

What About The Tetragrammaton, Yahweh and Jehovah

God spoke to me (a Oneness) in the Spring of 1986. If He had not spoken to me I would not have written books regarding the One Most High God and His glory, for until that time I had no biblical understanding of this awesome truth. Since then I have written four books on this subject, sufficient proof that God did say to me, ***“I am going to reveal myself to you in My word, and you will write books about My Glory.”*** When God spoke to me, in a period of time that covered about six weeks, He used several names to identify Himself. He said, ***“Lord,” “the Lord God,” “the Lord God of the mighty host,” “the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,”*** and ***“Elohim.”*** He also instructed me to call Him ***“Father”*** while speaking to Him in prayer. Therefore, I know when I use these names of God when I speak ***to*** Him or ***about*** Him, I am on safe and biblical ground. I do not know that for sure should I choose to use Yahweh, Jehovah, etc.

Who told us that God’s name is Yahweh or Jehovah? These names were not given by God, but are names that **men made up** by adding vowels to the Tetragrammaton. In fact the name “Jehovah” did not come into existence until about 1520 A.D. These **made-up** names are **corruptions** which are not accepted by most Jews, and that might in fact be displeasing to God. We are told that to any person, their name is the most important word in their language. A man recently wrote me and spelled my name as “Hempilles.” I was not offended but neither did I look upon it with favor. Likewise, who authorized men to create these names for God and then try to persuade or compel others to use them?

Regarding the Tetragrammaton, this is my answer. I treat it with much respect as it is the ancient Hebrew name for God, but who on this planet knows for sure how to write it, and no one knows how to pronounce it. I see it written by scholars variously as JHVH, IHVH, JHWH, YHVH and YHWH. *Webster’s New World College Dictionary* says ***“the modern reconstructions are Yahweh, Jehovah, etc.”*** But there is nothing necessary or magical about pronouncing the name of God in Hebrew. If it were necessary for salvation or sanctification, we certainly would have had the Name phonetically represented in the New Testament. Friends of mine who are proficient in Hebrew and Greek, and whose scholarship I respect, tell me that in the New Testament, no Apostle is recorded as using the

Tetragrammaton or instructing others to use it. I know of no place in Scripture where Paul taught the Gentile churches to whom he ministered, the importance of calling God by this name, or taught them how to say it properly. It is my understanding that they spoke to God or about God in their own language. Did Paul address this usage with the Greeks on Mars Hill? Obviously not. One day God said to me, “*I am the **Lord God** and I will do according to my pleasure.*” Whether or not you have thought about it, God is the Father of languages [Genesis 11:6-9], and speaks perfect English!

Please allow me to speak from my heart as a very flawed and unworthy man, who stands ready to be corrected by Holy Scripture. It is a person’s own choice whether they call God “*Yahweh*,” (or is it Y-A-H-V-E-H, Y-A-H-U-W-E-H, Y-A-H-O-W-E-H or Y-A-H-O-W-A-H as I see it written by various scholars?) But with love and all due respect, I believe its use, rather than the name “*Lord God*,” can be a distraction to cause believers in the One True God, to appear even more strange to those we are trying to win to this desperately needed truth. Unless specifically instructed to do so by God, I will not do it!

Love in Christ Jesus,
Joel Hemphill

p.s. The following is the full quote from *Webster’s New World College Dictionary; Fourth Edition; 1999; p. 1481* regarding the Tetragrammaton.

“The four consonants of the ancient Hebrew name for God (variously transliterated JHVH, IHVH, JHWH, YHVH, YHWH), that was considered too sacred to be spoken aloud: the word ‘Adonai’ (Lord) is substituted for this name in utterance, and the vowels of ‘Adonai’ or ‘Elohim’ (God) are inserted in Hebrew texts, so that the modern reconstructions are Yahweh, Jehovah, etc.”