

Objections to Jehovah

By Steve Combs

The following questions and objections to the teaching that the tetragrammaton is correctly pronounced Jehovah have been raised. My thoughts and answers are below.

I. Against the contention that the vowels of Adonai differ from Jehovah, video by Heisler:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=95lc_cRFS64

I have listened to the video.

1. One statement in the video was that the scribes did not point the name to be vocalized as Jehovah. I have before proved that they did indeed point it to be vocalized as Jehovah at times. Over 1000 manuscripts, including the Aleppo MS, vocalize it that way. Some of these MSS are dated prior to 900 AD.

2. No historical or linguistic evidence was given in the video that the scribes used the vowels of Adonai. There is only the dogmatic assertion that “this is what they did.” Although, they *may* have done that at times, it was not their typical method of hiding God’s name. I have shown this from the MSS themselves, and I have shown what it is that they actually did. The only historical evidence given in this video is that “everybody knows.”

3. The last two vowels in Adonai are the same as those in Jehovah. The first vowel is different. Adonai has a chateph patach, while Jehovah has a sheva. The chateph patach could not be used with the yod in Jehovah, because it can only appear with a guttural letter. The yod is not a guttural letter. However, that is not the point. Vowels are *sounds*. In any language, whatever letters or symbols are used for vowels only exist as representations of *sounds*. In Hebrew, the chateph patach represents a long -a- sound, and the sheva represents an -e- sound. So, the first vowels in the two words represent *different* vowel *sounds*, therefore they are not the same *vowel*. If the -a- sound in Adonai was to be used in Jehovah, the scribes could have used a patach, which is a short vowel with an -a- sound. They did not do this. The vowels are not the same. Therefore, the scribes did *not* use the vowels of Adonai.

4. Some people say the Yod cannot take an -a- sound and that is why it has a sheva. This is not true.

1 Samuel 29:6 uses the word יָשָׁר *Yashar*, thou hast been upright. The vowel under the yod is a qamets, a long -a- vowel, but the chateph patach is a short vowel. Is the yod ever used with a short -a- sound? Joshua 10:3 uses the word יַרְמֹות *Jarmuth* (name of a city). The vowel used with the yod is a patach, a short -a- vowel.

II. Why would Jehovah always get shortened to Yah instead of Yeh? (also noted in video above. FYI, someone suggested in response that JAH is a contraction from Jehovah using the first and last sounds. I don't know how we can go about settling that).

I disagree that Jah is short or a contraction for Jehovah. The key word is הָיָה *ha-yah*, which means *to be* or *to exist*, *he was*, *he existed*. Hayah can also be spelled הָיָה *ha-vah*. The tetragrammaton is derived from this word. Yah יְהוָה or Jah is also likely derived from ha-yah.

I don't think Yah is a shortening or a contraction of Jehovah. It is a different word, although it is God's name and means that God exists, just as Jehovah means He is eternal and exists in all of history, past, present and future. Since it is a different word, it is pointed differently. It is used by itself, interchangeably with Jehovah, and along with Jehovah.

1. In many verses, Yah is used by itself to name God. An example is Exodus 15:2.
2. In some verses Yah is used interchangeably or in the place of Yehovah. Ps. 68:18 says, “Yah Elohim” Lord God. In most other places the Bible says, “Yehovah Elohim.”
3. In some verses, Yah and Yehovah are used together in the same verse. Examples are Is. 12:2, “for **YAH YEHOVAH** is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation” and Is. 26:4, “for in **YAH YEHOVAH** is everlasting strength.”

God named the Jewish nation “Israel.” Yet, He also gave the nation another name, Jeshurun. “For the LORD’S portion is his people; **Jacob** is the lot of his inheritance ... But **Jeshurun** waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation” (Deut. 32:7). “Fear not, O **Jacob**, my servant; and thou, **Jesurun**, whom I have chosen” (Is. 44:2). Israel and Jeshurun both name Israel, but both are different words, and both are pointed differently in Hebrew. The name, Jeshurun, means *upright* and it is Israel’s *poetic* name. In similar fashion, Yah is God’s poetic name. The vast majority of times yah is found in the Bible it is in the poetic book, Psalms. The first time it is found is in Exodus 15:2, as part of the Song of Moses’ victory over Pharaoh.

Navah says this on the Jewish web site, Time of Reckoning:

Another common error among non-Jewish is to mechanically transfer the vowels from Yah to the Tetragrammaton. For instance, they say that because many Hebrew names ending with -yahu or -ya (see above) have the three-letter יהו, the Tetragrammaton must be pronounced as yahu-. Hence, they come up with “variations” such as Yahweh, Yahuah, Yahueh, Yahwè, Jahweh, Jahwè, Jave. This does not agree with any grammatical and phonetic rules in Hebrew, not to mention that they dismiss the Hebrew names starting with yeho-. Notice that although yud and hey are common for both Names, יה and יהוה they have different vowels and therefore pronounced differently: Yah and Yehovah. Now, can we apply a vowel set from the Name Yah or the suffix -yahu to יהו? And can we insert any vowels in the Tetragrammaton YHVH? Let us consider the following example. The word Yeshurun is YHVH’s intimate name for Israel and appears only four times in Tanak: Isa 44:2, Deu 32:15, Deu 33:5, and Deu 33:26. Notice that the first three letters of the word ישראל for Israel are identical with the first three letters in ישרון for Yeshurun (yud, shin, and resh) although these names sound differently. (An Ephramite would pronounce Yeshurun as Yesurun.) We should have already noticed that what is the name Yeshurun to Israel, the same is the Name Yah to Yehovah. Vowels of one do not go mechanically to the other just because Yeshurun is the poetical name of Israel as Yah is the poetical Name of Yehovah.

III. Does he address anywhere the etymology of Yahweh as the third person of ehyeh, אֶהְיֶה? That’s a big deal, since surely Yehovah cannot be the third person of ehyeh, yet that etymology seems to be on very clear scriptural footing.

Yahweh is not the third person of אֶהְיֶה, ehyeh, I am. Yahweh isn’t even a Hebrew word. It is a Greek and Latin word, and they got it from the Samaritans, as I have shown. But, Yehovah isn’t the third person of אֶהְיֶה, ehyeh, either. The third person is הוּוֹה, hoveh, he is (related to הָיָה, hayah, he was, from which Yehovah is derived).

The Lord told Moses that he is, “I am that I am.” This describes the meaning of the name, Jehovah. He is the eternally existing and present One. Go to the past and He is, in the present He is, and if you

go to the future, He is. הַיְהִי־הוּא הַיְהִי־הוּא הַיְהִי־הוּא Hayah, Hoveh, Yihyeh. He was, He is, He will be. Jewish sages say YHVH represents these three words.

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, **which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.** (Rev. 1:8)