**Yahweh or Jesus: What is God's Name?**

by
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In the OT God declared that His name was YHWH (Exodus 6:3; 20:7; see also 3:14). Scholars believe that "YHWH," or "Yahweh" is the third person singular form of the ancient Hebrew verb, "haya," meaning "to be." The basic thrust of this verb describes the state of existence. As the third person form of *haya*, Yahweh literally means "He is," or "He exists." It is a description of who God is. He is the self-existing one.

To understand the import of this we must understand the nature of Hebrew names. Hebrew names are not simply nominal devices used to identify one person from another as they are in the English language; they are actually sentences in themselves. It is similar to how the Indians named their children "rising sun" or "running bear." These were not quite complete sentences, but they were descriptions (partial sentences). God's name, YHWH, is a full sentence. It just so happens to be the shortest sentence in any language--"I am."[1](http://www.onenesspentecostal.com/yahorjesus.htm#foot1)

Has YHWH always been God's name? While it is possible, it is unlikely. God existed long before the Hebrew language, so it would seem unlikely that God has always had a Hebrew name. It must be remembered that God did not reveal a name to the Hebrew people that they were unfamiliar with; God revealed Himself to the Hebrew people using existing Hebrew vocabulary (*haya*) to express to His chosen people who "He is" (pun intended). It was a word/sentence they were familiar with because it already existed in their language before God declared it to be His name.

I am persuaded that God said His name was YHWH only because He was speaking to Hebrew people. If God would have revealed Himself to English speaking people He would not have said His name was "YHWH," but rather "I am,"[2](http://www.onenesspentecostal.com/yahorjesus.htm#foot2) because the Hebrew "YHWH" and the English "I am" are the same verb. The difference is not in the meaning, but in the language through which the meaning ("I am") is conveyed. The name *YHWH* does not "tag" God for identity purposes (for God does not need a name), but rather describes to us who God is. God was not eternally called "YHWH." He was simply Himself, the self-existing one.

I am further persuaded that the name God revealed to the Hebrews was for the sake of revealing something about Himself and His nature to man. He is the "I am," the "existing one." It is for this reason that it is in vain when people make a big ordeal over the manner in which we should pronounce God's name. Some go so far as to say that if you do not pronounce God's name correctly you cannot be saved. While this is not to say that God's name is unimportant, it is to say that His name describes who He is, and discovering who God is takes precedent over the exact pronunciation of the words used to describe Him. When God communicated His name to the Hebrews it was not so they could know what to call Him, or how to pronounce His name properly, but to reveal something about Himself to them.

*Jesus vs. Yahweh?*

Many Oneness believers will contend that God's name is not YHWH, but Jesus. While I do not disagree that Jesus is God's name, the problem with such a statement is rooted in the fact that it sets up a false dichotomy between "YHWH" and "Jesus," forcing us to decide between the two. No choice needs to be made because in actuality they are both the same name, but with one of the names being an expanded form of the other, describing what God does. It could be said that God's name is Jesus only because His name is YHWH. While that may sound contradictory at first, let me explain.

In Hebrew Jesus' name is spelled as "Yeshua." The "Ye" in Yeshua is the abbreviated form of YHWH. "Shua" is from the Hebrew word for salvation, *yasha*. Jesus' name literally means "YHWH is salvation." The name "Jesus," then, actually contains the name "YHWH" in abbreviated form. While YHWH simply describes who God is, when it is combined with a verb it describes what God does. The name "Jesus" describes the fact that YHWH has become salvation. Who is Christ? He is YHWH, saving His people from their sins. If YHWH is not God's name, then Jesus' name becomes meaningless. To deny that God's name is YHWH is to ultimately deny the name of Jesus.

We should pick up on the fact that God is never referred to as "Yeshua" (Jesus) in the OT. He is always referred to as YHWH. If God's name has always been Jesus (as some claim) it would seem strange that He never referred to Himself as such, nor was He ever called that until the NT. It might be counter-argued that while God was called YHWH in the OT, He is never called by such in the NT. But is God called YHWH in the NT? Yes, in its expanded form as "Jesus," meaning "YHWH is salvation." The name "Jesus," found exclusively in the NT, is a continuation of the revealed name of God found throughout the OT. "Jesus" is not a new name. The name of Jesus encompasses the fullness of God's revelation of Himself to man--as Savior. The name "Jesus" is so important to us because it is an expanded form of the same divine name revealed in the OT. It is not a different name. It is only greater in that it more fully expresses who God is to us--Savior. Truly God's name is Jesus, because God's name is YHWH. We confess that God's name is YHWH every time we confess Him as Jesus.

Footnotes

1. When God told Moses "I am that I am," that is the first person singular form of haya, "ehyeh." It may be said that from God's perspective He is "I am," but from our perspective "He is."
2. Technically it would be "He is" because that is the English equivalent to "YHWH," but as noted in the previous foot "I am" is the first person form of the same Hebrew word. Since I am specifically discussing what God would say His name is, I used the first person form "I am" rather than the third person form "He is."

**God's Name Was Not Secret**

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**Question:**

Praise the Lord! Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ! I have heard some Oneness Pentecostals teach that the patriarchs of the OT did not know a name for God (Jacob and Manoah, both asked but were told it was a secret). His name would only be declared later. Jesus declared that He had come in his Father's name. YHWH is Jesus. Please respond with more information on this marvelous subject.

 **Answer:**

I have heard this teaching before from other preachers. It is a popular belief, but one that is not faithful to the Biblical record. God had declared His name in the OT. His name was and is YHWH (Yahweh). This name was revealed to Abraham (Genesis 12:8; Genesis 22:14), Sarah (Genesis 16:11), Isaac (Genesis 26:25), Moses (Exodus 3:15; 15:3; Deuteronomy 28:58), and countless others by God, who declared that it was indeed His name. God even testified that Yahweh was His name (Exodus 6:3; 20:7). God identified His name to Moses as "I AM" (Exodus 3:14). This Hebrew word is *ehyeh* which is the first-person singular form of the Hebrew word *hayah*, the Hebrew eqivalent of the English verb of being (is/am/are). "Yahweh" is also derived from *hayah*, but is the third-person singular form, meaning something akin to "he is." The difference between "I AM" and "Yahweh" is not a difference in name, but a difference in perspective (first-person or third). From God’s perspective He is "I am;" from our perspective He is the "He is." Either way, this is the revealed name of God. Jesus’ name is Yeshua, which is a compound of two Hebrew words: *Ya* (an abbreviation for Yahweh) and *shuwah* (salvation). It basically means "Yahweh is salvation," or "Yahweh has become salvation." It is a compound form of Yahweh. If we deny that God’s truly revealed His name to be Yahweh, then we are also denying that Jesus’ name is the name of God because Jesus’ name is a compound form of Yahweh. The name Jesus, then, is not a new name for God, but describes a certain quality about God. It is descriptive about God’s person and activity. Christ was the saving God. It is not a matter of God not revealing His name in the OT, but that the ultimate expression of God’s name is found in Jesus, because Jesus is Yahweh who saves.

The Manoah episode (Judges 13) does not teach what some try to make it teach. The text does not say that it was the LORD who was speaking to Manoah, but rather the Angel of the LORD. Although there is some debate as to the identity of the angel (whether He is a theophany of God or a true angel), it cannot be demonstrated Biblically that the Angel is a theophany. Seeing that this text is questionable at best, it is not wise to base a doctrine off of this episode. Since it does seem that this was a genuine angel who is representing Yahweh, Manoah was asking for the angel’s name, not the name of God (Judges 13:17-18). The context of this story gives us every reason to believe that Manoah and his wife believed the angel to be an angel, not God Himself. Manoah’s comment that they had seen God need not indicate that he believed the angel was God Himself, seeing that the Hebrew word for God (elohim) is also used of angels (Psalm 8:5).

The same situation applies to Jacob’s account of wrestling with the angel. The account even calls the angel a *man* (Genesis 32:24). Hosea, referring to this episode said that Jacob wrestled with an angel, not God (Hosea 12:4).

Concerning Jesus’ statement that He had come in His Father’s name (John 5:43), we should not understand this to mean that He came *with* His Father’s name. Although this may be true, that was not Jesus’ point. In order to understand the point Jesus was making we must understand the Biblical concept and significance of "names." To the Biblical authors one’s name is tantamount to their person, worth, authority, or presence. Jesus’ point was that He had come in His Father’s person. Jesus was the Father’s representative who bore His Father’s authority. I would suggest reading my paper titled [The Biblical Significance of Names](http://www.onenesspentecostal.com/names.htm) for further clarity on this topic.

**Question:**

Thanks for your reply. It appears to me that the name Jehovah and Yahweh are man made fabricated names. I understand YHWH are hebrew consonants that they are expressed as "ehyeh asher ehyeh" or "I am that I am" or "I am that I will be." The literal translation for YHWH is "WAS, IS, SHALL BE." In Exodus 3:14,15 God said that YHWH was His name forever. Word studies from Strong's Dictionary of Bible Words, from Vine's, from Wilson's Bible Word Dictionary, and many other sources interpret the word "name" as in "my name for ever" to mean "identity" The Tetragrammaton was not given as a proper name, but as a statement of fact: I AM THAT I AM (YHWH). Concerning Jacob wrestling with the Angel of the Lord, Jacob said himself "he wrestled with God face to face, and my life is preserved" Solomon the wisest man on earth asked "What is his name and what is his son's name if thou canst tell?" Psalm 22:22 "I will declare thy name unto my brethren....." Prophecy said His name would be declared or made known by the Messiah. The name he declared was JESUS, a name above every name according to the word.

**Answer:**

I understand what you are saying, but if YHWH is not God's name, then neither is "Jesus," which is only a compound form of the name YHWH. I agree that YHWH means "He is," but Jesus by extension only means "He is salvation." If we say that Yahweh is not a name, then neither is Jesus; it is only a description. Such an opinion is not consistent with the nature of Hebrew names. Hebrew names are often descriptions. Jacob means "supplanter" or "deceiver." Israel means "he contends with God." Nabal means "fool." Such is the nature of Hebrew names. One's name was often a complete sentence, such as in the case of YHWH and Israel.

When the Scripture says that the name of Jesus is above every name, it is not saying that the actual spelling of a nominal designation--JESUS--is the best name in the world. Jesus was a common name. What it means is that the person, Jesus Christ of Nazareth, is the most exalted person. Again, I refer you to my paper on the Biblical concept of "name."

**Is the Name of the Messiah "Yeshua?"**

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**Question:**

I think that all can agree that there is only one name that causes salvation, which causes us to be free. Acts 4:12 says, "Neither is their salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Peter did not say that the English word "Jesus" was the name.

In the front of most bibles it says something to the effect of: "Translated Out of the Original tongues and with Previous Translations Diligently compared and Revised." This means that the sounds have changes but the meaning have stayed the same. The Messiah’s name is a perfect sound and if you change the sound, you have changed the name (Acts 3:16). You cannot separate a man from his language. Exodus 3:18 tells us that God is the God of the Hebrews. The Messiah even confessed his own name in Hebrew according to Acts:26:14-15. **In Zephaniah.3:9 he told us that he will return us to a pure language that all may worship him in one consent.(Hebrew language-for this is the language he named himself in.)**

The English name for the Messiah has even changed over the years. The Oxford Dictionary states that:

In the 1400's (Old English)=His name was Healand\*

In the 1500's (Middle English)=His name was Iefus\*

In the 1600's (Modern English)=His name was Jesus\*

Furthermore the letter J did not come into existence until late in the 1500's and did not become popular until the 1600's. Therefore, any name beginning with the letter J including the name of Jesus is only about 400 years old.

The name "Jesus" is an ENGLISH, not an APOSTOLIC name! I can also assure you that the Hebrew name "Yeshua" is not the name of the Messiah. Although this name for the Messiah is Hebrew, it is modern Hebrew .This is not the Paleo-Hebraic form (ancient Hebrew). "Yeshua" is an extraction form his primitive name.

**Answer:**

It goes without saying that Acts 4:11 (the antecedent to the pronouns in v. 12) does not read the English name "Jesus" in the original Greek manuscripts. The English language did not yet exist. It is true that Peter did not say "Jesus" was the Messiah’s name, but neither did He say that His name was the Paleo-Hebraic spelling/pronunciation of the modern *Yeshua*. Peter said His name was *Iesous*, the Greek name for Jesus.

It was also noted that all English Bibles are translations from the original tongues. This is most assuredly true, but it needs to be made clear that there are two primary languages in which the Bible was inspired, not one (with the exception of some sections in the OT that were written in Aramaic, thus making three). Not only was the Bible written in Hebrew (OT), but also Greek (NT). The Messiah, and thus the name of the Messiah, appears in the NT, not in the OT. Every time it appears it is written in Greek, not Hebrew. This is a very significant point. Why insist on calling the Messiah by His Hebrew name when the Messiah is never called by His Hebrew name in the inspired Scripture? The only way to get around this is to deny that the NT was written in Greek, but in Hebrew. Many have suggested such a thing, but unfortunately there is no convincing evidence to substantiate the claim.

It was then said concerning the English translations that the sounds of the original languages were changed, but the meaning did not. If sounds do not change the meaning of words, then what is the fuss over how to pronounce the Messiah’s name in Hebrew? As long as the meaning is conveyed, the message is received, and is valuable. The only reason one would need to stress a certain pronunciation of a name is if by failing to do so, the meaning and identity of the one behind the name, was altered or lost. This is not true, however, with the English name for the Messiah, Jesus. Whether I say "Jesus," "Yeshua," or "Iesous," it is clear that one person is being referred to, i.e. Jesus Christ. There is no loss in meaning.

It was noted that the English language has pronounced the Messiah’s name differently since the 1400’s. It was also pointed out "the letter J did not come into existence until late in the 1500's and did not become popular until the 1600's. Therefore, any name beginning with the letter J including the name of Jesus is only about 400 years old. The name "Jesus" is an ENGLISH, not an APOSTOLIC name!" To this I agree. "Jesus" is the result of the evolving English language. The fact that the English language has developed and changed over the years is not surprising, nor is it bad. The fact that the English way of saying the Messiah’s name has changed is to be expected. All languages change. It is to this fact that I want to center our attention.

Without exception, all languages evolve over time. The previous layout of the way in which the English language has changed the spelling of the English name for the Messiah since the 1400’s demonstrates this very fact. James Barr, a leading philologist, claims that most languages lose/change 25% of their content/form every 400 years (*The Philology of the Old Testament*). Greek and Hebrew are no exception.. The way in which Hebrew words were written and pronounced changed over the centuries. The early Hebrew alphabet (Paleo-Hebrew) looked more like the other Semitic languages which evolved around the same time (Phoenician and Ugaritic). Over time it added new letters, dropped other letters, and changed the appearance of most others. This means there is no universal, non-changing spelling of Hebrew that we can be sure of. How are we to spell the Messiah’s name if it changed over the centuries as the language changed?

Concerning vocalization, it is also known that there were several different dialects of Hebrew. There is even an older grammar of the Hebrew language which existed in Moses’ day, which was revised around 1350 B.C. We know that the Pentateuch had to have had its grammar revised to fit the new form because the grammar of OT is more or less uniform. The Pentateuch, if it had not been edited to match the newer grammar, would be different than that of the rest of the OT, but it is not. Later scribes updated the text to reflect the newer grammar of their day.

The Greek language is no different. There are two major forms of Greek: Classical Greek, and Koine (common Greek). The Classical Greek way of spelling and speaking eventually began to be replaced by a less sophisticated form. Some of the letters dropped out, certain cases and tenses changed function or dropped out of use altogether. This was primarily due to the rapid spread of the Greek language with the conquest of Alexander the Great. In his quest to spread the Greek culture throughout the world, he taught Greek to those he conquered. Seeing that it was not their native tongue, and considering the vast amount of people from diverse areas that were speaking the language, many regional differences began to develop in the language. Certain regions spelled and spoke Greek in certain nuanced ways that other regions did not. As a result Classical Greek changed dramatically. This same phenomenon can be seen in the United States today. The different regions of the U.S. speak differently. Each region, isolated from the others, developed its own unique "brand" of English.

The point of all of that was to say this: Even if we are to call Jesus by His Hebrew name, how are we to know we are pronouncing it properly? Who even says it has to be the Paleo-Hebraic pronunciation? Why can’t it be a later form? Regardless of whether we knew which period of Hebrew was the standard period to know the "true" way of saying the name of the Messiah, we can never know if we are saying it right. If we cannot say "**Jesus"** because that is not the Messiah’s name, then neither should we pronounce the Paleo-Hebraic form of ***Yeshua,***or any other form because we have no way of knowing whether we are saying it properly.

**It was said that "if you change the sound, you have changed the name."** If this is true, then every Hebrew person after 2000 B.C. changed the name of the Messiah. If one’s name is Jose, and someone pronounces it as "Josie" instead of "Hosay" as it should be, one would not consider that person to be saying their name. It may sound similar, but it’s not your name. Nobody today knows how exactly how we are to pronounce the Hebrew name for Jesus, **YHS**'. The oldest form we have of the Messiah's Hebrew name appears in Exodus 17:9 and Numbers 13:16. It was pronounced as ***Yehoshua*.** During the exilic period, however, it was shorted to *Yeshua*. The last letter of the Messiah’s Hebrew name is *ayin*. This letter is virtually unpronounceable by English speakers, and even to many modern Hebrews. If most of the world cannot make their throat utter this deep gutteral, including the native speakers themselves, then what are we to do? Even if one knew the correct way to say the name of the Messiah, they may not be physically able to utter it (Daniel Segraves, *The Messiah's Name: Jesus, not Yahshua*, Kearney, NE: Morris Publishing, 1996).

No one knows exactly how ancient Hebrew was pronounced. Hebrew is a consonantal language, having no vowels. It was not until the Masoretes in the 6th through the 10th centuries that we find vowel points added to the Hebrew language. The Masoretes inserted small dots and dashes throughout the consonantal text to preserve the oral tradition of the vowels used to pronounce the words, and the accents of the words. The closest idea, then, of how to pronounce Hebrew comes from those who lived some 2300 after the earliest Hebrew Scriptures, and some 1300 years after the latest Hebrew writings. Although they might have been fairly accurate, there can be no doubt that their vocalization was not that of the Paleo-Hebraic, or even the later Hebrew dialects up to the time of Christ.

Concerning **Acts 4:12,** it was said that **"there is only one name that causes salvation, which causes us to be free."** This statement was in reference to Acts 4:12 which states that there is no salvation in any other name than that of Jesus (name supplied from context). This comment demonstrates a misunderstanding of this verse. **What makes salvation effective, or prayer effective, is not the pronunciation of the Messiah’s name, but faith in the Messiah**. His name is not mystical. There is nothing about His name that has the ability to save in and of itself. This is a misunderstanding of the ancients’ concept of a name. To a Jew, one’s name signifies their person, worth, character, reputation, or authority. When the Scripture says that the "name of the Lord is a strong tower" it does not mean that there is a tower shaped in the letters of Lord that the righteous run into, but that the **person of YHWH** is like a strong tower wherein lies safety. The focus is on the person, not the name. Another example is found in Revelation where John said that there were "a few names in Sardis who have not defiled their clothes" (Revelation 3:4). John clearly had people in mind, not names. Because a person’s name does represent them, however, when one uses that name, they carry the person’s authority, character, and reputation along with it. The focus must always be seen on the person, and not the actual pronunciation of the name. The meaning of Acts 4:12 is that there is no other *person* in whom men can find salvation other than Jesus Christ.

There is a fundamental assumption here that we *must* place a great emphasis on the way the Messiah’s name is spoken. I question this assumption. Why must we place such an emphasis on the pronunciation of the Messiah’s name in a certain language? Upon what basis is this founded? Why should we stress something that even God Himself did not stress? There is no place in the Bible where God stressed that His name, or the name of the Messiah must be pronounced in a certain way. **He only declared that His name was YHWH (*Yahweh*).** Even this is no surprise. YHWH is the third person singular form, most likely coming from the old Hebrew word *hayah*, which has the meaning of "to be." YHWH is merely the third personal singular form of this word meaning "He is." The name for God was not a special name that was not part of the Hebrew vocabulary, but was actually one of the words they were already familiar with. In other words, God declared who He was through the use of the Hebrew language. He was trying to portray who He was, i.e. the "self-existing one." God only said "YHWH" because He was speaking to the Hebrews. There is nothing in the OT that would lead us to believe that if God would have spoken to any other non-Hebrew, that He still would have said YHWH was His name. God’s name is not language-specific, nor is it dependent on the right pronunciation

If pronunciation of the Messiah’s name is so important, then must we all learn Hebrew or Greek in order to be able to know God? Surely this is not the case. If we do not have to know the original languages in order to relate to, and have a saving relationship with God, then why is it necessary to know and pronounce the Hebrew name of the Messiah? If the receptor language of the translation of the Scriptures is adequate to bring salvation to those who hear it, how can it be that the way the receptor language transliterates and pronounces the name of the Messiah is not adequate? If we must know one Hebrew name for our references to God to be valid, then why stop there. Why not demand that everyone learn Hebrew, since this is being purported as *the inspired* language?

When we look at the historical evidence, we see that demanding pronunciation of the Messiah’s name in one specific language is a non-issue, for we know that the Messiah’s name, even in His own day, was pronounced different ways, none of which included the Paleo-Hebraic form. (What follows is largely taken from Segraves, *The Messiah's Name*) We know from historical evidence that Palestinian Jews in the time of Jesus commonly spoke Aramaic. The Gospels give evidence to the fact that Jesus also spoke in Aramaic by leaving certain of His words untranslated from Aramaic (Mark 5:41; 7:34). In Aramaic, Jesus’ name would have been pronounced *Yesu* by the Galileans (including Jesus’ Himself), and as *Yeshu* in southern Israel, because they were typically able to pronounce the "sh" sound of the Hebrew letter *shin*, whereas northern Israelites could not (See Judges 12:5-6).

In addition to Aramaic, however, most Jews spoke, or were at least familiar with Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. All of these languages were spoken in the region of Judea because it was a popular trading route. When interacting with various individuals, the Messiah would have heard His name pronounced three or four different ways.

That Jesus’ name was pronounced by the Greeks as *Iesous* almost goes without saying. The Greek language was very common in Israel. It was, after all, the official language of the Empire. All of the coins in Israel had Greek writing on them, and even a synagogue has been found with Greek writing inscribed on it. Of 168 inscriptions found in Palestine, archeologists found that 114 of them were written exclusively in Greek. Even Jewish stone coffins (ossuaries) had Greek inscriptions on them. Surely Jesus knew Greek, and spoke it when interacting with Greeks. When Jesus spoke to Pilate (which most definitely spoke Greek) at His trial, there is no evidence that a translator was needed.

Most of the quotations in the NT from the OT are not direct translations from the Hebrew Scriptures, but quotes from the Septuagint (LXX) translation of the OT. Even Jesus quoted from the LXX. Just one example to prove this is Jesus’ quotation of the OT in Matthew 15:8-9. Had He been quoting the Hebrew Scriptures the force of His argument would not stand (In the Hebrew it says that the *fear* of God was taught by the commands of men, whereas the LXX says that men are teaching the commands and *doctrines* of men). He was basing His argument from the LXX translation, which was commonly used by the Jews in the first century. The NT writers not only had a knowledge of Greek, but wrote all of the NT books exclusively in Greek.

The reason Greeks (among many others in the Empire whose primary language was Greek) would call Jesus *Iesous* was because this was the way that the Hebrew *Yeshua* or the Aramaic *Yesu* would have sounded to the Greeks. They did not have a "y" sound in their alphabet for the Hebrew letter *yod*, so began Jesus’ name with a long "e" sound. Neither did they have a letter for the "sh" sound of the Hebrew letter *shin*, so made the last syllable begin with an "s" sound. For the ending of this syllable the Greeks simply added another "s" (*sigma*), which was a common addition to the end of masculine names in the nominative case. *Iesous* was a direct transliteration from Hebrew to Greek.

This is important for two reasons. First, it demonstrates that Jesus would have been called by other names besides *Yeshua* in His lifetime. Even those who would have said His Hebrew name would not have pronounced it in its Paleo-Hebraic form. In the NT we do not find Jesus demanding that anyone call Him by His Hebrew name. Secondly, even Hebrew people who wrote inspired Scripture in Greek used the Greek transliteration of Jesus’ Hebrew name. The NT uses the Greek name *Iesous* for the Messiah over 1000 times. They did not seem to be concerned about writing it in its Hebrew form. Of the 5700+ Greek manuscripts of the NT extant today, not one of them contains the Hebrew name of the Messiah. Some of these manuscripts even date as far back as the early second century. Every manuscript reads *Iesous*.

The fact that Jesus commanded His disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature (Matthew 28:19-20) would necessitate that the gospel be translated into the language of the nations. We have no reason to believe his included every part of the gospel except the name of the Messiah. The Apostles obviously did not understand that to be the case, because all of their writings use the Greek form of the Messiah’s name.

Concerning the Scriptures referenced, these do not prove the point they are said to prove. that **Zephaniah 3:9 only indicates other nations will pray to YHWH.** There is a vast difference in saying they will pray to YHWH (referring to His person), and saying they will pronounce His name in Hebrew. **A person is not the same as his language**. I would be no different if I spoke French as my native tongue, than if I spoke English. My person is the same. The metaphysical reality of "myself" remains unchanged. To define a person in terms of his language is illogical. In order to substantiate this claim it would have to be demonstrated how the pronunciation of someone’s name, or the use of a certain language, can radically change or alter one’s existence.

**Exodus 3:18 does not say God is the God of the Hebrews. It merely states that He is against anybody who is against Israel. God favored Israel, and was their God, but this does not mean that He is *only* the God of the Hebrews.** He was the God of Melchisedec, who was not a Hebrew. He was the God of Job, who was not a Hebrew. He was the God of many people before the Hebrew people ever came into existence. Many Gentiles proselytized to Judaism and YHWH became their God, yet they were not Hebrew. The church today consists primarily of non-Hebrew people. **God is not just the God of the Hebrews. He is the God of all who will put their faith in Him, and keep His law, Gentiles included (II Corinthians 6:16).**

Concerning Acts 26:14-15, the meaning of this text has been misunderstood, and the implications have been exaggerated. Paul said God spoke to him in the "Hebrew tongue," but this does not mean the Hebrew language. The Greek phrase is "*hebraidi dialekto*," meaning the Hebrew dialect, referring to the particular form of Hebrew spoken by Hebrew people in Palestine. Most modern translators understand this to be referring to the Aramaic language. Even if it does mean the Hebrew language, and not Aramaic, all this demonstrates is that God was speaking to Paul in his native tongue. It was said, "And he [Messiah] even confessed his own name in Hebrew…." Even if it was Hebrew which the Messiah spoke to Paul in, and identified Himself by His Hebrew name, it still stands that Luke used the Greek equivalent *Iesous* when relating the story. He was not concerned with inserting the Hebrew form into his text.

Finally, it was stated, "I can also assure you that the Hebrew name 'Yeshua' is not the name of the Messiah. Although this name for the Messiah is Hebrew, it is modern Hebrew. This is not the Paleo-Hebraic form (ancient Hebrew). 'Yeshua' is an extraction form his primitive name." I agree that "Yeshua" is not the Paleo-Hebraic word for the Messiah, but this does not make it wrong. Again, why must the older form of the name be *the* name we pronounce? In the end, however, we are left with no name for the Messiah. If it has to be the Hebrew name, and the Paleo-Hebraic form of that name at that, and we cannot be certain on how we are to pronounce that form, we are left with no certainty as to the Messiah’s name.

Yeshua is the Messiah's name in Hebrew, and as such, we do not reject to calling Him by this name. We should refuse the doctrine, however, that says "Jesus" is a corruption of the Messiah's name, and is not valid for believers. When we are told that we cannot legitimately pronounce, be baptized in, or pray in the name "Jesus," the advocacy of calling the Messiah "Yeshua" becomes a dangerous doctrine indeed.

**Yahweh, Jehovah, or Jesus?**

by
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**Question:**

Bro Dulle, I was wondering if you could help me to understand why the name "Yahweh" is not found in our King James Version. It seems to me that if His name is Yahweh we should call Him by His correct name. Also, in the New Testament, His name is Jesus. There is no "J" sound in the Hebrew alphabet. Please be so kind and enlighten me on the reason why we don't call Him by His name Yahweh. I want to know him by His name—Yehoshuah or Jesus?

**Answer:**

Thank you for visiting our site. Let me try to answer your question.. Yahweh is not written in the KJV for the same reason that Iesous is not found in the KJV—the translators used the Anglicized pronunciation of the Hebrew and Greek names. I don’t have a problem with pronouncing the Hebrew and Greek names in an Anglicized way, but the name "Jehovah" is not even an Anglicized pronunciation of God’s name in the OT. It arose from a misreading of the OT name of God by medieval theologians. I detail the way in which this shift from Yahweh to Jehovah occurred in my article titled "[Is Jehovah the Name of God](http://www.onenesspentecostal.com/jehovah.htm)." Because Jehovah is not even close to the Hebrew name for God, I do prefer to stay away from any claim that God’s name is Jehovah. Yahweh is a much closer rendering of the OT name.

Regarding Jesus, it is not a matter of Yehoshuah or Jesus. It is a matter of Iesous or Jesus. Yehoshuah is Hebrew, but the NT is written in Greek, and thus the Hebrew name of Jesus does not appear. Jesus is a transliteration directly from the Greek word *Iesous*. Greek does not have the "J" sound, but English does. Before the late seventeenth-century the name of Jesus was written as "Iesus" and pronounced with a "Y" sound as in Greek. The original KJV of 1611 actually has it written this way.. But in the late seventeenth-century English speakers began pronouncing words that began with the letter "I" with a "J" sound. In time there was a hook added at the bottom of the letter I to indicate that the "J" sound should be made even though it was the letter "I." Over time the "J" sound took on a life of its own and became part of our alphabet as a separate letter from the "I," and was used in other places than just the beginning of words. This is how we went from saying "Iesous" to "Jesus." The NT does not spell Jesus’ name as "Yehoshuah" because the NT was written in Greek, not Hebrew, and that spelling is Hebrew. There are some people who insist that we must pronounce Jesus’ name according to the Hebrew name, but I believe that such a stance is gravely in error. See my article titled "[Is the Name of the Messiah Yeshua?](http://www.onenesspentecostal.com/yeshua.htm)" to see why I believe this is so.

**Is "Jehovah" the Name of God?**

by
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There is a common belief in modern Christendom that the divine name of God in the OT is "Jehovah." The most influential group advocating this pronunciation of God's name today is the Jehovah's Witnesses. This study is intended to demonstrate that the name "Jehovah" is not, and never was the name of God in the OT, but is an accidental, fabricated pronunciation of the divine name. Those who came up with this spelling/pronunciation did so from a misunderstanding of the Hebrew tetragrammaton "YHWH," as it appears in the OT text. The rendering of YHWH as "Yahweh" is much closer to the actual Hebrew name of God.

The way in which God’s name came to be spelled and pronounced as "Jehovah" is detailed with a lot of history and study of phonetics, but a few comments are in order here to help make some sense of the issue.

The Hebrew tetragrammaton, YHWH, is the way the name of God appears in the Hebrew Bible. The Hebrew language is a consonantal language, possessing no vowels. Vowels were pronounced, but not written. They were transmitted orally from generation to generation. This may like a difficult system, and quite strange to us, but it is not that difficult. Just as you can decipher that THS S TH WY TH HBRW PPL WRT BCK THN, means "this is the way Hebrew people wrote back then," so could they easily pronounce words without vowels.

By about 200 B.C., after the time of the Exile, and due to superstition, Jews would no longer pronounce God’s name for fear that they would take it in vain by not saying it properly. Instead of pronouncing the tetragrammaton, they would say *Adonai*, which is the Hebrew word meaning *Lord*. Because of this superstition, no one today knows exactly how it was pronounced. This was also true of the Masoretic scribes who copied the Hebrew Scriptures. When the Masoretic scribes, in the 9th to 10th ceturies, invented a system of vowels to preserve the pronunciation of the Hebrew Bible, they also inserted some vowels into the tetragrammaton. Because they too, did not know exactly how to pronounce God’s name, and did not believe one should attempt to, they did not try to insert the correct vowels into the tetragrammaton. Instead, they inserted the vowels from the Hebrew word *Adonai*, which are the sounds of the short *a*, long *o*, and another *a* with the sound of the word *awesome*. The insertions of these vowels were not for the purpose of pronunciation, but to remind the reader to say *Adonai* when they came to God’s name instead of pronouncing God’s name. If it was to be spelled out, however, it would read "Yehowah" (the vocalic change to the first vowel is due to the fact that *yod*, the first letter of the tetragrammaton is a non-gutteral, and thus turns the *a* sound [compound shewa] to a shortened, short e sound [simple shewa]).

Later on, in the days of the Renaissance, people were discovering the ancient languages all over again. The Hebrew Scriptures were being learned and read. When people came to the tetragrammaton, they simply pronounced it with the inserted vowels, not realizing that the vowels did not belong to YHWH, but were intended as indicators to say *Adonai*. As a result, they pronounced God’s name as Yehowah.

The spelling of "Iehovah" entered the English language through William Tyndale’s translation of the Bible completed in 1537. He transliterated the tetragrammaton into the English language with the Masoretic vowel markings as had those in the Renaissance. The letter and sound of the English "J" was a later development of the English language, and so this spelling and pronunciation would not change to "Jehovah" until the late 17th century. Since this time many English speakers have pronounced God’s name as Jehovah.

So how exactly should we pronounce the Hebrew YHWH? Because of the fact that the vocalic tradition for the pronunciation of YHWH has not been preserved, we cannot be absolutely sure about its pronunciation. We can be fairly certain, however. Here is a brief examination of the divine name of God.

YHWH is the third person singular form, most likely coming from the Hebrew word *hayah*, which has the meaning of "to be." In Exodus 3:14, when Moses asked God for His name, God said His name was *ehyeh*. This is the first person form of *hayah*, meaning "I am." YHWH is the third person form meaning "He is."

The original pronunciation was probably YaHWeH. This seems to be the case by examining Jewish names. Many names contain part of the divine name, i.e. *yah*, and by examing the vowels that they used to construct their names with the divine abbreviation attached, we can get a feel for how YHWH was originally pronounced. We conclude from the examining names such as Joshua, Jehoshaphat, Elijah, and even the word hallelujah (hallel=praise; yah=Yahweh), that YH was pronounced as *yah*. We also have evidence that Yahweh is probably the correct pronunciation from examining the Greek’s tranliteration of the divine name as *iaoue* or *iabe*.

In conclusion, although it is not necessarily wrong to say God’s name as Jehovah, by no means can it be claimed that Jehovah is the name of God that has only been restored to us in these recent times. At best Jehovah can only be claimed to be an acceptable way of pronouncing God’s name in the English language, and at worst it could be said to be a phonetic corruption of God’s name. The probable pronunciation of God’s revealed name is Yahweh.