidence that Gesenius ever retracted it. Although he had his personal opinion of the original pronunciation, **he was not biased** in his opinion of the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton (and that’s saying a lot for a man who is one of the most respected Hebrew scholars of this day and age).

I strive to be an unbiased truth seeker. I respect the views of others, but ultimately, the weight of the evidence must support my personal conclusion, with no disrespect intended towards anyone. I humbly respect the views of both sides.

Thank you for allowing me to share my observation and thank you also for a well-written study on one of my favorite topics – our Heavenly Father’s name. May YHWH bless you.¹⁶⁷

As I pointed out in the above commentary, it is true that there’s a record on page 337 of Gesenius’ lexicon (the 1859 edition) that he retracted *something*, but it was not his statement about the possible merit of *Yehowah*. It was about something else. My commentary generated the following quick response from the YRM author:



After submitting my posting, I realized the fact that Gesenius upheld *Yehowah* as a possible pronunciation presents an *enormous* enigma for YRM, as well as other groups rejecting the potential legitimacy of this pronunciation. First, YRM recognizes Wilhelm Gesenius as “... *perhaps the most renowned linguistic scholar of his day and even in modern scholarship.*” If such a renowned linguistic scholar as Wilhelm Gesenius recognizes the linguistic possibility of *Yehowah*, will Yahweh’s Restoration Ministry do the same?

Second, when the YRM author states, “... we will make corrections **if needed**,” that is, on the surface, a commendable response; however, at the same time it is a major understatement *unless* they are actually able to locate some now-hidden document in which Wilhelm Gesenius actually *did* retract his acknowledgment of the possibility that *Yehowah* represents the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. Consider the following opening statement from “The Yehovah Deception” that would need to be overturned:

Yehovah, this latecomer in the rendering of our Creator’s Name, has gained popularity within the Messianic and Hebrew Roots communities. However, there are **serious linguistic flaws** with this pronunciation.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁷ Posted on 11/02/2021 in response to “The Yehovah Deception” at the following link: <https://yrm.org/yehovah-deception/>

¹⁶⁸ From “The Yehovah Deception: Reinventing a Misnomer,” p. 2, currently available online at <https://yrm.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Yehovah-Reinventing-a-Misnomer.pdf>.

So think about this for a moment: Wilhelm Gesenius, who the YRM author considers “... perhaps the most renowned linguistic scholar of his day and even in modern scholarship,” obviously did *not* perceive any “serious linguistic flaws” with the pronunciation *Yehowah* or else he wouldn’t have so much as *mentioned* this pronunciation, much less give it *honorable* mention. It wouldn’t have even been on his radar except, perhaps, to reinforce how it’s a mistake. But it *was* on his radar and he plainly stated that those who uphold the pronunciation “Yehowah” are not altogether without ground on which to defend their opinion. Does Gesenius’ acknowledgment of the legitimacy of *Yehowah* change the dynamics of YRM’s study? *Yes, absolutely!* Will they retract their “retraction (mis)report”? Two years after posting their “we’ll make corrections if needed” statement, no changes have been made to the article.

What Are the Linguistic Flaws with the Pronunciation ‘Yehowah’?

I think the YRM author needed to choose his words a little more carefully regarding any “serious linguistic flaws” with the pronunciation *Yehowah*. Since *Yehowah* is a name that can be pronounced, that makes it linguistically pronounceable. The only linguistic concern is with pronouncing the Tetragrammaton as *Yehowah* when it’s vowel-pointed with the vowels from *Adonai* (יהוה־י). Jewish American Biblical scholar Emil G. Hirsch (1851-1923) authored a profound explanation of the evolution of *Jehovah*:

This pronunciation is grammatically impossible; it arose through pronouncing the vowels of the “kere” (marginal reading of the Masorites: יְהוָה־י = “Adonay with the consonants”) of the “ketib” (text-reading: יהוה = “YHWH”)—“Adonay” (the Lord) being substituted with one exception wherever YHWH occurs in the Biblical and liturgical books. “Adonay” presents the vowels “shewa” (the composite ְ under the guttural א becomes simple ְ under the ו), “holem,” and “kamez,” and these give the reading יהוה־י (= “Jehovah”). Sometimes, when the two names יהוה and אדני occur together, the former is pointed with “hatef segol” (ֲ) under the ו —thus, יהוה־י (= “Jehovah”)—to indicate that in this combination it is to be pronounced “Elohim” (אלהים). These substitutions of “Adonay” and “Elohim” for YHWH were devised to avoid the profanation of the Ineffable Name (hence יהוה is also written יה, or even דְּ, and read “ha-Shem” = “the Name”).¹⁶⁹

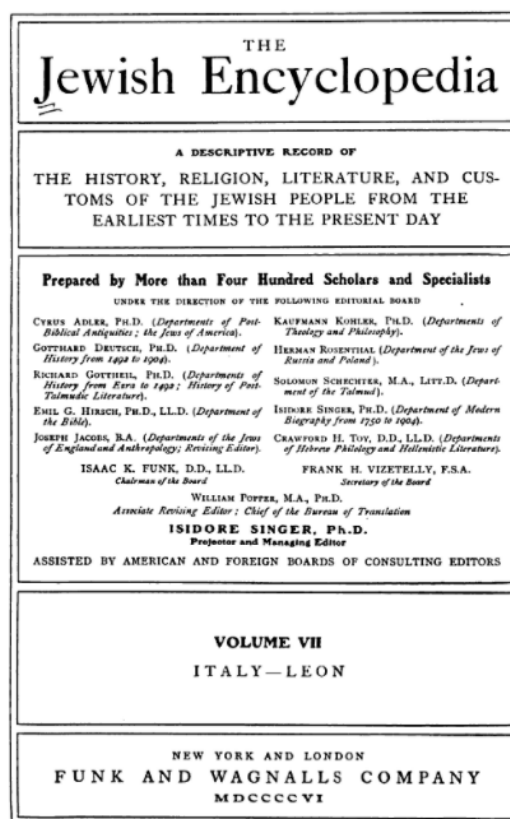
Hirsch goes on to write:

¹⁶⁹ [*The Jewish Encyclopedia*](#), Vol. VII, “JEHOVAH,” by Emil G. Hirsch, Funk and Wagnalls Company, New York and London, 1906, pp. 87-88.

The use of the composite “shewa” “hatef segol” (ְּ) in cases where “Elohim” is to be read has led to the opinion that the composite “shewa” “hatef patah” (ְֿ) ought to have been used to indicate the reading “Adonay.” It has been argued in reply that the disuse of the “patah” is in keeping with the Babylonian system, in which the composite “shewa” is not usual. But the reason why the “patah” is dropped is plainly the non-guttural character of the “yod”; to indicate the reading “Elohim,” however, the “segol” (and “hirek” under the last syllable, i.e., יְהוֹה) had to appear in order that a mistake might not be made and “Adonay” be repeated. Other peculiarities of the pointing are these: with prefixes (“waw,” “bet,” “min”) the vowelizing is that required by “Adonay”: “wa-Adonay,” “ba-Adonay,” “me-Adonay.” Again, after “YHWH” (= “Adonay”) the “dagesh lene” is inserted in בגדכפת, which could not be the case if “Jehovah” (ending in ה) were the pronunciation. The accent of the cohortative imperatives (קוֹמַת . שׁוּבָה), which should, before a word like “Jehovah,” be on the first syllable, rests on the second when they stand before יְהוֹה, which fact is proof that the Masorites read “Adonay” (a word beginning with “a”).¹⁷⁰

Let’s face it: The above explanation is not easy for the average layman to follow. Even with my background in the study of foreign languages, I had to look up the meaning of “cohortative imperatives,” and it essentially means a “sort-of strong command,” i.e., more than a suggestion, but less than an emphatic order. This aspect of Hirsch’s commentary doesn’t address pronunciation concerns pertaining to the Masoretic vowel points, and is essentially irrelevant to the discussion. For those who, like me, prefer things broken down into layman’s terms, try to think of pronouncing יְהוֹה like the following analogy: We all know the English word for the foot of a cat or dog is called a “paw,” and its ending sounds like *awe*. However, what if we inserted the vowel “o” into the word “paw”? How would you pronounce *paow* or *poaw*?

Wouldn’t you be “thrown for a loop” if, during your reading you came across a word spelled *paow*? How would you pronounce it? Although this analogy with the English language doesn’t fully equate to the issue with Hebrew linguistics, the example I just supplied should at least give



¹⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 88.

us some insight into the issue with trying to pronounce יהוה – not only is there a *ḵamez* (ֿ) under the *waw* (ו), but there's a *holem* (ֿ) on top of the *waw*. So the problem isn't that you can't say or pronounce the word *Yehowah* – the problem is you can't pronounce יהוה with both a *ḵamez* under the *waw* and a *holem* on top of it. It would be something like trying to say *paow* in English.

On the surface, Hirsch's exposé on the development of *Jehovah* seems to support the YRM author's position that both *Jehovah* and *Yehowah* have "serious linguistic flaws." However, if you paid close attention to Hirsch's explanation, you no doubt noticed that the "linguistics" was all pertaining to the use of *vowel points*. While I am no expert on Hebrew linguistics, I have consulted the experts and they, like Emil G. Hirsch, will tell you that you cannot get the pronunciation *Jehovah* or even *Yehowah* by reading יהוה. If you want to produce the pronunciation *Yehowah*, here's how you would need to vowel-point the Tetragrammaton: יהוה. It's as simple as that.

So didn't Wilhelm Gesenius make a mistake in recognizing the possibility that *Yehowah* could actually represent the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton? In a way, we would have to say "yes," because he certainly *did* present the Tetragrammaton with the unpronounceable vowel points (יהוה), as presented above. On the other hand, if we consult Gesenius' source for supporting this notion (Michaëlis), we find that Michaëlis' reasoning for upholding the pronunciation *Yehowah* was based on pre-Masoretic evidence, i.e., before the vowel points were invented. Thus, Michaëlis' justification for *Yehowah* representing the original pronunciation had *nothing to do with the Masoretes' vowel points*. This is an important distinction that we are about to make abundantly clear. While the pronunciation *Yehowah* may be grammatically impossible when reading יהוה with the Masoretes' vowel points, it *is* possible if you remove the vowel points. In fact, if we turn back the clock to *before* the vowel points were invented, who's to say the Tetragrammaton could not have been pronounced *Yehowah*? And that is precisely the angle from which Wilhelm Gesenius presented authors such as Michaëlis in his commentary.

It turns out the YRM author makes so many premature and inaccurate statements in opposition to the form *Yehovah* / *Yehowah* that, frankly, he will need to completely overhaul his study if he continues to acknowledge Wilhelm Gesenius' scholarship in the face of Gesenius upholding the legitimacy of *Yehowah*. Here's another example from his study:

As scholarship overwhelmingly verifies, the name *Yehovah* arose from willful and deliberate alterations to the Hebrew text by Jewish scribes. For this reason, those promoting this name are simply following an old Jewish superstition designed to conceal the true name of our Creator, *Yahweh*!¹⁷¹

Again, if an eminent scholar of Gesenius' standing recognized the potential legitimacy of *Yehowah*, it's safe to say scholarship does *not* overwhelmingly verify that the pronunciation *Yehovah* arose from willful and deliberate alterations to the Hebrew text by Jewish scribes. The fact is, there are and *were* other scholars who upheld the pronunciation *Yehowah*. We don't have

¹⁷¹ *Ibid*, p. 11.

to agree with them, but let’s be honest – some credible scholars have indeed expressed support for the pronunciation *Yehowah* over and above *Yahweh*. We’ve already mentioned one such scholar in this study—the late George Wesley Buchanan of Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, DC, but we only covered one aspect of his reasoning. He raises another point that is more difficult to refute, as we are about to see.

Does Scholarship Overwhelmingly Reject the Form “Yehowah”?

As we will see shortly, the YRM author cleverly touts reputable Hebrew scholars in his attempt to discredit the pronunciation *Yehowah*. The desired effect, of course, is to stack the deck with like-minded scholars in an attempt to persuade the reading audience that no credible scholar has ever recognized the legitimacy of this pronunciation. However, the reality is that such is not the case. A balanced study would have included the opinions of *other* reputable Hebrew scholars who uphold the pronunciation *Yehowah* and George Wesley Buchanan (1921–2019) was one such scholar. Not only was he Professor of New Testament at Wesley Theological Seminary for over 30 years, but he was also on the Editorial Board of *Biblical Archaeology Review*, and he published 20 books, including *Jewish Messianic Movements from AD 70 to AD 1300*. I’m not certain of his credentials in the Hebrew language, but he successfully silenced a Hebrew scholar named Anson Rainey in the March/April 1995 edition of *Biblical Archaeology Review* regarding the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. Professor Rainey had previously contributed an exposé on how the form *Jehovah* is a “ghost word,” and Buchanan submitted a lengthy rebuttal that was never answered. We addressed one of Buchanan’s points in chapter 14 (section D). We weren’t able to validate his point about the rhyme scheme in Exodus chapter 15 supporting the pronunciation *Yehowah*. However, another point he made may be worthy of consideration, especially in view of what Wilhelm Gesenius wrote.

Let’s re-read what Gesenius wrote:

Even those who regard יהוה [Yehowah] as the actual pronunciation, as Michaëlis in Supplem. p. 524, are not destitute of some apparent grounds; for the abbreviated syllables יה [Yeho] and י [Yo], which stand first in many compound proper names, can be so readily explained from no other form.

In other words, Gesenius recognized that many theophoric names carried over the sounds of deities’ names, after whom many parents named their children. That principle doesn’t change with the True Creator’s name, or at least that’s the point Gesenius recognized in unbiased fashion. Professor George Wesley Buchanan expounded on this same principle in his attempt to demonstrate that the Tetragrammaton must consist of *three* vowels, not two. He builds a formidable foundation, then caps it with a summary that is difficult to counter:

1) Among the magical papyri the name appears as ιαωουη (Ya-oh-oo-ay-eh), but it is difficult to know how much this pronunciation had to do with the Tetragrammaton because the prayers and incantations in these papyri mix all kinds of sounds

together, some meaningful, some nonsensical, so it is not certain how many of these syllables were thought to belong to the name. At least, however, it has more syllables than two, and the central vowel is not omitted, as is done in Yah-weh.

2) Clement of Alexandria spelled the Tetragrammaton $\iota\alpha\alpha\iota$ (Ya-oo-ai), $\iota\alpha\alpha\epsilon$ (Ya-oo-eh), and $\iota\alpha\omicron$ (Ya-oh). In none of these is the central *oo* or *oh* vowel omitted.

3) Rabbis often deduced the meaning of a word by taking the word apart and interpreting each part. A modern equivalent would be to determine the meaning of “insect” by the meanings of both “in” and “sect.” This might, then, be defined as a religious sect that is in some place. This methodology is called “etymology” and is not always accurate, but it was followed by rabbis, Clement of Alexandria, and some authors of Scripture (Genesis 28:10-22; 21:15-34; 26:17-34).¹⁷² By this logic Clement argued that the Tetragrammaton had the same consonants as the verb “to be,” so it meant the one who caused things to be, but he did not pronounce the word according to any form of that verb. His conjecture was homiletically thought-provoking, but not scientifically or historically correct. The verb “to be” would deserve the extensive comparative analysis it has been given only if it could be shown from the Scripture to be related to the Tetragrammaton, but that is not the case. Reams of paper and gallons of ink have been expended over the years justifying a pronunciation Westerners deduced on the basis of Clement’s conjecture. It may all be irrelevant to the subject. There are other places and ways to look for the correct pronunciation. These are found in the Scriptures and associated texts. The following are some of the materials to consider:

Among the caves of Qumran was a Greek text that included a few Greek words of Leviticus (4QLXX Lev), one of which was the Tetragrammaton. It was spelled $\text{IA}\Omega$ (Ya-oh). This is apparently a two-syllable word, but the second syllable is only a vowel. There is no way that it could be rendered “Yah-weh.” This was a transliteration of the Hebrew Ya-ho (יהוה). It is the same spelling given in the fifth century B.C. Aramaic papyri. From the Aramaic alone this word could be pronounced either Ya-hoo or Ya-hoh.

Some of the words in the Dead Sea scrolls were pronounced and spelled in the scrolls with an aspirant, *ah*, which is lacking in the Masoretic text. For example, Masoretic words like *hoo*

¹⁷² We are including this portion of Buchanan’s commentary, even though we adamantly disagree with the notion that Scripture had various “authors,” as though it wasn’t inspired by the ultimate author, YHWH. It thus appears that Buchanan upheld what is known as the “Critical View.” His interjecting this view does not otherwise interfere with his main points.

(הוּא) and hee (הִיא) are spelled hoo-ah (הוּאָה) in the scrolls. Arabs pronounce these words the same way that they are spelled in the scrolls, but Arabs do not spell the final aspirant with a consonant. They indicate the aspirant with only vowel pointing, which was not used in early Biblical texts. The word spelled Ya-hoo or Ya-hoh may have been pronounced Yahowah or Yahoowah, but in no case is the vowel *oo* or *oh* omitted.

The Hebrew for the name “Jonathan” is Yah-ho-na-than (יהונתן), “Yaho or Yahowah has given.” When this name was abbreviated it became “Yo-na-than, (יונתן),” preserving the vowel *oh*. John was spelled “Yaho-cha-nan” (יהוחנן), “Yaho or Yahowah has been gracious.” Elijah’s name was Eli-yahoo (אליהו), “My God is Yahoo or Yahoowah.” Ancients often gave their children names that included the name of their deity. For other examples, Ish-baal is “the man of Baal,” and Baal-yasha means “Baal has saved.” In both cases the name “Baal” is probably correctly pronounced in the name of the person involved. The same is true with the Tetragrammaton. **Anyone who cares to check the concordances will find that there is no name in the entire Scriptures that includes the Tetragrammaton and also omits the vowel that is left out in the two-syllable pronunciation Rainey upholds [*i.e., Yahweh*].**¹⁷³

Professor Buchanan’s explanation of the two-syllable *Yaho-* prefix dovetails with Gesenius’ comment about how theophoric prefixes *Yeho-* and *Yo-* can be explained by “no other form” than the tri-syllabic full form *Yehowah*. Thus, whether we like it or not, Gesenius respected the possibility that the Tetragrammaton consists of *three* syllables, not two. Buchanan not only respected this possibility, he based his conclusion on it.

¹⁷³ George Wesley Buchanan, Professor Emeritus, Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, DC, *Biblical Archaeology Review*, “Queries & Comments” section, “THE TETRAGRAMMATON: How God’s Name Was Pronounced,” March/April 1995, pp. 30-31. Professor Buchanan’s response was directed at Professor Anson F. Rainey’s own contribution to BAR’s “Queries & Comments” section in the Sept./Oct. 1994 issue. Rainey’s commentary offered support for the pronunciation *Yahweh* over and above *Jehovah*. Professor Anson Rainey, who sadly passed away in 2011, never countered Professor Buchanan’s rebuttal.



Do Those Who Promote “Yehowah” Base Their Reasoning on the Vowel Points?

Here’s another inaccurate statement from “The Yehovah Deception”:

Those who support Yehovah do so entirely on the vowel points added by the Masoretes.¹⁷⁴

The above statement is patently false, at least in the case of Wilhelm Gesenius and Professor George Wesley Buchanan. It can be demonstrated that Gesenius did *not* recognize *Yehowah* as a potential candidate based on the vowel points added by the Masoretes. This aspect of the discussion is important enough that it warrants additional space to explain its veracity. We’re including a scanned copy from Gesenius’ lexicon on the following page for those who need to see first-hand that what we’re saying here is true.

¹⁷⁴ From “The Yehovah Deception: Reinventing a Misnomer,” p. 15, currently available online at <https://yrm.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Yehovah-Reinventing-a-Misnomer.pdf>.

יהודה-יהודי

tribe of Judah]) masc., Isa. 3:8; The same name was borne by—

(a) other more obscure persons—(a) Neh. 11:9.—(b) Ezr. 3:9; Neh. 12:8.—(c) Neh. 12:34.—(d) ib. verse 36.

יהודי pl. יהודים, sometimes יהודים; Est. 4:7; 8:1, 7, 13; 9:15, 18, in נחיה—

(1) Gent. noun, a Jew—(a) one who belonged to the kingdom of Judah, 2 Ki. 16:6; 25:25.—(b) in the later Hebrew, after the carrying away of the ten tribes, it was applied to any Israelite, Jer. 32:12; 38:19; 40:11; 43:9; especially 34:9 (Syn. עברי). Neh. 1:2; 3:33; 4:6; Est. 2:5; 3:4; 5:13. Fem. יהודיָה 1 Ch. 4:18.

(2) [Jehudi], pr. n. m. Jer. 36:14, 21.

יהודי Ch. a Jew, only occurring in pl. יהודים; emphat. יהודאים Dan. 3:8, 12; Ezr. 4:12; 5:1, 5.

יהודית f.—(1) f. Gent. n. יהודי adv. Jewishly, in the Jewish tongue, 2 Ki. 18:26; Neh. 13:24.

(2) pr. n. Judith, the wife of Esau, Gen. 26:34.

יהוה Jehovah, pr. name of the supreme God (האלהים) amongst the Hebrews. The later Hebrews, for some centuries before the time of Christ, either misled by a false interpretation of certain laws (Ex. 20:7; Lev. 24:11), or else following some old superstition, regarded this name as so very holy, that it might not even be pronounced (see Philo, Vit. Mos. t. iii. p. 519, 529). Whenever, therefore, this *nomen tetragrammaton* occurred in the sacred text (יהוה, יהוה, יהוה, יהוה), they were accustomed to substitute for it יהוה, and thus the vowels of the noun יהוה are in the Masoretic text placed under the four letters יהוה, but with this difference, that the initial Yod receives a simple and not a compound Sh'va (יהוה, not יהוה); prefixes, however, receive the same points as if they were followed by יהוה, thus ליהוה, ביהוה, מיהוה. This custom was already in vogue in the days of the LXX. translators; and thus it is that they every where translate יהוה by ὁ Κύριος (אדני): the Samaritans have also followed a similar custom, so that for יהוה they pronounce אדני (i. q. אדני). Where the text has אדני יהוה, in order that Adonai should not be twice repeated, the Jews read אלהים אדני, and they write אלהים אדני.

As it is thus evident that the word יהוה does not stand with its own vowels, but with those of another word, the inquiry arises, what then are its true and genuine vowels? Several consider that יהוה is the true pronunciation (according to the analogy of יְהוֹשֻׁעַ,

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יהוה), rightly appealing to the authority of certain ancient writers, who have stated that the God of the Hebrews was called ΙΑΩ (Diod. i. 94: ιστοροῦσι . . . τοὺς νόμους διδόναι—παρὰ δὲ τοὺς Ἰουδαίους Μωσῆν τὸν ΙΑΩ ἐπικαλούμενον θεόν. Macrobi. Sat. i. 18. Hesych. v. Ὀζείας, intp. ad Clem. Alex. Strom. v. p. 666. Theod. quæst. 15 ad Exod.: καλοῦσι δὲ αὐτὸ Σαμαρεῖται ΙΑΒΕ [יהוה] Ἰουδαῖοι δὲ ΙΑΩ); to which also may be added, that this same form appears on the gems of the Egyptian Gnostics as the name of God (Iren. adv. Hæres. i. 34; ii. 26. Bellermand, über die Gemmen der Alten mit dem Abraxasbilde, i. ii.). Not very dissimilar is the name ΙΕΥΩ of Philo Byblius ap. Euseb. præp. Evang. i. 9; and ΙΑΟΥ (יהוה) in Clem. Al. Strom. v. p. 562. Others, as Reland (de cad. exercitatt. de vera pronuntiatione nominis Jehova, Traj. ad Rh. 1707, 8.), following the Samaritans, suppose that יהוה was anciently the true pronuntiation, and they have an additional ground for the opinion in the abbreviated forms יהו and יה. Also those who consider that יהוה was the actual pronuntiation (Michælis in Supplem. p. 524), are not altogether without ground on which to defend their opinion. In this way can the abbreviated syllables יהו and יה, with which many proper names begin, be more satisfactorily explained. [This last argument goes a long way to prove the vowels יהוה to be the true ones.]

To give my own opinion [This opinion Gesenius afterwards THOROUGHLY retracted; see Thes. and Amer. trans. in voc.: he calls such comparisons and derivations, "waste of time and labour;" would that he had learned how irreverend a mode this was of treating such subjects!], I suppose this word to be one of the most remote antiquity, perhaps of the same origin as Jovis, Jupiter, and transferred from the Egyptians to the Hebrews [What an ideal God himself revealed this as his own name; the Israelites could never have received it from the Egyptians]. (Compare what has been said above, as to the use of this name on the Egyptian gems [but these gems are not of the most remote antiquity; they are the work of heretics of the second and third centuries]), and then so infected by the Hebrews, that it might appear, both in form and origin, to be Phenicio-Shemitic (see מִצְרַיִם, בְּרֵאשִׁית).

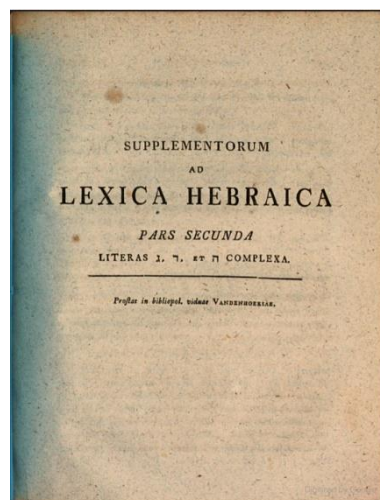
To this origin, allusion is made Exod. 3:14; אֲנִי אֶהְיֶה אֲנִי אֶהְיֶה, "I (ever) shall be (the same) that I am (to-day);" compare Apoc. 1:4, 8, ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος: the name יהוה being derived from the verb יהוה to be, was considered to signify God as eternal and immutable, who will never be other than the same. Allusion is made to the same etymology, Hos.

Gesenius begins his commentary on the Tetragrammaton with a brief exposé about the Jews' misguided superstition against speaking the Creator's name and how the Masoretes eventually substituted the vowels from *Adonai* so as to avoid speaking it. Once he finishes with this portion of his commentary, he writes, "As it is thus evident that the word יהוה [Yehowah] does not stand with its own vowels, but with those of another word, the inquiry arises, what then are its true and genuine vowels?"

Gesenius proceeds to give the opinions of several ancient witnesses, including the likes of Clement of Alexandria, Diodorus Siculus, Theodoret and Iraneus. You may recall that we essentially lean towards the pronunciation *Yahweh* based on Theodoret's testimony, and it appears that Gesenius shared our personal conclusion, based on what Theodoret heard from the Samaritans. However, Gesenius wasn't finished. It was at this point that he wrote, "Also those who consider that יהוה [Yehowah] was the actual pronunciation (Michaëlis in Supplem. p. 524), are not altogether without ground on which to defend their opinion. In this way can the abbreviated syllables יהו [Yeho-] and יו [Yo-], with which many proper names begin, be more satisfactorily explained."¹⁷⁵

Please notice that Gesenius didn't say anything about basing the pronunciation Yehowah on the vowel points added by the Masoretes. In fact, the Masoretes were not even *mentioned* in this portion of Gesenius' commentary. He *did* mention that this form could more satisfactorily explain the abbreviated forms *Yeho-* and *Yo-*. But we don't want to overlook Gesenius' *other* possible reason for regarding *Yehowah* as a possibility: *Michaëlis*. If you review Gesenius' commentary, you'll notice he cites Michaëlis in "Supplem." So who exactly was Michaëlis and what is "Supplem., p. 524"? That's what I wanted to know because I had never heard of Michaëlis.

It turns out Ioannis Davidis Michaëlis was himself a renowned Hebrew scholar who also excelled in Semitic languages¹⁷⁶, but he preceded Gesenius by nearly 70 years (Gesenius was five years old when Michaëlis passed away in 1791). It is quite likely that Gesenius studied Michaëlis' works in his early years. The work "Supplem." Referenced by Gesenius in his brief commentary on the possible merits of *Yehowah* is actually titled *Supplementorum Ad Lexica Hebraica*, Part 2, which was actually published the year following Michaëlis' death. Locating this work was not easy and regrettably, I was only able to find the original Latin composition.¹⁷⁷ I obtained an English translation of the three pages in which Michaëlis addresses the Tetragrammaton (pp. 524-526), and indeed, Michaëlis did *not* explain his reasoning for supporting the rendering *Yehowah* as being due to the vowel points added by the Masoretes. In fact, Michaëlis believed that the Hebrew vowel points were divinely inspired, i.e., they accurately indicate the original



¹⁷⁵ Gesenius, Wilhelm, *Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures*, translated and edited by Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, LL. D., Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, MI, 1949, originally published in 1859, p. 337.

¹⁷⁶ Source: https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/1911_Encyclop%C3%A6dia_Britannica/Michaelis,_Johann_David.

¹⁷⁷ The page in question from Michaëlis' work is 524, which is currently accessible at the following link: <https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=di1HAAAACAAJ&pg=GBS.RA1-PA524&hl=en>

pronunciation of the Hebrew words. Michaëlis believed the pronunciation *Yehowah* pre-dates the Hebrew vowel points, which in turn means he would not have shared the scholarly consensus that the vowel points concealed the true pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. Here’s a translated excerpt from his commentary:

In truth – even though I do not dare to say anything about the time of Moses – I am quite certain that much earlier, before the time of the Masoretic Text, יהוה used to be pronounced *Jehova*.¹⁷⁸

We do not have to agree with Michaëlis’ conclusion about how the Tetragrammaton was originally pronounced, but the fact remains he *clearly* did not base his conclusion on the Masoretic vowel points. According to Michaëlis, there are Egyptian inscriptions predating the Masoretic text in which they apparently identified the deity Isis with *Yehowah*, a name which he believes was brought to Egypt by none other than Moses:


For assuredly, the Egyptian priests had written it down by the means of seven Greek vowels IEHΩOYA, as Gesnerus claims in his work *de laude dei apud Aegyptios per septem vocales*.¹⁷⁹ Finally, there is the inscription on the temple of Saitic female deity whom Plutarch calls Minerva and considers identical with Isis: ‘ἐγώ εἰμι πᾶν τὸ γεγονὸς καὶ ὄν καὶ ἐσόμενον καὶ τὸν ἐμὸν πέπλον οὐδεὶς πῶ θνητὸς ἀπεκάλυψεν’ – ‘I am all that has been, and is, and shall be, and my robe no mortal has yet uncovered’ (Plutarch De Iside, Frankfurt edition, 1620, Vol. 2, p. 354), which differs from the customary interpretation of the name יהוה, as it refers to Isis, or rather nature itself, from which and through which everything takes its beginning and in which everything is dissolved. The agreement between the Egyptian inscription and the Hebrew name – as it is explained in the Apocalypse – is obvious; the only doubt that could be cast is as to whether the idea contained in the sentence was brought to Egypt by Moses and transferred from Jehova, from inanimate and devoid of understanding nature to the creator, living, and the maker of all nature? Whether reflecting their own customs and known for their syncretism already in the time of Hadrian¹⁸⁰, the Egyptians imitated the Israelites and transferred the interpretation of Jehova’s name to denote their Isis?¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁸ Ioannis Davidis Michaelis, *Supplementorum Ad Lexica Hebraica*, Part 2, Gottingae: C. Dieterich, 1772, p. 524. Translated from Latin into English on 11/17/2021 by TheWordPoint.com.

¹⁷⁹ Conradus Gesnerus (1516-1565) was a Swiss physician, naturalist, bibliographer, and philologist. I was not able to locate his work, *de laude dei apud Aegyptios per septem vocales*, although some 19th century authors apparently had access, such as Franciscus Paulus Scholz in his Latin work *De Origine Nominis יהוה* Dissertatio Quam, published in 1857. I’m currently unable to locate an English translation of this book.

¹⁸⁰ Gesnerus, p. 247, volume 1, commentary of the Society of Science, Goetting. (This is Michaelis’ footnote).

¹⁸¹ Ioannis Davidis Michaelis, op. cit., pp. 524-525.



So where and how did the Egyptian priests come up with IEHΩOYA (*Yehua*)? Well, we know the pharaoh of Egypt watched his vast army drown in the Red Sea. What we *don't* know is what he did with the rest of his life after that traumatic event. Prior to the Israelites' departure from Egypt, Pharaoh endured daily petitions from Moses to "let His people go" to worship יהוה. Do we know how Moses conveyed that name to Pharaoh? Did he say *Yahweh* or did he say *Yehowah* or possibly *Yehuah*? In spite of the nine plagues that all but destroyed Egypt, the Name Moses conveyed to Pharaoh failed to impress him, but maybe all that changed when Pharaoh witnessed a parted Red Sea come crashing down on his helpless army. Did Pharaoh subsequently ordain that the most holy deity is IEHΩOYA, resulting in the form written down by the Egyptian priests as referenced above by author Ioannis Davidis Michaëlis? Based on the above, Michaëlis believed the name Moses conveyed to Pharaoh was *Yehowah*, and he based that belief on what he read from a man named Conradus Gesnerus about an Egyptian inscription bearing the pronunciation IEHΩOYA, which would be very similar to *Yehowah* or possibly *Yehuah*.

If Gesnerus' account of the Egyptian rendering of the Tetragrammaton (IEHΩOYA) is correct, then I would say his support of the form *Yehowah* is not altogether without merit. Say, isn't that essentially what Wilhelm Gesenius said?

From a "truth seeker" perspective, I had to question the report of the Egyptian inscription(s) of IEHΩOYA for the Tetragrammaton. Why? Because, for one thing, if I were a Jehovah's Witness clamoring for support of my belief that *Jehovah* comes close to the original pronunciation, I would be waving flags and plastering photos of the inscriptions for all to see. It would be difficult for me to argue against such solid archaeological evidence. *So where are the inscriptions?* Why must I dig and scour the Internet to find tiny nuggets of information and clues that ultimately lead me nowhere? The question being begged is, "*Where are the inscriptions? Show us!*" And please don't tell us the Egyptian inscription consists of carvings of two feathers, a sideways "9," a noose and a bird!¹⁸²

My search for information about ancient Egyptian inscriptions of IEHΩOYA led me to a book published in 1869 by Charles William King. According to the 1911 edition of *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Charles William King was an English writer on ancient gems, and he was recognized universally as one of the greatest authorities in this department of art.¹⁸³ King's book is titled *The Gnostics and Their Remains: Ancient and Mediaeval*, Part 1, and he includes information about the Egyptians and the name IEHΩOYA:

The author of the treatise 'On Interpretation' says, "the Egyptians express the name of the Supreme Being by the seven Greek vowels, IEHΩOYA;" which last sufficiently explains their so frequent occurrence upon the talismans under consideration. The entire idea of the Ineffable Name was evidently derived by the Egyptians (from whom the Jews

¹⁸² See Chapter 14, section c.

¹⁸³ Cf., https://theodora.com/encyclopedia/k/charles_william_king.html

borrowed it) from the Hindoo doctrine concerning the title O'M, or AUM, itself, like IAW, trilateral.”¹⁸⁴

The above information is intriguing to say the least. But there are two problems. First, contrary to Mr. King’s conclusion, we believe the evidence shows the Israelites did *not* borrow the idea of the Ineffable Name doctrine from the Egyptians. We present our perspective of the origin of the Ineffable Name Doctrine in our study *Sticks and Stones*.¹⁸⁵ The next problem is more serious because it involves misrepresenting an ancient text. The author claims he obtained his information about how the Egyptians express the name of the Supreme Being from a work titled “On Interpretation.” This is a clear reference to Aristotle’s work *De Interpretatione*, which, as it turns out, has an English translation that’s currently available online. I searched high and low in *De Interpretatione* for validation of Mr. King’s claim, but there is nothing in Aristotle’s work regarding the Egyptians and IEHΩOYA. Did Mr. King forget where he obtained his information? Did he get it from Gesnerus and falsely attribute it to Aristotle? Did he make it up?

Earlier I mentioned that I’m not saying ancient inscriptions with IEHΩOYA don’t exist, nor am I calling eminent scholars such as Michaëlis and Charles William King liars. Indeed, there seems to be too much written about these inscriptions from what I would consider to be reliable sources for me to think they do not or did not exist. We could start with 4th century scholar and historian Eusebius. Many refer to Eusebius as the “father of church history.” In his work *Praeparatio Evangelica*, Eusebius makes reference to the view that the Almighty’s Name consists of *seven vowels* in the Greek language:

And any one going over the remaining letters of the alphabet, would find that they have been named among the Hebrews each with some cause and reason. For they say also that the combination of the seven vowels contains the enunciation of one forbidden name, which the Hebrews indicate by four letters and apply to the supreme power of Theos, having received the tradition from father to son that this is something unutterable and forbidden to the multitude. And one of the wise Greeks having learned this, I know not whence, hinted it obscurely in verse, saying as follows:

‘Seven vowels tell My Name,----the Mighty Theos,
The everlasting Father of mankind:
The immortal lyre am I, that guides the world,
And leads the music of the circling spheres.’¹⁸⁶

You would find also the meanings of the remaining Hebrew letters, by fixing your attention on each; but this we have

¹⁸⁴ Charles William King, *The Gnostics and Their Remains: Ancient and Mediaeval*, Part 1, p. 84 (footnote). Available online at: <https://books.google.com/books?id=-oY0AAAAQAAJ&q=Jehovah#v=onepage&q=Jehovah&f=false>

¹⁸⁵ Cf., *Sticks and Stones May Break My Bones ... But Names Will Never Hurt Me*, Ch. 5, “The First Directive to Not Speak the Name is Given by a Heathen Nation,” 2006, pp. 21-29.

¹⁸⁶ This is apparently a quote that can be found in more detail within an extensive work titled *Anthologia Graeca*, 13 vols., by C.F.W. Jacobs, (Leipzig, 1794-1813), vol 12, p. 34. I do not currently have access to this work.

already established by our former statements, when we were showing that the Greeks have received help in everything from the Barbarians.¹⁸⁷

For those who haven't already noticed, the Greek form of the Tetragrammaton referenced above – with seven vowels – could well be IEHΩOYA, though Eusebius didn't specify such a spelling. Nevertheless, the oft-repeated claim is that in the Greek, the Tetragrammaton is spelled with *seven vowels*, whereas it only consists of four in Hebrew. Did the author who cited the above refrain pull his words out of thin air? Or is there something to it? I am persuaded that it's more than just a coincidence that these authors – with no apparent axe to grind – supplied evidence supportive of either the form *Yehowah* or *Yehuah*. Or even *Yohuoe*.

But there's more.

Author Charles William King, from whose work *The Gnostics and Their Remains: Ancient and Mediaeval* we've already cited, offered evidence in support of yet *another* form of the Creator's name:

Montfaucon, Pl. 169, gives a set of inscriptions found at Miletus¹⁸⁸ in which these vowels, variously combined, form the name of the god who is thus besought to protect that city and all its inhabitants. In the first the name Jehovah is evidently expressed.

**ΙΕΟΥΑΗΩ ΑΕΗΙ ΟΥΩ ΑΓΙΕ ΦΥΛΑΧΟΝ ΤΗΝ ΠΟΛΙΝ
ΜΙΛΗΣΙΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΝΤΑΣ ΤΟΥΣ ΚΑΤΟΙΚΟΥΝΤΑΣ.**¹⁸⁹

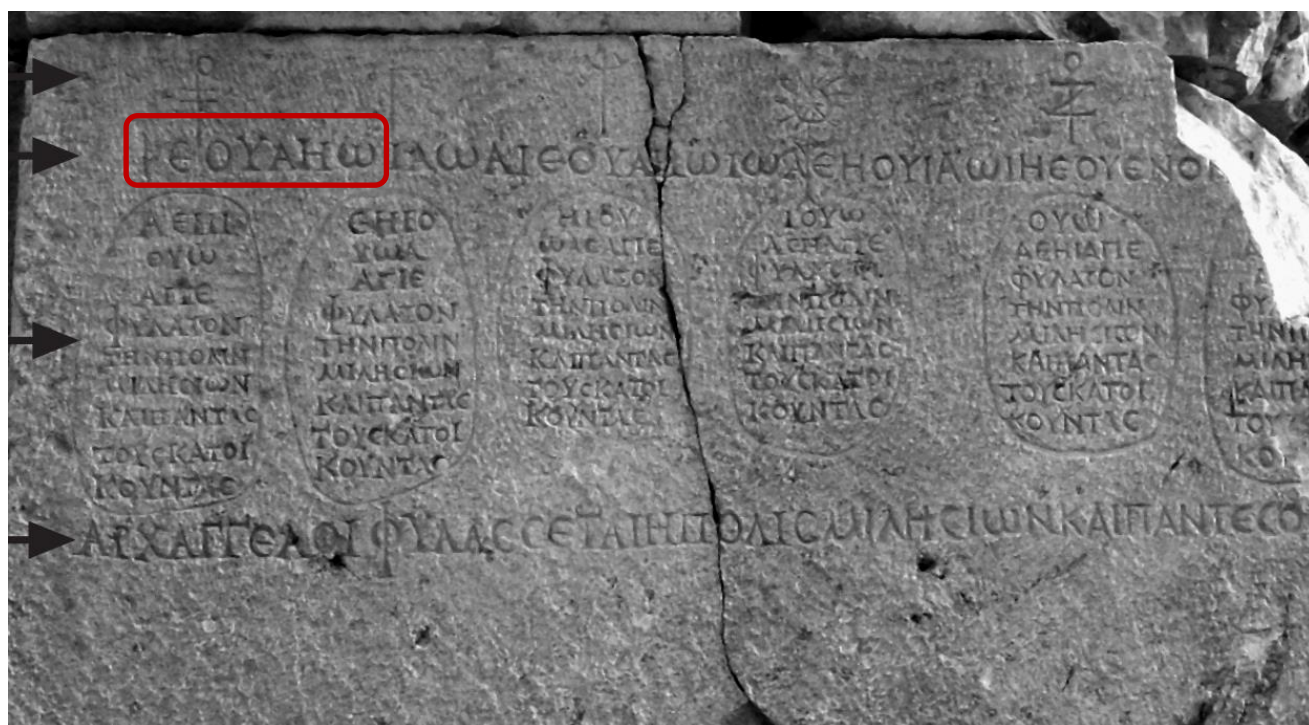
The above information fascinated me to the extent that I wanted to see a photo of the above inscription bearing the rendering **ΙΕΟΥΑΗΩ**. Regrettably, although I found many of Montfaucon's writings to be available online, I am nevertheless unable to locate his Pl. 169 as referenced in C. W. King's book. Despite this shortcoming, I eventually found the photo I was looking for. It is incorporated into an engaging study authored by Professor Rangar Cline, Professor of History at the University of Oklahoma. As a professor, Cline's primary focus is the relationship between Greek and Roman religions, early Christianity and Judaism in the Roman world. In his study "Archangels, Magical Amulets, and the Defense of Late Antique Miletus," he not only offers a photo of the inscription, but he also throws in a photo of the theatre bearing the inscription. Cline persuasively argues that the inscription dates to either the 4th or 5th century CE. It goes without saying that this time frame falls *before* the Masoretic vowel-pointing of the Hebrew text of Scripture. Below the photo is a very helpful transcription of the Greek words.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁷ Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica*, Book XI, Ch. 6.

¹⁸⁸ Miletus is located in western Turkey.

¹⁸⁹ Charles William King, *The Gnostics and Their Remains: Ancient and Mediaeval*, Part 1, p. 93.


¹⁹⁰ "Archangels, Magical Amulets, and the Defense of Late Antique Miletus," by Rangar H. Cline, *Journal of Late Antiquity*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 03/15/2011, p. 59.



Some of the Greek characters on the above inscription are difficult to make out. What follows is a helpful table that author Rangar Cline supplied showing a transliteration of the Greek words:

1	5 charakteres [probably originally seven]						
2	ΙΕΟΑΗΩΙΑΩΑΙΕΟΥΗΩΙΑΩΕΗΟΥΙΑΩΕΟΥΕΝΟΝ [ca. 14]						
3	ΑΕΗΙ ΟΥΩ ‘Αγιε φύλαξον την πόλιν Μιλησίω ν και πάντας τούς κατοι- κούντας	ΕΗΙΟ ΥΩΑ ‘Αγιε φύλαξον την πόλιν Μιλησίω ν και πάντας τούς κατοι- κούντας	ΗΙΟΥ ΩΑΕ ‘Αγιε φύλαξον την πόλιν Μιλησίω ν και πάντας τούς κατοι- κούντας	ΙΟΥΩ ΑΕΗ ‘Αγιε φύλαξον την πόλιν Μιλησίω ν και πάντας τούς κατοι- κούντας	ΟΥΩ ΑΕΗΙ ‘Αγιε φύλαξον την πόλιν Μιλησίω ν και πάντας τούς κατοι- κούντας	[ΥΩ Α[ΕΗΙΟ ‘Α[γιε φύ[λαξον την πό[λιν Μιλησί[ω ν και πάντ[ας τούς κατ[οι- κοῦ[v]τας	[ΩΑΕ] ΗΙΟΥ] ‘Αγιε] etc.
4	Ἀρχάγγελοι φυλάσσεται ἡ πόλις Μιλησίω ν και πάντες οἱ κατ[οικοῦντες]						

Fig. 4: Text of the archangel invocation, text following P. Hermann, IMilet, no.943 (Table: R. Cline).



Now I'm no Greek scholar, but I am at least familiar with the Greek alphabet, and I have difficulty pronouncing *all* of the above renderings of the Tetragrammaton as seen on the above inscription. The inscription found in the upper left portion of the photo, which we're indicating with a **red box**, is the one referenced by Charles William King in his book. Frankly, I do not get the pronunciation *Jehovah* or *Yehowah* from the spelling IEYOAHW (ἰεουαηω). If I were expecting a Greek inscription bearing the pronunciation *Yehowah*, I would look for something more like this: IEOYA (ἰεουα).

Next, if you examine the inscription closely, you will find that each successive column lists a different form of the Name than the preceding one, and they follow a pattern of removing the first letter from the previous Name and putting it at the end of the subsequent Name. The first one (AEHIOYΩ) comes out like "Ayiohuo" when I try pronouncing it. I inserted an "h" to help me sound it out! I have never heard of anyone suggesting that AEHIOYΩ could *possibly* be the Creator's name and upon further investigation I found that AEHIOYΩ consists of the seven vowels of the Greek alphabet *in alphabetical order*. The second one (EHIOYΩA) would seem to be pronounced something like "Ehiouoa." Again, this one doesn't seem like a feasible option. The third one (HIOYΩAE) comes out something like "Ehiouoae," which sounds remarkably close to "Eiohuoeh," possibly "Yohueh," probably depending on dialect. The fourth one (IOYΩAEH) seems like "Yohuaeh," which once again seems quite close to sounding like "Yohueh" if you say it fast enough. The fifth one (OYΩAEHI), in my opinion, would sound something like "Ohuoayhi," which I would compare to saying something similar to "Oh, Hawaii."

In summary, I'm not certain I would be inclined to base my understanding of how to pronounce the Tetragrammaton on *any* of the names inscribed on the theatre of Miletus. On top of that, we have already seen two obvious spelling discrepancies within the ancient Egyptian realm (IEHΩOYA and IEYOAHW). Are both correct? *Are both incorrect?* In our next chapter we will find that there are additional discrepancies, leaving us to wonder why anyone would base the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton on ancient Egyptian writings or inscriptions.

William Charles King is not the only author to present information about the Name (or Names) invoked by Miletus' ancient inhabitants. In 1776, antiquities explorer Dr. Richard Chandler published the second edition of his book *Travels in Asia Minor*, in which he described his visit to Asia Minor, including Miletus and its famous theatre inscription. What makes Chandler's commentary so interesting is his description of how the superstitious Basilidians and Gnostics would engrave gems and amulets with the names of deities in hopes of obtaining the deities' protection. Here's a pertinent excerpt:

On the side of the Theatre next to the river is an inscription in mean characters rudely cut, in which "The City Miletus" is mentioned seven times. This is a monument of heretical christianity. One Basilides, who lived in the second century, was the founder of an absurd sect called Basilidians and Gnostics, the original proprietors of the many gems with strange devices and inscriptions, intended to be worn as amulets or charms, with which the cabinets of the curious now abound. One of their idle tenets was, that the appellative "Jehovah" possessed signal virtue and efficacy. They expressed it by the

seven Greek vowels, which they transposed into a variety of combinations. The superstition appears to have prevailed in no small degree at Miletus. In this remain the mysterious name is frequently repeated, and the deity six times invoked, “Holy **Jehovah**, preserve the town of the Milesians and all the inhabitants.” The Archangels also are summoned to be their guardians, and the whole city is made the author of these supplications; from which thus engraved, it expected, as may be presumed, to derive lasting prosperity, and a kind of talismanical protection.¹⁹¹

We will address the Gnostics’ drive for obtaining “talismanical protection” with amulets in our next chapter. In the meantime, this type of superstition *may* explain the different combinations used to spell various forms of *Yehowah*: If they didn’t get it quite right with a certain spelling, then maybe the deity will ignore their pleas for protection; thus, if they present the deity’s name with a variety of spellings, hopefully *one* of them will be correct and the deity will guard their safety.

Evaluating Wilhelm Gesenius’ Acknowledgement

Let’s circle back to Wilhelm Gesenius’ acknowledgement that those who uphold the pronunciation *Yehowah* “are not destitute of some apparent grounds” on which to base their conclusion. To support his acknowledgement, he cited Ioannis Davidis Michaëlis’ *Supplementum Ad Lexica Hebraica*. Michaëlis, in turn, cited an obscure work by 16th century author Conradus Gesnerus – a book I’m currently unable to locate – in which Gesnerus apparently makes the claim that the ancient Egyptian priests transliterated the Tetragrammaton as IEHQOYA. And there you have it – that’s the basic evidence supporting *Yehowah*.

The reason I personally find Gesenius’ nod to Michaëlis misplaced is primarily due to the fact that in my own research I do not find Egyptian renderings of the Tetragrammaton to be consistent, except for one common form: *Iao*. If I would have found consistent ancient Egyptian renderings of IEHQOYA, I would think Michaëlis was on to something because, as we’ve made clear in this study, there would have been nothing to have prevented a heathen priest from overhearing someone pronouncing the Sacred Name and then writing down what he heard. If one truly thinks the pronunciation was so secretly preserved that its pronunciation was never leaked to a heathen who knew how to write, then one word comes to my mind: *naïve*. I would be willing to bet that *some* of those Egyptian priests produced an accurate transliteration of the Name, and who knows? Maybe it’s IEHQOYA. However, the evidence, from my vantage point, doesn’t point in that direction. In our next chapter, we will display various ancient Egyptian representations of the Tetragrammaton I found while perusing some of 18th century author Bernard de Montfaucon’s writings.

¹⁹¹ [*Travels in Asia Minor: Or An Account of a Tour Made at the Expense of the Society of Dilettanti*](#), by Richard Chandler, D. D., 2nd edition, London: J. Dodsley, J. Robson, T. Cadell, P. Elmsly, and G. Robinson, and by D. Prince, Oxford, 1776, pp. 145-146. This account is repeated in *The Bible Cyclopaedia: Or, Illustrations of the Civil and Natural History of the Sacred Writings, By Reference to the Manners Customs, Rites, Traditions, Antiquities and Literature of Eastern Nations*, Edited by W. C. Taylor, Vol 2, London: John W. Parker, 1843, p. 866.

The other contingency we must consider is the “Telephone Game” effect. That’s when, in a long line of individuals, one person whispers a word or phrase into a listener’s ear, the listener



then whispers what he or she heard into the next person’s ear and so on until the last person says aloud what he or she heard. Every time I have played this game, the final word or sentence ends up being drastically different from the original. How do we know whether or not those early Greek and Egyptian listeners weren’t

victims of the “Telephone Game” effect? Hopefully they, like us, did their best to get it right.

Do the Vowel Points for “Elohim” Prove a Deliberate Attempt to Hide the True Pronunciation of the Name?

At various times throughout the scope of this study we have addressed the fact that whenever the title Adonai appears in conjunction with the Tetragrammaton, the Masoretic scribes vowel-pointed יהוה with the vowels from *Elohim*. Otherwise, since the reader *already* knows to not vocally express the Name, but to say “Adonai” instead, he or she would awkwardly read “... and Adonai Adonai” in such places as Zechariah 9:14, where וַאֲדֹנֵי יְהוֹה appears. This contingency has led some to conclude that since, in these isolated instances, the Masoretes changed up the vowels so as to cause the reader to say “... and Adonai Elohim” instead of “... and Adonai Adonai,” this conversely means the vowel points from *Adonai* were indeed likewise falsely inserted in place of the true vowels in multiple thousands of places throughout Scripture.

Maybe this is so, *but maybe not*. There is a broad *assumption* that the Masoretes deliberately mis-vowel-pointed the Name so as to guide the reader to say either *Adonai* or *Elohim* instead of יהוה. However, in my diligent search to find proof of this contention, I have thus far found none. Granted, in those places where *Adonai* either precedes or follows יהוה, the vowel points from *Elohim* were inserted to help guide the reader to say *Elohim*. But the question arises as to why to even bother vowel-pointing the Tetragrammaton at all if it’s not supposed to be spoken. Couldn’t the Hebrew instructors have taught their beginning students that when they come across this one un-vowel-pointed word, it’s not to be spoken, but to say *Adonai* instead? And is יהוה *that* difficult to notice and recognize that, even without any vowel points, it would nonetheless be uttered aloud? I am reminded of various local newspaper writings that were published regarding my dad while I was growing up in a rural area. He was a member of a local Farm Bureau, as well as other civic organizations, and from time to time his name would appear in the local newspaper regarding the various functions in which those groups were engaged. Every time I came across his name, my mind subconsciously read “Dad.” I’m sure others do the same because we’ve been conditioned to *not* address or even think of our parents by name, but rather by title (e.g., “Dad” or “Mom”). If the mind can thus trained to subconsciously change a certain word or name to something else whenever you come across it, the conversion becomes automatic and *second nature*, i.e., it’s not even a challenge.

Let’s face it: יהוה is easy to recognize.

So let’s consider another possibility: What if the Tetragrammaton was correctly vowel-pointed in every place *except* for when the reader came upon the word *Adonai* either before or after it? In those situations, and *only* in those situations, the vowels for *Elohim* were placed to guide the reader to say “*Adonai Elohim*” instead of the awkward, “*Adonai Adonai*.”

Put another way, the readers may have been trained to automatically say “*Adonai Elohim*” instead of “*Yehowah Eloheinu*” (יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ), but when they noticed the vowel points for *Elohim* within the Tetragrammaton, they knew to say “*Adonai Elohim*” instead of “*Adonai Yehowah*” (אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה).

The reason the above is a possibility is, in a nutshell, due to the fact that we have no direct testimony from the Masoretes explaining that they deliberately substituted the vowels from either *Adonai* or *Elohim* for the “true vowels” of the Almighty’s name. Is it possible that they correctly vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton in every place *except* when it was either preceded or followed by *Adonai*? If the rabbis had already trained the young Hebrew students to say “*Adonai*” instead of uttering the Tetragrammaton, then they *knew* to say “*Adonai*” *every time* – except when they saw it vowel-pointed with the vowel points from *Elohim*.

If we do a diligent probe into the actual practices of the Masoretes, we find that as they carried out their transmission of Scripture, they were diligent in inserting marginal notes in which they pointed out various deficiencies, including where the *Sopherim* who preceded them had blatantly substituted the word *Adonai* in place of the Tetragrammaton in 134 places. The Masoretes, under the leadership of the Ben Asher family line, introduced the Tiberian method of vowel-pointing that became the standard. Here’s a succinct description of how diligent they were in striving for an accurate transmission of the original text:

The Tiberian Masoretes strove earnestly to preserve in written form the pronunciations that they had inherited by oral tradition. The Masoretes were not descended from the tribe of Judah but from the tribe of Levi. While all Masoretes were Levites, not all Levites were Masoretes. The Masoretes were a special class of Levite, entrusted with the responsibility of safeguarding the Hebrew text and preserving it from being corrupted in any way. To allow any word to be mispronounced through a deliberate mispointing would have been totally against the ethic of these Levitical Masoretes! Had such tampering with the Hebrew text been attempted, the cries of protest from these Masoretic scholars would be recorded in historical writings for all the world to see. But there is no such historical record!¹⁹²

¹⁹² Excerpted from the online article *The Sacred Personal Name of God the Father: The Myth That Jehovah Was Pointed with the Vowel Markings of Adonai*, by Carl D. Franklin, with additional thoughts inserted by Edward D. Andrews.



The author goes on to write:

The Masoretes were very much concerned with the accurate transmission of each word, even each letter, of the text they were copying. Accuracy was of supreme importance; therefore the Masoretes used the side margins of each page to inform others of deliberate or inadvertent changes in the text by past copyists. The Masoretes also used these marginal notes for other reasons as well, such as unusual word forms and combinations. They even marked how frequently they occurred within a book or even the whole Hebrew Old Testament. Of course, marginal space was very limited, so they used abbreviated code. They formed a cross-checking tool as well, where they would mark the middle word and letter of certain books. Their push for accuracy moved them to go so far as to count every letter of the Hebrew Old Testament.¹⁹³

Certainly, if anyone can prove that the Masoretes deliberately mis-vowel-pointed the Tetragrammaton in those multiple thousands of occurrences within Scripture (apart from the obvious examples with the vowels from *Elohim*), then this would be a strike against the form *Yehowah*. Otherwise, since there are indeed pre-Masoretic inscriptions that come closer to producing the pronunciation *Yehowah* than *Yahweh*, it seems rather premature to reject the possibility that *Yehowah* may be correct.

Please don't think I'm promoting the view that the Masoretes correctly vowel-pointed יהוה as יהוה; nevertheless, it's been shown that that the transliteration *Yehowah* or something very close, did indeed exist prior to the invention of vowel-pointing.


As we bring this chapter to a close, one thing we should bear in mind is the fact that the form *Yehowah* is not nonsensical. Here's a quote from the YRM study in which they, in turn, quote Hebrew professor Dr. Steven Fassberg:

Much later some started reading the vowel signs together with YHWH and came up with the nonsensical word *Jehovah*.¹⁹⁴

As we pointed out with the citation from late Professor George Wesley Buchanan, many Hebrew scholars out there would have disagreed with Professor Fassberg's remark and some still do. Fassberg says "Jehovah/Yehowah" is a nonsensical word. Wilhelm Gesenius wrote that those who uphold this pronunciation are not "destitute of some apparent grounds." One of these two men is/was in error. The problem as I see it lies with the fact that, indeed, the Hebrew language makes allowance for a *plethora* of pronunciation possibilities, depending on which vowel points you use and where you position them. Thus, if we find some ancient pre-first century authority

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁴ Yahweh's Restoration Ministry, "The Jehovah Deception," anonymous author, posted January 20, 2017, <https://yrm.org/yehovah-deception/>.



who transliterated the Tetragrammaton as *Yehowah*, then who's to say, “That's nonsensical!” If that's how it was pronounced, then that's how it was pronounced. It should be as simple as that.

17. Can Heathen Amulets Offer Any Clues?

I like to segue to related topics and as we begin this final chapter of our study, I want to build on our previous chapter's commentary validating the fact that Wilhelm Gesenius never retracted his acknowledgement that *Yehowah* may be the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. I hadn't realized until I looked into this question more deeply that he wasn't the *only* 19th century Hebrew scholar who put together a Hebrew grammar book or lexicon. While researching to see if Gesenius ever retracted his statement, I found at least two additional Hebrew scholars of the same era who published their own grammar books. One of those scholars, unlike Gesenius, retracted his acceptance of the legitimacy of the form *Jehovah*. The other scholar didn't believe anyone can possibly know how the Tetragrammaton is pronounced, nor did he consider researching it to be a matter of importance; he therefore went with *Jehovah*.

A Hebrew Scholar Who Retracted His Support of "Jehovah"

Heinrich Ewald was a 19th century Hebrew scholar who apparently retracted his support of the rendering *Jehovah* in favor of *Jahveh* (which we hopefully know would more correctly transliterated as either *Yahveh* or *Yahweh*). The following are screen captures taken from pages two and 55 of Ewald's [*A Grammar of the Hebrew Language of the Old Testament*](#)¹⁹⁵, published in 1836, in which he uses the forms *Jehovah* and *Jehova*:

The two names which the worshippers of **Jehovah** receive in the old Test. *Israelites* and *Hebrews* are distinguished by the first being the holy name, closely connected with their religion and the tradition of the race, while the latter is the usual name of the nation, and as such, is much more ancient and universal (Abraham himself being called a *Hebrew* Gen. 14, 13), and calls to mind no ancestor of glorious

The later Jews, after the example of the Greeks and others, used their alphabet as numerals also: א—ב for 1—9; י—ז for 10—90; ק—ר for 100—400; the numbers 500—900 were expressed either by ר 400 in composition with other hundreds, as ש ר 700, or by the final letters ק, מ, נ, פ, צ; 1000 is א again; instead of י ה 15, which two letters can mean the divine name **Jehova**, and were therefore avoided out of reverence, טו 9+6 is used.

To be fair, Heinrich Ewald also recognized the form *Jahveh* (p. 343):

¹⁹⁵ Ewald, Heinrich, [*A Grammar of the Hebrew Language of the Old Testament*](#), Translated by John Nicholson, B.A. Oxon, London: Williams and Norgate, 1936, pp. 2 & 55.

I. Nothing is required, according to §. 471, to form an entire proposition, but the logical combination of subject and predicate, in whatever form and even with whatever compass either may appear. Two ideas which are combined by the thought are always necessary to form an entire proposition in ordinary diction, e. g. *לִי גְבוּרָה* *to me (mine) is strength*, *אֲנִי יְהוָה* *I am Jahve*, *הוּא צַדִּיק* *he is just*, *שָׂרָה בְּאֶהֱל* *Sara is in the tent*, *קָצִיר הַיּוֹם* *harvest is to-day*.

However, in a subsequent edition, published 34 years later, Ewald makes it plain that “The form Jehovah is purely a modern mistake.”:¹⁹⁶

the consonants of the *Q'ri* were written only in the margin, but their points were written in the text where the consonants of the margin should be read; as *פִּ. 126. 4:*

שׁוּבָה יְהוָה אֶת־שְׁכֻנָּתִי | שְׁבִיתִי

that is, *שְׁבִיתִי* is to be read. In the case of a few words only, which occur very frequently, the letters in the margin were omitted, as being easily supplied by the reader, which is now called a *Q'ri perpetuum*; especially in the case of the divine name *יהוה*, i. e., *Jahve*, which should be read *אֲדֹנָי*, but is now written merely as *יְהוָה*;* in the case of the name of the city *יְרוּשָׁלַם*, which according to the vocalisation ought properly to be written *יְרוּשָׁלַיִם*; and in that of the pronoun *הוּא* when it is used as a feminine, and the reader is directed to read *הִיא* instead of *הוּא*.

* Because of the frequency with which this word occurs, and for convenience sake, simple *Sh'va* instead of the compound one, § 30 sq., has remained under the *י*. The form *Jehovah* is purely a modern mistake.

Another 19th century Hebrew scholar who should probably be mentioned is Samuel Lee. Lee essentially considered any attempt to determine the original pronunciation of YHWH to be a waste of time. Here's an excerpt from his listing of YHWH:

¹⁹⁶ Ewald, Heinrich, *Ewald's Introductory Hebrew Grammar*, translated from the third German Edition by J. Frederick Smith, London: Asher & Co., 1870, pp. 37-38.

יְהוָה, r. הָוָה, or הֵוָה: see יָה above. The most sacred and unalienable name of God; unknown, however, to the patriarchs, Exod. vi. 3. It is not, therefore, more ancient in all probability than the times of Moses. It may, consequently, be termed the Israelitish designation of the true God; among whom generally it was held blasphemy—up to a considerable antiquity—even to pronounce it, from a mistaken view, perhaps of Exod. xx.7; Lev. xxiv.11. Philo in Vitam Mosis, tom. iii. pp. 519. 529. On this account it has received the vowels either of אֱלֹהִים, or אֱלֹהֵי; as, הֵוָה, הָוָה. This latter punctuation takes place whenever the combination אֱלֹהֵי הָוָה occurs; for then, instead of reading אֱלֹהֵי twice over, it has been usual to read אֱלֹהֵי אֱלֹהֵי. See Gram. art. 159.2. Whether either of these, or what really was, the ancient pronunciation of this word, it is utterly impossible now to say: nor is it of much importance either to the critic or the theologian, how this question is determined.¹⁹⁷

We're including the above commentary because we feel it's important to recognize the fact that it would indeed be impossible to determine how יְהוָה is pronounced if we didn't research to find out how it was transliterated into other languages, such as Greek. If we didn't have transliterations into Greek available for consideration, any attempts at determining the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton would truly be an exercise in futility. Lee's final remark is one with which we couldn't disagree more. Like the majority of our society, he does not consider the question of our Heavenly Father's name to be of much importance. We answer: On the contrary, determining how the Tetragrammaton is pronounced is of *paramount* importance to those who want to deepen their relationship with our Creator and give honor to His name.

The Abraxas (Abraxas) Stones and the Name

In our previous chapter, we addressed the Greek inscriptions found on the ancient Miletus Theatre. You may recall that there are five columns or “charakteres” of inscriptions that have survived the ages (originally seven), and each one is an appeal to the Almighty to protect Miletus and its inhabitants. The name of the Almighty inscribed at the head of each inscription consists of seven Greek vowels and each one is spelled differently. It is speculated that this practice was reminiscent of the ancient Gnostics’ practice of magic. Apparently, during the first few centuries of the common era, certain believers, whose lives were obviously not grounded in the practice of Torah, would make amulets and charms with their deity of choice inscribed thereon. They would then wear these as you would jewelry with the thought that this would invoke the deity’s presence and protection. In today’s vernacular, they were worn as “good luck charms.” For the Miletus inscription, it stands to reason that they used a different form of the name for each prayer in hopes that *one* of them was the right spelling. They were likely concerned that if each name was wrong, the deity would not protect them.

¹⁹⁷ Lee, Samuel, D.D., [*A Lexicon, Hebrew, Chaldee, and English*](#), London:Duncan and Malcolm, 1844, p. 249.

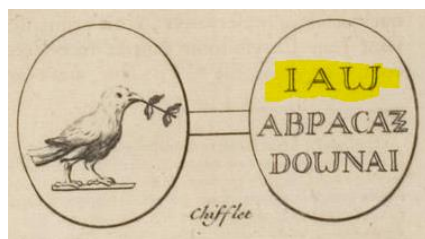
Apparently, the practice of magic and wearing “protective” amulets as jewelry was the norm among 3rd and 4th century Gnostics. These Gnostics borrowed or incorporated various religious practices of other cultures into their own, and yes, that included worship of the Mighty One of the Jews. In the course of this vastly watered-down and skewed form of worship, Gnostics would often incorporate the name *Iao* onto gemstones, along with their contrived images of what He must look like. A sample image of the front and back of one such amulet is displayed on the right.¹⁹⁸ Any devout Jew or believer who recognized the validity of Torah would have abhorred such images; nevertheless, if you were a gnostic who rejected the teachings of Torah, yet you came across the name of the Creator, associating that name with an image denoting His protective powers might seem like the way to go. We’re incorporating samples of these images, not because we agree with the Gnostics’ practices, but as a means of exhibiting their varying understandings of how to say or spell His name.



I want to introduce you to the “Abraxas,” which is a term I hadn’t ever heard of until I began this revision of our study. The word “Abraxas” is actually a corruption of the original word “Abrasax.” For our purposes, it’s a term used to denote the Gnostics’ understanding of the Supreme Being. Scholars have debated the original meaning of “Abrasax,” so their best guess is just that – a guess. Charles William King, in his 1864 book *The Gnostics and Their Remains: Ancient and Mediaeval*, expresses his understanding of what “Abrasax” means as follows:

As for the etymology of the word, the most satisfactory yet offered is the compound of the Hebrew Ha-Brachah, “blessing,” and Dobara, “speak”; meaning the “Blessing of the Mystic Name” – that is, utter the Tetragrammaton, invoke the Holy Name of Jehovah, itself the mightiest of charms.¹⁹⁹

As it turns out, many of the amulets created for “Deity insurance” incorporated forms of the Tetragrammaton, the most common of which was *Iao* (pronounced *yee-ow*, as in “how”). This name can also be written in all capitals like this: *IAO* or even *IAW*. I found many examples of these in Bernard de Montfaucon’s 1722 work *L’Antiquité Expliquée*. Here’s an example²⁰⁰:

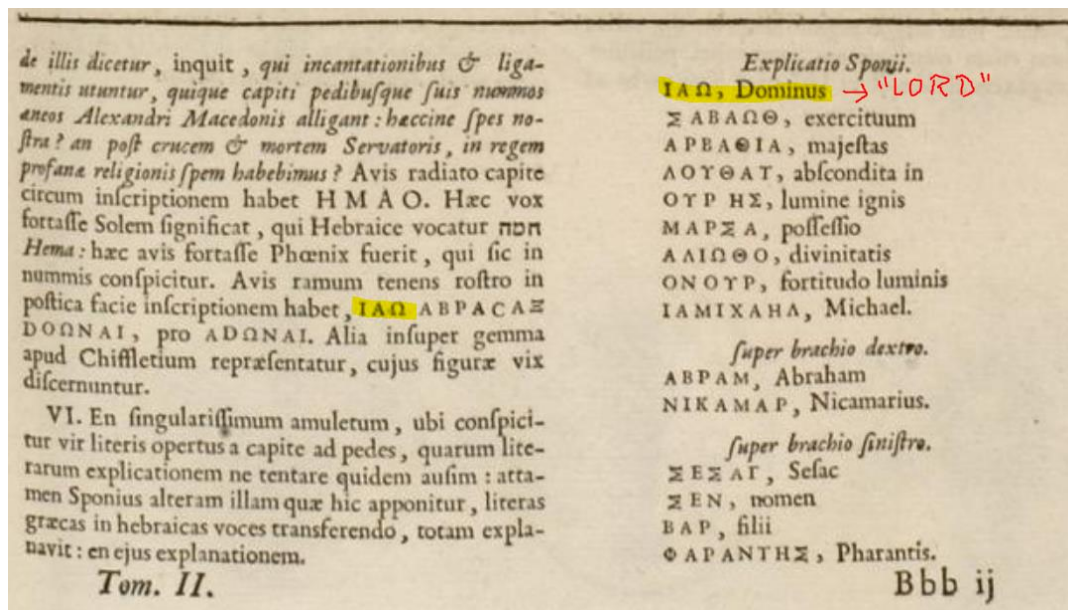


¹⁹⁸ Bernard de Montfaucon, *L’Antiquité Expliquée*, Vol. II, Book 3, “Les Abraxas,” Paris: Florentin DeLaulne, Michel Clousier, Jean-Geoffroy Nyon, Etienne Ganeau, Nicolas Gosselin & Pierre-François Giffart, 1719, p. 366, Pl. 366.

¹⁹⁹ *The Gnostics and Their Remains: Ancient and Mediaeval*, Part IV, By C. W. King, M.A., London: David Nutt, 1887, p. 317.

²⁰⁰ Bernard de Montfaucon, *L’Antiquité Expliquée*, Vol. II, Book 3, Paris: Florentin DeLaulne, Michel Clousier, Jean-Geoffroy Nyon, Etienne Ganeau, Nicolas Gosselin & Pierre-François Giffart, 1719, p. 372, Pl. 372.

On a different page, Montfaucon established that $\text{IA}\Omega$ means *Dominus*, which is the Latin word for “LORD.”



Here's a coin and an amulet I found while searching online:



The Sacred Name Iao (Gk IAW) on an Abraxas coin.
https://serpentarium.org/3_coins/2_creatures/abrasax/3_2_abr-001.html

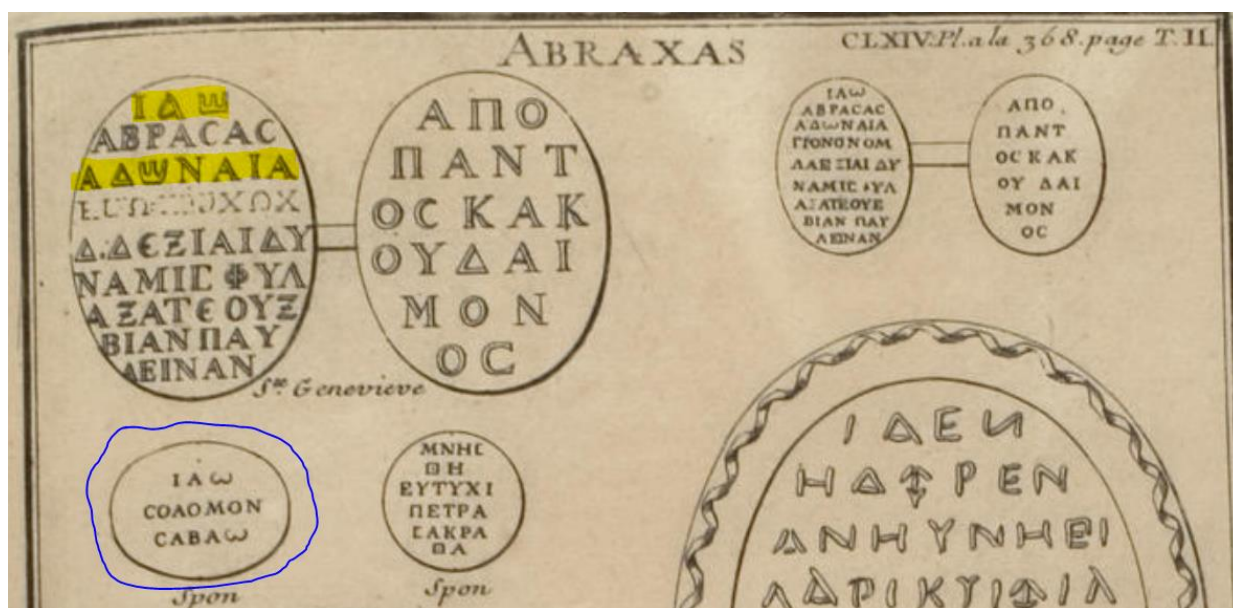


The Sacred Name Iao (Gk IAW) on an Abraxas
 an undated amulet
<https://www.gnosticdoctrine.com/2021/06/what-is-abraxas.html>

You may be wondering why we're focusing so heavily on the Greek rendering *Iao*. It turns out *Iao* is the earliest recorded transliteration of the Tetragrammaton. Diodorus Siculus, a first-century BC historian, wrote, "Moyses referred his laws to the theon who is invoked as *Iao*."²⁰¹

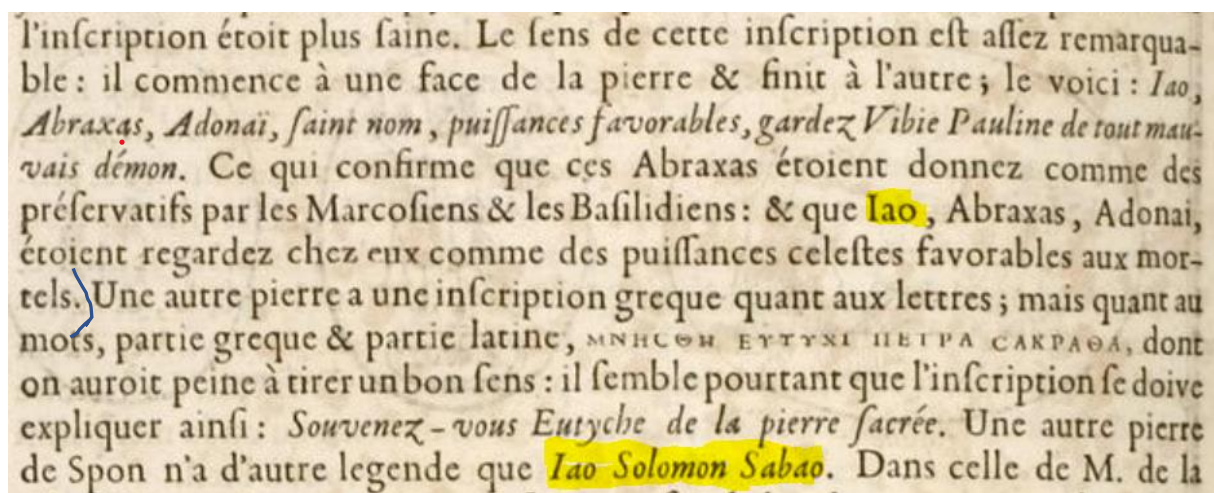
believed it. Thus it is recorded that among the Arians Zathraustes⁴⁴ claimed that the Good Spirit gave him his laws, among the people known as the Getae who represent themselves to be immortal Zalmoxis⁴⁵ asserted the same of their common goddess Hestia, and among the Jews Moyses referred his laws to the god who is invoked as *Iao*.⁴⁶ They all did this either because they believed that a conception which would help humanity was marvellous and wholly divine, or because they held that the common crowd would be more likely to obey the laws if their gaze were directed towards the majesty and power of those to whom their laws were ascribed.^c

Of course, we're persuaded there's more to the Tetragrammaton than just *Iao*. And indeed, there are many other inscriptions that have been found. While *Iao* is dominant, there are others as well, which we will see shortly. Here's an interesting Abrasax gem that not only invokes *Iao*, but it also mentions *Adonaia*, *Solomon* and *Sabao* ("hosts of heaven").²⁰²



²⁰¹ Siculus, Diodorus, *Bibliotheca Historica*, Book i.94.2. Just to be clear, Diodorus Siculus did not refer to the Almighty as "god." The Greek word he used is *theon* (θεόν).

²⁰² Bernard de Montfaucon, *L'Antiquité Expliquée*, Vol. II, Book 3, "Les Abraxas," Paris: Florentin DeLaulne, Michel Clousier, Jean-Geoffroy Nyon, Etienne Ganeau, Nicolas Gosselin & Pierre-François Giffart, 1719, p. 368, Pl. 368.



I found author Bernard de Montfaucon's commentary on the above *Abrasax* stone (upper left) to be very interesting; here's an English translation of the indicated (French) text:

The meaning of this inscription is rather remarkable: it begins on one side of the stone and ends on the other; here it is: *Iao, Abraxas, Adonai, holy name, beneficent Mighty Ones, protect Vibie Pauline from all evil demons.* This confirms that these *Abraxas* [stones] were given as protective talismans by the *Marcosians* and the *Basilidians*: & that *Iao, Abraxas, Adonai*, were regarded by them as beneficent celestial powers for mortals.

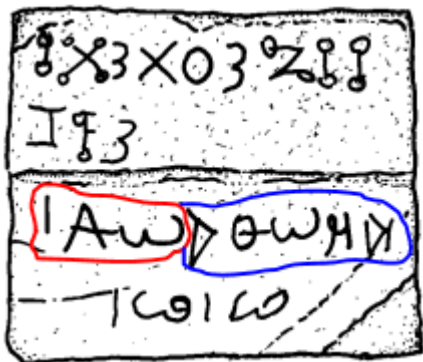
Wearing *Abrasax* stones as amulets was so common that there is no shortage of information about the multitudes who wore them. And no wonder. There's a story that circulated about a man who received a letter from the resurrected Yeshua, and upon seeing the seal of the letter, he was healed. Here's a brief summary as found in C. W. King's *The Gnostics and Their Remains, Ancient and Mediaeval*:

The celebrated letter of Christ to Abgarus was (according to Cedrenus) sealed with the initials of the seven Hebrew words, whose Greek interpretation was Θεὸς Θεοθὲν θαῦμα θεῖον. At the mere sight of the seal the king was healed of his gout and of his black leprosy, all but a slight trace upon the face remaining to be cleansed by the waters of baptism.²⁰³

If you were an ancient believer who heard about a king being healed of disease simply by looking at such an object described above, might you consider obtaining an amulet inscribed with the Creator's name? Does this give you an idea as to why prayer cloths and the like are still popular to this day? By the way, *Abrasax* amulets are currently available for purchase online!

²⁰³ King, C. W., M.A., *The Gnostics and Their Remains, Ancient and Mediaeval*, 2nd Ed., London: David Nutt, 1887, p. 318.

Evidence that protective amulets were widespread in the early centuries is supported by the discovery of a gold *lamella*²⁰⁴ in a Rumanian sarcophagus dating to the third or fourth century CE, shown below²⁰⁵:



The top portion of the *lamella* consists of magical signs. The lower portion reads “*ιάω αθωνάϊ*,” which is transliterated “*Iao Athonai*.” The author explains:

ιάω αθωνάϊ: *αθωνάϊ* is an orthographic variant for *αδωνάϊ* [adonai]. A fold divides the upper and lower sections of the tablet. The fact that the *lamella* was found with a coin and gem depicting Sol suggests that these divine names, too, were understood as solar deities.²⁰⁶

While we cannot deny the fact that those who used *lamellae* and amulets as a form a magic did so contrary to Torah, this does not preclude the possibility (and likelihood) that those who began such rituals only did so after having heard (or overheard) the Name used in a righteous manner. As we know from our own decaying society, those things which were once revered and considered noble can be corrupted and denigrated. This does not override the original sanctity. Is this what transpired with *Iao adonai*?

I found an interesting photo of an ancient *Abrasax* amulet while searching online:



The above Abrasax gem is preserved in the Istanbul Archaeological Museums. It was found during a rescue excavation in the Province of Istanbul, district of Eminönü, in the quarter of

²⁰⁴ A *lamella*, in terms of archaeology, is used to describe a very thin gold plate with a stamped text.

²⁰⁵ Kotansky, Roy, *Greek Magical Amulets: The Inscribed Gold, Silver, Copper, and Bronze Lamellae*, Part I, Opladen, Germany: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1994, p. 95. This image only one of several presented in Kotansky's book.

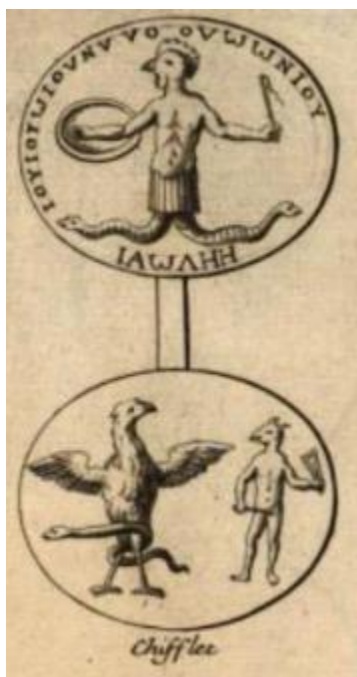
²⁰⁶ Ibid, p. 96.

Cankurtaran. If you look closely at the circled word, it's another Greek transliteration of the Tetragrammaton (ΙΑΟΥ), either pronounced Yaho'u or Yahu.²⁰⁷

The archaeologists who discovered the above Abrasax stone went into some detail about dating them, as well as a trait not uncommon among Gnostics:

It is very difficult to date such gems exactly. Even the forms of their letters are not very helpful. Usually such objects date to the later 3rd or 4th century A.D. This is the period, when the traditional city cults lost the support of their followers, the cult of the sun god became very prominent, and, in view of the many difficulties which most people experienced, magic gained an immense popularity. It seems that it was precisely at this period that the Abrasax gems are the most widely spread magical amulets in Antiquity. They are a product of the syncretism of the 3rd century A.D., mixing Persian, Egyptian, Jewish, Christian, as well as Greek and Roman religious and superstitious traditions together. This gem is apparently a further proof of this cultural development.²⁰⁸

The Gnostics may not have known which deity to call on for protection, especially if the one they had been calling on didn't save them from catastrophe. If this one certain deity didn't protect you, then maybe if you call on ALL of them, one of them will surely hear your cry and come to your rescue. Sir Ernest Alfred Wallis, in his book *Egyptian Magic*, brings out this principle, and even supplies a "magical formula":



An Abrasax image with an alternate rendering: Iaoleh? – p. 360, Pl. 360

In another magical formula we read, "I call upon thee that didst create the earth and bones, and all flesh and all spirit, that didst establish the sea and that shakest the heavens, that didst divide the light from the darkness, the great regulative mind, that disposest everything, eye of the world, spirit of spirits, god of gods, the lord of spirits, the immoveable Aeon, **IAOUEÏ**, hear my voice. I call upon thee, the ruler of the gods, the high-thundering Zeus, Zeus, king, Adonai, lord, **Iaouêe**. I am he that invokes these in the Syrian tongue, the great god, Zaalaêr, Iphphou, do thou not disregard the Hebrew appellation Ablanathanalb, Abrisilôa. For I am Silthakhôoukh, Lailam, Blasalôth, **Iaô**, Ieô, Nebouth, Sabiothar, Bôth, Arbathiaô, Iaoth,

²⁰⁷ Abrasax: A Magical Gem in the Istanbul Archaeological Museums; <https://journals.openedition.org/anatoliaantiqua/303>

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

Sabaōth, Patoure, Zagourē, Baroukh Adonai, Elōai, Iabraam, Barbarauō, Nau, Siph,” etc.²⁰⁹

Based on the above, we can see that the Egyptian priest did his best to not leave out any potential protective deities, an obvious clue that they did not worship ONE Almighty – the Mighty One to whom we are introduced in Torah. These were not Torah-practicing people; yet, somehow, somewhere along the line, they heard the Name of the Almighty of the Jews. Did they hear each syllable correctly? We can never know in this lifetime; however, isn't it interesting that what they came up with comes very, very close to *Yahweh*? Consider also that they apparently pronounced *Adonai* correctly (or close enough). Were they able to reproduce *Adonai* (אֲדֹנָי), but *unable* to transliterate יהוה correctly?



An Abrasax image with a variant rendering of Iao (p. 376, Pl. 376)

If anything, I would say the ancient inscriptions and amulets serve as indicators that the ancients understood pronunciations such as *Yahweh* or *Yahuweh* as more closely resembling the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. Take, for instance, what Frederic G. Kenyon wrote in *Greek Papyri in the British Museum*:

It is unnecessary to describe at length the Gnostic system, or to give the names of the successive grades of emanations which compose its hierarchy. For this the works which formally treat of the subject must be consulted. A comprehension of the system is not required in order to understand the contents of the papyri, which are not the composition of professed Gnostics, but of persons using the thoughts and phraseology of a prevalent system of belief along with the older Greek and Egyptian mythologies. Some of the most common names and notions should, however, be noticed. First among these is the frequent use, in all sorts of combinations, of the seven vowels. One reason for this is, no doubt, the fact of their being of the mystic number seven. Another is that they were used to veil the Hebrew name of God.



An Abrasax image with an alternate rendering: Iaheiehi? – p. 370, Pl. 370

The exact pronunciation of that name, as is well known, was preserved a profound secret, but several approximations were made to it; among which the commonest is the word *Iāō* (cf. Diod. Sic. i. 94), which was sometimes expanded, so as to employ all the vowels, into *Iāōoue*. An early Gnostic work mentioned below, the *Pistis Sophia*, says of the vowels that they are “a name wherein be contained all Names and all Lights and all Powers” (c. 335, p.

²⁰⁹ Budge, Sir Ernest Alfred Wallis, M.A., Litt.D., D.Lit, *Egyptian Magic*, London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Lt., 1901, p. 177.

378, ed. Petermann). Other names taken from the Hebrew titles of the Deity, and occurring very frequently in magical formulae, are Sabaoth and Adonai. The Ophite doctrine, which was one of the earliest forms of Gnosticism, enumerated Iao, Sabaoth, Adonai, Eloï, Ouraios, and Astaphaios, as the six emanations of Ildabaoth, the creator and tyrant of the Lower World; and these six, with their progenitor, became the lords of the seven planetary spheres. It will be noticed that the first four of these six are Hebrew names of the Deity.²¹⁰

Regrettably, Kenyon doesn't offer his source for the rendering Ιαωουε, but according to the *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, a very similar form appears among the ancient Jewish-Egyptian magic-papyri:

In the Jewish-Egyptian magic-papyri it appears as ιαωουηε.²¹¹

Both of the above Greek transliterations (Ιαωουε and Ιαωουηε) come close to *Iabe* and *Yahve*, as supplied by such scholars as Theodore and Epiphanius. Nevertheless, there are other examples of Abraxas stones that come closer to *Yahweh* than to *Yehowah*.

I will be frank: In the depiction displayed below, if the Abrasax gem stone on the left served as the only Egyptian clue I had to how they transliterated the Tetragrammaton, I would come up with something very, very close to *Yahweh*:²¹²



Let's face it: If you strategically position certain vowel points under certain letters of the Tetragrammaton, you can come up with a plethora of potential pronunciations, including *Yahweh* and yes, including either *Yehowah* or *Yahuwah*. So please don't expect anyone to believe *Yehowah* is "linguistically impossible." It's possible. Does it match the original pronunciation?

²¹⁰ *Greek Papyri in the British Museum*, Edited by F. G. Kenyon, M.A., London: Oxford University Press, 1893, p. 63.

²¹¹ *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. 9, New York and London: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1905 p. 161.

²¹² *L'Antiquité Expliquée*, Vol. II, Book 3, "Les Abraxas," Paris: Florentin DeLaulne, Michel Clousier, Jean-Geoffroy Nyon, Etienne Ganeau, Nicolas Gosselin & Pierre-François Giffart, 1719, p. 366, Pl. 366.

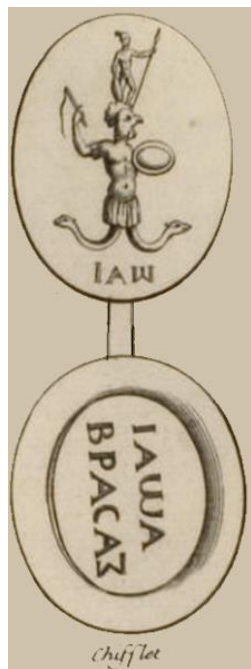
That's what we're all trying to determine, some of us more dogmatically than others. The eminent scholar Wilhelm Gesenius acknowledged the possibility of *Yehowah* being the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton and unless someone can show me otherwise, he never retracted his acknowledgement.

As for us: we acknowledge that it's *possible* the Almighty's name is pronounced *Yehowah*. It may even be pronounced *Yahuwah*. We're not out to dogmatically assert ourselves on this topic. All we ask is, "Please do *not* expect us to believe Yahweh is not a possibility."

The Most Universally-Known Word?

Many of us have heard that the most universally-known word is *HalleluYah*. But is it really?

I am about to go out on a limb with something, so I must ask you to please bear with me.



What I'm about to express may not be 100% correct, even though I personally believe there's at least a few kernels of truth to it. I admit it does require some speculation. Please allow me to lay a small foundation before I state my case. My foundation is this: It can be demonstrated (and I have done so in other writings) that *God* is the name of a heathen idol whose worship Yahweh condemns (Isaiah 65:11, see the Hebrew text). In spite of what *should* be a clear signal to not so much as *speak* this idol's name, mankind has collectively accepted *God* as the name of the Creator. Let's face it, if *God* cannot be and *is not* the name of the Creator, then it can only be the name of an idol. And what's an idol? The Apostle Paul admonished us in I Corinthians chapter 10 that **idol = devil**:

19 What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing?

20 But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to the Almighty: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

So if *God* is an idol whose worship Yahweh condemns, but we've made the decision to worship *God* anyway, then the Apostle Paul is telling us we're worshipping devils. This is made even more abundantly clear when you realize that *God* is one of the two idols singled out in Isaiah 65:11, but in the Greek Septuagint translation of this same passage *God* is translated "demon." The 1st century BCE Hebrew scholars who translated the text of Isaiah into Greek thus conveyed their understanding that *God* is the name of a demon.

In spite of all the above, it's a given that our society – those who still believe in a Creator – collectively worships the Creator as "Almighty God" and they think they have a pure form of worship. This is a sad testimony, yet it's true.

Okay, now to my point. The adversary has seen to it that we've swapped our pure worship of Yahweh, along with our diligence in living lives of obedience to His righteous ways as outlined in Torah, for a false idol. That was a very clever trick—so clever that 99% of people aren't even

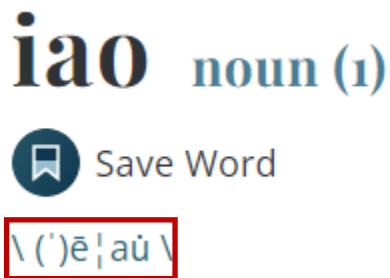
aware of the switch. It makes me wonder what *other* tricks the adversary has pulled on us unwitting creatures.

How about the third commandment? Here's what it says in Exodus 20:7:

7 Thou shalt not take the name of Yahweh thy Elohim in vain;
for Yahweh will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in
vain.

In our 30-plus years of calling on the name Yahweh, we've heard many a sermon about how removing Yahweh's name from the Bible was in and of itself a violation of the third commandment. The act of substituting the Creator's name with a title ("the LORD") "brings it to nought,"²¹³ as in bringing it to nothing—causing everyone to not even know or recognize the Creator's name. And I agree. But I think there's more. Remember the most common transliteration of the Tetragrammaton in Greek? Remember the oldest Greek transliteration of the Tetragrammaton? The answer to both questions is *Iao*. Or *Iᾱω* if you prefer. *How is this word pronounced in Greek?*

Here's a phonetic listing of how to pronounce *Iao* as supplied by Merriam-Webster Dictionary.com:²¹⁴



Just to be clear about how this word is pronounced, I found an online biographical sketch of someone whose first name is actually *Iao*, and the website supplies the following phonetic pronunciation guide for her name: "ee-yow":

Iao (pronounced "ee-yow") [REDACTED] retired as RAND's community director in 2016 but continues as an adjunct staff member and senior community affairs. Her personal involvement with community nonprofit organizations maintains robust relationships with government officials.

For those who prefer an audio version of how to pronounce "Iao," here's the link to one I found online:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DgvA2bqWebo>

²¹³ The *Holy Name Bible*, published by The Scripture Research Association, Inc., Brandywine, MD, revised by A. B. Traina, 1983, translates Exodus 20:7 as follows: "Thou shalt not take away the Name of Yahweh thy Elohim to bring it to nought, for Yahweh will not hold him guiltless that taketh away His Name to bring it to nought."

²¹⁴ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/iao>

In view of the correct pronunciation of *Iao*, if this name truly *is* a valid transliteration of the Almighty's name as claimed by ancient Greek writers, as well as the name so widely used on Abrasax gems, I am persuaded that it is quite possibly the most abused and ill-treated name in the world. You see, one of the first words we were taught to say when we stub our toes or fall off our bikes is, "Ee-yow!" By now it's become so instinctive to say something close to "Ee-yow" that we don't even think about it when we say it. But what if we had been taught to say something else? I mean, Homer Simpson is famous for saying, "Doh!" whenever something goes wrong – what if we had been taught to say, "Doh!" whenever we stub our toes or bump into something that causes us sudden pain? If we had been taught to say, "Doh!" or "Oof!" from infancy, wouldn't *that* be what we would all say when we feel pain? How and why did it turn out that the word we use is, "Ee-yow!" or "Yow!" And if we get technical, isn't "ouch" related to "yow"?



An Abrasax image with
Iao on the shield – p. 360,
Pl. 360

Before you dismiss what I've just presented, please allow me to point out that it has been demonstrated that what we say when we experience sudden pain is a *learned* thing. Different cultures have different "pain expressions," but the one common to English and German languages is similar to "Yow!" Here's an excerpt from James Harbeck's online article "Why Pain is Expressed Differently in Different Languages":

But does that seem natural? We may say "Ouch!" without thinking of it, but a baby never would. We learned that somewhere. Actually, English seems to have borrowed it from German just about two centuries ago — most likely starting with German-speaking people in Pennsylvania. And where did it come from in German? Good question. An added bit of jaw-clenching, perhaps.

But it's also a learned thing to say "Ow!" rather than "Oy!" or "Ay!" If it were natural and automatic, everyone would make the same sound. Languages tend to pick something, and we learn that that's the noise you make — and we make it.

So remember this: Your pain response may be automatic, but it's immediately filtered through your language before you even finish saying it. Learned language is quick and pervasive. We even scream with our own accents.²¹⁵

To be clear, saying, "Ee-yow" or even "Ouch!" isn't some instinctively natural thing humans say when they experience sudden pain. *We learned it from somewhere*. Is it a coincidence that it just happens to dovetail with the very name ancient Greek writers supply as a form of the Creator's name? If it's a *form* of His name, doesn't that count for something?

²¹⁵ Harbeck, James, "[Why Pain is Expressed Differently in Different Languages](http://www.theweek.com)," posted on The Week™ (www.theweek.com), Copyright © Dennis Publishing Limited 2021, 01/11/2015

The question I feel we need to be asking is, “Were we taught to use our Heavenly Father’s name ‘in vain’ from infancy?” If saying “Ee-yow” is a learned expression, from where did we learn it? When you felt the sudden pain and you quite audibly expressed the anguish, did someone calm you down, then say something like, “I heard you say, ‘Rine’ when you got hurt. I was raised to say, ‘Ee-yow’”? Not likely. If you were raised here in the USA, you were most likely trained from the “get-go” to say, “Ee-yow!” without a second’s worth of thought and by now it’s *become* pure instinct.

So here’s the irony: The name we *should* despise and avoid speaking (*God*) is the name we’ve been taught to reverently call upon and pray to; as for the actual name of our Heavenly Father, we use *it* in anguish whenever we feel sudden pain, almost akin to a curse at the pain we’re experiencing. Which name do we as a society collectively *honor*? Which name do we call out when we’re in sudden pain? Upon sharing the above with June, she agreed, saying, “The adversary has flipped everything – the day on which we’re commanded to worship, the holy days versus his ‘holidays,’ the foods we’re commanded not to eat, and even the name of the Almighty.”

I found the following comic strip on page 17 of the December 1991 issue of *Bible Advocate* magazine, published by the Church of God (7th Day), Broomfield, CO. In what I feel is an ironic twist, the magazine publisher chooses to refer to the Almighty as “God,” but the comic strip has the mother essentially taking the Creator’s *real name* in vain:



There may be an even more disturbing corollary to this scenario. If *Iao* forms the first syllable of the Creator’s name, a potential rendering could be *Iaoee*, or *Yowie*. This should at least be recognized as a pronunciation that could arise due to dialectal variations, if it hasn’t already. As such, I was surprised to learn of a mysterious creature in Australia known as the *Yowie*.²¹⁶ As legend has it, the name is derived from “Yahoo-Devil” (*Yahu?*):

In the 1870s, accounts of “Indigenous Apes” appeared in the *Australian Town and Country Journal*. The earliest account in November 1876 asked readers: “Who has not heard, from the earliest settlement of the colony, the blacks speaking of some

²¹⁶ Cf., for example, Myths and Folklore Wiki, “[Yowie](#).”

unearthly animal or inhuman creature ... namely the Yahoo-
Devil, or hairy man of the wood ...”²¹⁷

So who might inspire mankind to worship the adversary’s alter ego by the name *God*, while attributing the true Creator’s name to that of a *monster*? Not only that, but in “honor” of the *Yowie* creature, an Australian confectioner came up with *Yowie* chocolates in the shape of – you guessed it – monsters. Here’s an image we found online:



We do not have any concrete proof that what I’ve just shared is the result of the adversary’s trick on humanity; I cannot say for certain, so I am admittedly speculating. But I *do* know that from antiquity, the oldest Greek transliteration of the Almighty’s name is pronounced *Ee-yow*, and I *do* know that one of the first words out of our mouths when we feel sudden pain – *something we’ve subconsciously learned to say* – is *Ee-yow*. If our theory about the potential origin of *Yowie* is true, then not only are we all victims of a very elaborate ruse, but mankind has also been duped into completely *reversing* what was once a pure, untainted worship into a totally corrupt one. And to make matters worse, those who seem to have an inside track into seeking out the Creator’s name and so honoring Him with it are expending more energy “correcting” each other than working together harmoniously with a mutual commitment to keep love at the forefront.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

Conclusion

As I began composing the final two chapters of this study in late 2021, I realized I had never offered any concluding remarks. As it turns out, there is one point I want to leave readers with before I move on to my next project, so this is an appropriate spot for it. I have always felt that many controversies are controversies because the definitive information needed to resolve the matter is not clearly spelled out either in Scripture or the annals of history – or both. One example that comes to mind is the count to Pentecost. Many who are persuaded that the count begins on the morrow of the weekly Sabbath have their conclusions set in stone, so to speak, *i.e.*, they are unwilling to budge. But the same can be said of those who believe the count begins on the morrow of the “high day” Sabbath that initiates the Feast of Unleavened Bread each year. Some fairly unkind things have been said from one faction to the other – words like “deceived” come to mind. It occurred to me that the Almighty *could have* made this a “no-brainer” for both sides, with no need for arguments. He *could have* instructed us to begin the count on the morrow of the Shabbat that falls during the feast. Or He *could have* commanded us to begin the count on Abib 16. But in His eternal wisdom, He *didn't* inspire His Word to be written that way. *Why not?* I surmise that He wants to see how His children work out their disagreements. That's right – it's a *test*. We can either see and appreciate others' reasoning, at the very least commending their desire to do the right thing, OR we can rebuke them, label them, laugh at them and disassociate ourselves from them. Of course, I think we should go for the first option. I still have fond memories of a family with whom we would meet on Pentecost. I would take off from work during the week and we would go to their home on the day we observed it, then we would return on a Sunday to do it again on the day *they* believed it should be observed. To top it off, our time was not spent arguing about whose count was correct! It seemed as though our love for each other was only surpassed by our love for our Heavenly Father.

I think this same principle should apply to the pronunciation of the Creator's name. The current political climate in our nation is a very divisive one, nothing like when I was growing up when Democrats would say they voted for Reagan (at least that's what I overheard in our rural community). That was back when people would say things like, “I always vote for the MAN, not the party!” Those days are gone (or so it seems). But when we as a nation pulled together and worked for harmonious resolutions to disagreements, shaking hands in the end, we accomplished more. We as a nation felt stronger and we *were* stronger. We as believers can achieve this same feeling and experience the same strength if we with open minds concede that the opposition presents some valid arguments that are worth considering. When both sides make these concessions, we can at least shake hands or embrace each other. I have tried to achieve that sort of balance in this study. To me, this is not about who's right and who's wrong – it's about sincerely seeking the Creator's name and then using it reverently because we love Him and we want to honor Him accordingly. Is that name *Yahuwah*? Maybe. Is it *Yahweh*? That's where I tend to lean, but I'm primarily basing this on hearsay, *i.e.*, did Theodore truly hear the Samaritans say *Iabe*, and wasn't that *b* originally a *waw* sound? How about the form *Yehowah*? I understand there's a valid argument for the belief that the Tetragrammaton consists of three syllables, not two, so maybe *Yehowah* is the correct form. Or is it *Yahuweh*? And what about that most ancient Greek form – *Iao* (pronounced *Yow*)? Is it possible that we've been subconsciously duped into taking the Creator's name in vain every time we accidentally stub our toes or otherwise inflict injury upon ourselves? Finally, did the adversary orchestrate his alter ego (*God*) becoming the central focus of man's worship while seeing to it the true name (*Yowie*) evolved to become the



name of a monster? The Creator's name cannot *possibly* be *Yowie* – or can it? Since none of us were there at the Burning Bush to hear how the Almighty expressly identified Himself to Moses, I think we should at least show respect for *all* the forms.

It is true that in this study we expended much of our energy into answering false claims about the Creator's name – and those false claims have emanated from *both* sides, so hopefully no one will charge us with being “hopelessly biased”! Regardless of how you believe the Creator's name is pronounced, we pray you use it with humility and respect and that you treat those who don't share your view in that same way. May the spirit of the Almighty guide us and bring us all to loving unity.

