

YAIY NEWS



Yahweh's Assembly in Yahshua

Praise ye Yahweh.
I will give thanks
unto Yahweh with
my whole heart, In
the council of the
upright, and in the
congregation.

—Psalm 111:1 ASV

Scholars Help Explain: Yahuah or Yahweh?

We receive questions, at times, which we feel should have a more scholarly answer than we can give. Since many of us are not, I repeat, are not Hebrew linguists, much of what we find concerning the Father's Name is based upon what other language experts have already concluded.

Currently there seems to be a lot of questions and claims about an alternative spelling and pronunciation of "Yahuah" for the Elohim of Scripture. Instead of giving them a link to our study *The Mistaken "J"*, we decided to take the following straight to the scholars, some of whom have spent more time studying the Hebrew language than a few of us have been alive.

The following three questions came in recently and were sent out to some well respected scholars.

1. How does one come to the conclusion that YHWH translates into Yahweh, if the Y= Yod, H=Hay, W (which really is a U)=Uau or Waw, and H=Hay? The Creator's name should read, and be spoken as, Yahuah or Yahuwaw.



2. Is not the letter dalet in the Semitic language represented anciently in Hebrew pictographs as a door? We see the Savior, today, as that "Door" and believe this fits since He came in His Father's Name from the line of Judah. The dalet in the name, Judah (Yahudah), if removed, reveals the Father's name as Yahuah. Your use of Yahweh for the Father's name, therefore, is incorrect.

3. Is it not impossible to get, phonetically, Yahweh from the Tetragrammaton (YHWH), due to the fact that the letter "heh" is pronounced the same (ah) no matter where you put it in a name?

A first response came in from the professor of Hebrew at the University of Oxford, England. His name is Professor Hugh Williams. The following is his unedited response to the three questions presented:

The root of the problem you raise is that the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament was written at a time when for the most part vowels were not recorded; the vowel signs in our present Hebrew manuscripts (and hence in printed Hebrew Bibles) were added in the middle of the first Christian millennium, about 1000 years after the original writing. By that time the Jews no

I am Yahweh,
that is
my name;
and my glory
will I not give
to another,
neither my praise
unto graven
images.

—Isaiah 42:8 ASV

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longer pronounced the name of God (because of the danger of breaking one of the first commandments) and so said the Hebrew word for 'Lord' whenever they came across the divine name in the text. So they wrote the vowels for 'Lord' (Hebrew adonay) on the consonants of the divine name (yhwh), and it is the (mistaken) combination of these two that gave rise to the later form Jehovah.

The consonants of the divine name are YHWH, but we have no direct access to how this was pronounced. Many OT names use part of the divine name at the start or the finish (e.g. all those that start Je- or end with -iah or -yahu), and Greek transcriptions give us a clue as to what vowels were used in pronunciation of these in the last century or two BC. In addition, there are clues from Exodus 3, for instance, as to how the name was understood, and this helps with a conjectural vocalization, mostly considered to be Yahweh, being an imperfect form of the verb 'to be', hence either he who is/will be or he who causes to be/creates. This is very probable, but cannot be ultimately proved. So the alternatives you suggest (well, Yahuah, at least) cannot be disproved, but they would then empty the name of any known meaning, which would be improbable. In your support, you might note that sometimes the divine name appears in the shorter form Yahu.

On your third question, the latter 'h' in Hebrew can only stand for a long 'a' when it occurs at the end of a word, not in any other position. However, that usage developed only over time and one assumes that this name is older than that. Hence the 'h' at the end of YHWH is unlikely to be just a long 'a'; it is better treated as a consonant.

Your second question is based on a fanciful interpretation of one of the letters in the Hebrew alphabet. Letters do indeed usually start out as representative of some object of which they may be the first sound (e.g. m is the first letter of the word for water, and it looks a bit like the way water might be represented). Equally, I may agree with you that Jesus is the Door, but that is no reason for playing with the name of Judah, as though one could just remove a letter to get some other word. That is not how language works (even if preachers sometimes like to play games of that sort in order to make their point more memorable). I must therefore completely discount your proposal here.

In conclusion, we must recognize that our knowledge is limited but that you are probably correct to pronounce the divine name as Yahweh.

Yours sincerely,

Hugh Williamson

The second response we received, which is more technical in nature, is from Dr. David K. Stabnow, PhD of Hebrew at Holman Bible Publishers. They recently published the HCSB Study Bible, which uses Yahweh's Name in verses where the Sacred Name is emphasized or used to specifically identify the Heavenly Father.

Here are my responses to your specific questions. My opinion does not necessarily represent the policy of Holman Bible Publishers or LifeWay Christian Resources.

1. How does one come to the conclusion that YHWH translates into Yahweh, if the Y= Yod, H=Hay, W (which really is a U)=Uau or Waw, and H=Hay? The Creator's name should read, and be spoken as, Yahuah or Yahuwaw.

The first consonant is clearly Yod. The second consonant is clearly Heh, not the vowel letter (*matres lectionis*) indicating the long-a ("ah"), since the vowel letter Heh only occurs at the end of words. The third consonant also is likely the consonant pronounced like our "w" and not the vowel letter for o/u-class vowels. The final consonant is likely a consonant, since the trilateral root is likely HWH, an ancient form of HYH, "to be." Therefore, the word is a form of the verb, and the Yod is a prefix. As to its pronunciation, we are dependant on its

Scholars Help Explain...cont.

transliteration into other languages in ancient texts. Those transliterations suggest that the vowels were a long ‘a’ in the first syllable, and an e-class vowel in the final syllable. The first syllable ends with an ‘h’, and the second syllable begins with a ‘w’—thus, “Yahweh.”

2. Is not the letter dalet in the Semitic language represented anciently in Hebrew pictographs as a door? We see the Savior, today, as that “Door” and believe this fits since He came in His Father’s Name from the line of Judah. The dalet in the name, Judah (Yahudah), if removed, reveals the Father’s name as Yahuah. Your use of Yahweh for the Father’s name, therefore, is incorrect.

There is some question whether the ancient pictograph for Dalet was a door or a fish. In either case, I do not understand how removing a letter from “Judah” contributes to the discussion of the correct pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. Incidentally, the Hebrew word for “Judah” is not Yhudah but Yehudah; the first vowel is a Shewa. In all the occurrences in the Hebrew Bible, no matter how the word is declined, there is never an a-class vowel in the first syllable.

3. Is it not impossible to get, phonetically, Yahweh from the Tetragrammaton (YHWH), due to the fact that the letter “heh” is pronounced the same (ah) no matter where you put it in a name?

It is not a fact that Heh is pronounced the same no matter where it occurs in a word. Heh indicates an a-class vowel when it is functioning as one of the *matres lectionis*. When it is functioning as a consonant it is pronounced like English ‘h’. The first Heh in the Tetragrammaton is certainly the consonant ‘h’. The last one is likely a consonant. While the final Heh (or Aleph) often is a *mater* indicating an a-class vowel, it can also be a consonant. Some argue that if it were a consonant it would have a *mappiq*, that is, a dot in the center of the Hebrew letter. However, the Tetragrammaton is written without the pointing associated with the Name, so the *mappiq* would not show up in any case. Likely, it is a consonant Heh from the Hebrew word HWH, an ancient variant on HYH, “to be.” It refers to the God of Israel as the eternally existent One.

Praying that Yahweh will be glorified in all the world through His Son.

Yours truly,

David K. Stabnow

We hope to print a few more responses to these three questions at a later date. For now, we share the two that came in. We deeply appreciate the time spent to answer these, and while we may not all agree on the exact pronunciation, we agree that there is an important aspect of why the Father’s Name is mentioned throughout Scripture nearly 7000 times.

Early in the Sacred Name Movement, and it seems among many Hebrew linguists too, Yahweh has generally been agreed upon as the best attempt to bring the phonetic transliteration over into our language today. It is much more important than most realize. The HCSB Study Bible says, in Joel 2:32a, “Then every one who calls on the name of Yahweh will be saved...” May we be found calling upon His Name in humble obedience to His will.

Yahshua the Messiah, who never sinned against Yahweh, was the living example of His Father’s will for us. Don’t forget to review the last YAIY News (pages 3 and 4) concerning His Name. It’s also important, since He inherited His Father’s Name within His own, Exodus 23:21; Philippians 2:9.





Where Did 'Yeshua' Come From?

Following the example in the Septuagint, Christian scholars did attempt to transliterate (bring across the sound of) the Savior's Name as it was written in the Greek.

Writing Yahweh's name in the Hebrew texts (יהוה), Jewish Scribes (hundreds of years earlier) inserted a *shewa* (:) instead of the *qamets* (ט), changing the vowel sound "ah" to "eh" to forestall blurring out the short form "Yah" of the Sacred Name. This



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practice is still found in the erroneous "JEHovah." (While using "Jehovah" might be considered better than using a substitute title in place of the name of Yahweh, it is still an incorrect transliteration).

Thus, we have the Savior's Name beginning with "JE" when it should be "YAH" as in "halleluYAH." We don't say "halleluYEH."

Using the Greek capital "I" (iota), the Greek translators did not insert the vowel letter "a" (alpha) but had ignorantly accepted the Hebrew diacritical vowel points and used the letter "e" (eta). Thus they began the Savior's name as "Ie."

The Greek has no "h" in its alphabet, only a rough breathing mark at a word's beginning that appears as a reverse apostrophe. No "h" appears in Greek of the poetic form "Yah." In fact from the above, we can see the first part of the Tetragrammaton in Greek would be written "Ie" (with no "h" as they had none) to be consistent with the Jew's rule of "Yeh" to avoid vocalizing the "Yah" sound. Nor did the Jews want in any way to associate Yahweh's Name with that of the Savior's, which might be seen as acknowledging His position as the very Son of Yahweh Who came in His Father's Name.

The Greek language has no "sh" sound, so only the "s" (sigma= s) appears. Thus far, we have the first three letters of the Savior's name, "IES." In the Greek this is followed by "o" (o= omicron), the sound being short, as in lot. This is followed by the "u"(upsilon = u), sounded as "oo."

The transliteration in Greek, then, is something like "Ee-ess-oo-uh." Say it rapidly and we get a fairly close rendition, "Yesuah," remembering no "sh" sound was available. In Greek the Savior's name appears as "IESOUS" (with the suffix "s" for the Greek ending). The Latin translation was then made primarily from the Greek text, bypassing the original Hebrew.

Excerpt taken from: "How the Savior's Name Was Changed"
by Yahweh's Assembly in Yahshua

Prayer List

Elder Dick Vaow, Hap Tew, Michelle Love and Family, Jewell Holt, Dolores Parker, Elder Don Mansager and Family/Friends, Maxine Conrad, Patricia Prince, Terrel Frasure, Donald Appling, Lois McDonald, David and Barbara Creel, David Jones Jr. and Family, Larry Skinner, Charlie Pelton, Tami Lanphere, Robert Dorchester, Dries Van Zyl, Daphne Griffith and Family, Donald Carringer, Clare Kane, Elizabeth Bailey, R.C. Fernald Family/Friends, Gerald Bennet and Family, David Wilson, Heidi Ann Eve Isdell, Stella Rogers, Sean Rogers, Elder Yahkara Sunith, Robert and Patricia Potter, Benjamin Francis, Manuel Longoria and Family, Gary and Lanai DuBois, Donnie and Roland Miller, Al Pagano, Brian Huck, Florencia Vergara, Anthony Golden, Isaac Mung and family, Jessie Hoffman, Rachel Rodgers, Serena & Sonya Siangco, John Cole, Cindy Gustke and Family/Friends, Helen and Tim Rose, David Miller, Glen Jones, Katrina Jenkins and Family/Friends, Dave Bobst, Jim Colletti and Family, Cindy Smith, Pamela Woodfork, Carrol Isdell and Family, Loretta Reyes, May Rodgers, Karen van Schalkwyk, Lynette du Toit, Kenneth Tatman, Bonnie Merryman, Gerald Bennet and Family, Sandra Gets, Jesus Onate, Shawn Allen, Tiffany Harris, Skip Franchino and Family, Sharon Scott, Clyde Scott, Inez Scott, Editha Joseph-Wayland, brethren around the world, world leaders, Jerusalem and all the land of Israel.