

# YAHWEH OR YAHVAH

By: Jerry Healan, Yahweh's Evangelical Assembly,  
A Branch of Messianic Assemblies of Yahweh 7<sup>th</sup> Day

*(This is a reprint of an letter article on the YEA Newsletter. The **Congregation of Yahweh in Yahshua Ha Mashiach –COYIYHM-** is sharing this article to all lovers of truth in the continuing desire to provide timely, well-researched and factual Scriptural Study. We wholeheartedly thank Elder Jerry Healan for this article.)*

We have received the following letter from an inmate who has presented a challenge concerning the possibility of using the term YAHVAH over YAHWEH. I am responding to his letter openly for others who ask certain similar questions.

**Dear Mr. Jerry Healan,**

Greetings in the name of awesome YAHVAH who manifested Himself in our Saviour YAHSHUA, HalleluYah!!!

I had written you before about the name "YAHWEH over YAHVAH." Please consider what I'm saying and ask yourself these questions. I understand your intelligence is far better than mine. Please help me by letting me hear your response to my outlook.

Now the **Webster's New World Dictionary**, Encyclopedia Edition, under the word "**Tetragrammaton**," states plainly that the name Yahweh is a modern reconstruction of the Name.

The **World Book Encyclopedia**, under the letter "**W**", we read: "W" is the twenty-third letter of our alphabet. Neither the ancient Semites nor the Greeks had this letter, since the sound of **w** did not occur in either language. The Romans did use this sound, but they used the letter **v** to represent the **w** sound in writing their language.

Under the letter U in **The World Book Encyclopedia, 1947 edition**, page 8241, we find "**U**". This is the twenty-first letter of our alphabet. It probably came from the Semitic letter **vav** from which the letters **F, V, W**, and **Y** also were taken. The **vav** was pronounced by the Semitic people like our **V**. The Greeks used this letter as a vowel and gave it a sound, which is not used in English speech. This sound is formed by beginning the sound of "u" ("oo" as in moon) and combining it with *E* as in me. When the Romans adopted the alphabet they gave this letter the form of the modern capital **V** and used it to represent two sounds. As a vowel **V** stood for the sound of "oo" as in moon, as a consonant it stood for the sound of "W" in wind.

Now we have three choices. We can use the letter *W* and follow Rome, or the letter *U* and follow the Greeks, or we can use the *V* and follow the Hebrew consonant **Vav** as YHVH.

Since the **American Heritage Dictionary** tells us the letter V is ancestral to the letters U, W, Y, and F, one should have no problem determining which is the oldest. Remember also, the progenitor of the Greeks was named Javan (Yavan), spelled with a "v" or Vav, not Waw. Also David and Nineveh, etc. All of these names pronounced, according to Strong's Concordance, with a V or Vav.

Since the Tetragrammaton is a four Hebrew consonant letters and since the most ancient Hebrew did not have vowels, the Name could not have been Yahweh. When you look up the Name under the erroneous title Lord in Strong's Concordance, it will take you to #3068. Here, you will find these four consonants yod, hey, vav, hey.

When you combine the two active verbs **HaYah** and **HaVah** together meaning "to be/to exist," you have **YaHVah**, the true Name of the Heavenly Father, self-existing Creator of Heaven and Earth. I look forward to hearing from you, what you think.

Respectfully,

**HWF**

Dear HWF,

Thank you for your interest in our work, and also for presenting that which you believe that you have proven as fact, from many of the worldly works.

You flatter me when you say that my intelligence is far greater than yours. Such cannot be the case as my own intelligence is nil, or next to nothing. But, as you are going to find out, our research is going to clash, and even though you may feel that you have put the monkey on my back, I am going to return it to yours, and you will have to make a decision.

Here is what **Webster's New World Dictionary**, Second College Edition has to say about the word "Tetragrammaton" – the four consonants of **JHVH, IHVH, JHWH, YHVH, YHWH** - considered too sacred to be spoken aloud, the word **Adonai** is substituted for this Name in utterance, and the vowels of **Adonai** or **Elohim** are inserted in Hebrew texts so that the modern reconstructions are Yahweh, Jehovah, etc.

Do you understand what etc. means? It means that the whole list of modern day pronunciations are included since they say that the name is too sacred to be spoken. That would include your preferred version --- **Yahvah**.

By the way, do you not see that the **W** and **V** are utilized by the scholars in the above renderings of the English versions of the Tetragrammaton?

But now we need to go a step further. You say that you are quoting from **The World Book Encyclopedia** of 1947 vintage. It just so happens that I have on hand **The World Book Encyclopedia** 1967 edition. Now, I am going to reveal to you what the 1967 edition has to say about the letters **W, U** and **V**.

"W - **w** is the 23<sup>rd</sup> letter of our alphabet. The letter developed from a symbol used by the Semites who once lived in Syria and Palestine. They named it **waw**, meaning *hook*, and adapted an Egyptian **hieroglyphic**, or picture symbol. The Romans, who took it from the Greeks, gave it a V shape. They first pronounced it as we pronounce **W**, but later pronounced it as **V**. During the 1000's, French scribes doubled the **V**, as **VV**, in order to write the Anglo-Saxon letter *wen*, for which they had no letter in their alphabet. The **VV** was also written in a rounded form as **UU**. It later came to be called "double U" in English. See Alphabet."

"U – **u** is the 21<sup>st</sup> letter of our alphabet. It came from the letter which the Semitic peoples of Syria and Palestine called **waw**. *Waw* was also the source of F, V, W, and Y. The word **waw** meant *hook*, and was represented by a symbol of a tenthook. The Romans, when they adopted the letter, dropped its bottom stroke and wrote it as a **V**. They used it for the vowel sound, **U**, and the consonant sound, **V**. About A.D. 900, people began to write *U* in the middle of a word, and *V* at the beginning. During the Renaissance, it became customary to use "**u**" as a vowel and "**v**" as a consonant. See Alphabet."

"V – **v** is the 22<sup>nd</sup> letter of our alphabet. It came from the letter used by the Semites, who once lived in Syria and Palestine. They called the letter **waw**, their word for *hook*. They wrote the letter with a symbol borrowed from the Egyptian **hieroglyphic**, or picture symbol. The Greeks borrowed the letter from the Phoenicians and gave it a Y-shape. The Romans, when they adopted it, dropped the vertical stroke. They used it for the vowel sound, "**u**", and the consonant sound, "**v**". About A.D. 900, people began to write "**v**" at the beginning and "**u**" in the middle. During the Renaissance, people began using "**v**" for the consonant and "**u**" for the vowel. But the change was not final for several hundred years. See Alphabet."

Now, brother, I am going to have to call your research into question. You had a 1947 version of **The World Book Encyclopedia**, and I have a 1967 version. My question is: Could information and things have changed so drastically in 20 years? I suppose it is possible, but my books say that the letters **U, V**, and **W ARE OF SEMITIC ORIGIN**, and that they were all known as **waw**.

Our information from the same encyclopedia, albeit 20 years difference, clashes! I would personally have to accept the 1967 version since the people who published the encyclopedia may have discovered discrepancies in what they first presented and changed it to reflect the truth of the matter.

The **Jewish Historian Josephus** says this about the mitre that the High Priest wore when he went into the holy of holies (*qodesh ha qodeshim*) on the Day of Atonement, "**A mitre also of fine linen encompassed his head, which was tied by a blue riband, about which there was another golden crown in which was engraved the sacred name of the Almighty: it consists of four vowels.**" (The Works of Josephus, Wars of the Jews Book V, Chapter V, p.556).

Here is what **Rabbi Arthur Green** admits in his book entitled **Seek My Face, Speak My Name**: "*I further betray my faith by the use of the English word "God," rooted as it is in **old Germanic paganism**. I struggle with ways to replace this term in English but come up empty-handed. By "God," of course, I mean **Y-H-W-H**, the One of all being. This name of God is the starting point of all Jewish theology. It is to be read as an impossible construction of the verb "to be." **HaYaH** – that which was, **HoWeH** – that which is, and **YiHYeH** – that which will be, are here all forced together in a grammatically impossible conflation. **Y-H-W-H** is a verb that has been artificially arrested in motion, and made to function as a noun. As soon as you try to grab hold of such a noun, it runs away from you and becomes a verb again. "Thought does not grasp you at all", as the wise have always known. **Y-H-W-H** as a noun can be the bearer of predicates, but those too become elusive as soon as the verbal quality of the divine Name reasserts itself. Try to say anything definitional about **Y-H-W-H** and it dashes off and becomes a verb again. This elusiveness is underscored by the fact that all the letters that make up this Name served in ancient Hebrew interchangeably as consonants and vowels. **Really they are mere vowels, mere breath**. There is nothing hard nor defined in their sound." (p. 18)*

Look at the combinations that you utilized **HaYah** and **HaVaH** compared with those that Brother Green utilized **HaYaH** – **HoWeH** – **YiHYeH**. To be sure, His Name means that He exists, but not just for the now only. Both past and future are also included.

The Hebrew word for "breath" is **ruach**. **Ruach** is also the word for "spirit."

Yahshua told the Samaritan woman, "*Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. Yahweh is Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.*" **John 4:22-24**.

There is more research that I am going to present here, but now I am putting the monkey back on your back because the Creator's Name is all vowels, which are breath (spirit), but **Yahvah** has the hard consonant V in it which is not a breath (ruach) sound.

Did you know that the **aleph, hey, waw, yod**, and **ayin** all serve as both consonants and vowels in Hebrew language, and that each letter can carry the sound of our **a, e, i, o, u** depending on the Hebrew word that they are in?...

You wrote, "Greetings in the Name of awesome Yahvah who manifested Himself in our Savior Yahshua. HalleluYah!!! In the Name Yahshua, there is a **waw/vav** which you say must be pronounced like a "v." So why didn't you say **Yavshua**?

The other Hebrew word that you utilized is **HalleluYah**. Why didn't you say **HallelvYah**? You went the way of the Greeks which you said we should leave behind.

You addressed the name David, which we pronounce it like **Day-vid** in English, but the Hebrew reveals that their rendering is **Daw-veed**... There are Semitics who pronounce David's name like **Daw-eed**, and also **Do-uwd**.

Yes, brother, there are **dialectic differences**, and we have to give way to those. We did have a sister from Yugoslavia who tried to say **Yahweh**, but in her dialect, the "w" sounded more like a "v" so it

always sounded like **Yahveh**. We didn't excoriate her because she couldn't easily say Yahweh. She was a very dear person.

The **waw** is very versatile. It depends on the word in which it appears as to whether it will sound like a "v", an "o", an "oo", an "u", an "a", an "i", etc...

The **waw** appears before many words as a conjunction and once again it depends upon the word and how it is utilized in the sentence as to whether it sounds like "ve," "va," "wa," "oo", or "u".

Therefore, brother, please don't be too condemning or demanding in your approach to Hebrew and especially the use of the true Names. We are all like little children and we are all trying to get it right, but I am sure that when the pure lip (language) is given as promised, we will then all have it right.

#### **ELDER HEALAN**

*(For the complete copy of this letter, you can find it on YEA NEWSLETTER, March-September 2011 issue, on pages 1, 4-6)*