

What is God's Name?

This should not be such a big deal, but the way to say God's name has divided Christian denominations, organizations, individuals, and even bible scholars. How do you pronounce God's name? Are we even allowed to say God's name? Now it is obvious from the Holy Scriptures that God does have a proper name. He told it to Moses (Exodus 3:14). He spoke to Moses as the "**I AM THAT I AM**" (KJV), or literally, "I will be, what I will be", that is, the Unchanging God Who exists forever! This self-expression, or shall I say name, is found written in the Hebrew Bible almost 7,000 times, as the so-called "Tetragrammaton" (meaning four-letters), and is most often articulated as, Yahweh. This Divine Name is expressed in Holy Scripture in two contracted forms, namely, as **YHWH** (or *YHVH*, or *JHVH*), or the even more shortened form, YAH, (or *JAH*)! (For truly there is no "J" sound in the Hebrew, but you will find it in the Latin and the German, instead). Compare Psalms 68:4 in the KJV.

In former times there were no vowel points, punctuations, and stress marks, only consonants in the original Paleo-Hebrew script; therefore, today, one has to rely on the traditional vowel points and marks supplied by the Masorahs (about 500 A.D. - 900 A.D.). These were the masterful gatekeepers of the traditional Hebraic text. These widely accepted vowel points, punctuations, and stress marks tell us what words mean, where to pause while reading the text, and how to properly pronounce the fixed consonantal Hebrew text out loud. These gatekeepers of the sacred text being obedient Jews did not believe it was right or proper to read or speak God's holy name out loud. So out of reverence for God they added vowel points from the other titles addressed to God, such as, "Adonai" (meaning Lord) and "Elohim" (meaning God) to the consonants of God's name, so that when you come across His name in the biblical text it is not announced or read out loud. You would read Yehovah or Jehovah instead. In addition, the Rabbi's would often substitute God's holy name for Elohim, Adonai, EL Shaddai, or Ha Shem (Lit. the Name).

This frequency for not saying God's name is also found in the New Testament. Although, YHWH can be found scribbled on a few ancient Greek manuscripts, the holy name of God is widely substituted for the title, κύριος, "LORD". This comes by way of the Greek translation of the Old Testament called, the LXX, or Septuagint.

Why are religious men so averse to speaking God's name? Doesn't He have a name? Doesn't He want us to invoke it in times of trouble or when at prayer? Even Jesus instructed us to pray, "Our Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy NAME" (Matthew 6:9 and Revelation 14:1)! If Jesus himself told us to hallow, that is, glorify, set apart as holy, God's name, then shouldn't we be able to pronounce it, or say it aloud in prayer with holy reverence, despite what tradition or religious teachers might say?

I don't see why the pronunciation of God's Name is such a mystery or is still taboo to many! Many Jews might not realize it, but they speak and read God's holy name all of the time. Follow me for a second. If you ever read the names of the Hebrew prophets or kings, (*not so much easily distinguishable in the Anglicized pronunciation of their names*), but the Hebrew pronunciations of their names, you will see that God's name

and how to properly pronounce it are right there in front of your eyes for all to see and hear. Just to name a few:

For example, *the Anglicized Isaiah in the Hebrew tongue is:*

ישעיהו ישעיהו Yesha-YAHU (*YAHU or YAH is my Salvation*) [pronounced yahoo]

ירמיהו ירמיהו Jeremiah is Yirmi-YAHU (*YAHU or YAH has uplifted*)

יחזקיהו יחזקיהו Josiah is Yoshi-YAHU (*YAHU or YAH Supports or Despairs*)

חזקיהו Hezekiah is Hezeki-YAHU (*YAHU is my Strength*)

זכריהו Zechariah is Zekhar-YAH (*YAH remembers*)

Elijah, whom the Jews call on every Passover is, Eli-YAHU (*My God is YAH or YAHU*)

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So you see the Prophets and Kings have the supposedly unspoken holy name of God -- YAHU, (sometimes contracted to YAH), appended to their names. So that when you read or speak the name of these prophets or kings you are also invoking the holy name of God!

Even when a modern Israeli reads or speaks the name of their 9th Prime Minister -- Benjamin

!they say the holy name of God , "בִּיבִי" בְּנֵימִין , "Bibi" (Netan-YAHU)

The 4th century B.C., Aramaic texts found at Elephantine (a Jewish garrison or military colony. See Syene in Ezekiel 29:10; 30:6) bears witness to the true pronunciation of the holy name of God. (Aramaic is a close cognate language to Hebrew). You will see in their correspondence to the temple Priests and Jews in Jerusalem that God's name is written, read, and pronounced with ease and without fear of punishment. It was written as YAHO, or YAHU!

Furthermore, there are *two Egyptian texts that record the Divine Hebrew Name of God*, one dated to the period of Amenhotep III (14th century B.C.), and the other to the age of Ramesses II (13th century B.C.): both refer to "**Yahu** in the land of the Shasu or Šosū-nomads" (written in Egyptian Hieroglyphics as, *t3 š3šw yhw*), in which *yhw/Yahu is a toponym*. - See the Wikipedia article: *Shasu of YHW*

Now regarding the name *yhw[3]*, Michael Astour observed that the above "hieroglyphic rendering corresponds very precisely to the Hebrew tetragrammaton YHWH, or Yahweh, and antedates the hitherto oldest occurrence of that divine name – on the Moabite Stone – by over five hundred years." - Astour (1979), pg. 18.

We have already seen that you will not find the holy name of God in the New Testament. However, the New Testament does give us a better revelation of the holy name of God. I can truly say that it gives an even more intimate name than YAHU! It is the title that the Saviour used. It is Father! This is the most

intimate and loving name of our holy God. For as soon as a baby is able to speak it does not speak the titles or the names of its mother and father, but calls them mama or dada, that is, Mother and Father. The child knows that his or her parents are the ones who loves them, and that they are the ones who will nourish and protect them from all hurt, harm, and evil. So it is with **our Heavenly FATHER!**

We ought to call God our Father, for this is the most intimate name He has. This mystery was not lost to the people of God in the Old Testament. For we read that God is our Father (Deuteronomy 8:5; 2 Samuel 7:14; 1 Chronicles 17:13; 28:6; Psalms 89:26; Hosea 11:1). We read in the New Testament that God is not only our Father, but He is our **ABBA, FATHER** (Mark 14:36; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6)! For even when we are old we still call our parents mama or Mother, and, daddy, or Father. Not out of reverence or fear, but out of familiarity because we know them and are known of them. So it should be with God!

I also find that people have turned the so-called seven names or titles of God into doctrine. They are as follows:

- YHWH-Yireh — "The Lord will provide" ([Genesis 22:13-14](#))
- YHWH-Rapha — "The Lord that healeth" ([Exodus 15:26](#))
- YHWH-Nissi — "The Lord our Banner" ([Exodus 17:8-15](#))
- YHWH-Shalom — "The Lord our Peace" ([Judges 6:24](#))
- YHWH-Ra-ah — "The Lord my Shepherd" ([Psalm 23:1](#))
- YHWH-Tsidkenu — "The Lord our Righteousness" ([Jeremiah 23:6](#))
- YHWH-Shammah — "The Lord is present" ([Ezekiel 48:35](#))

These seven names or titles of God are simply the revealed attributes of God; qualities that are characteristic of Him. They highlight and bring to remembrance the things He has done for us. God does not have to be addressed by any of these so-called titles or names in order for you to be heard by Him. The most intimate and effective title to use when calling on God is our Father!

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