

What About Those “Four Vowels” ?

Why did Flavius Josephus, the noted Jewish historian, write that the sacred Name consists of four vowels? Here is a translation of this passage in question:

“A mitre also of fine linen encompassed his head, which was tied by a blue ribbon, about which there was another golden crown, in which was engraven the sacred name [of the Almighty]: it consists of four vowels.” *The War of the Jews, Book 5. 5. 7.*

Hebrew grammar scholars agree: “However, long before the introduction of vowel signs it was felt that the main vowel sounds should be indicated in writing, and so the three letters ך, ם, and ן were used to represent long vowels.” Weingreen, (Oxford University Press, 1959)

Other Hebrew grammar books state the same fact: *A Beginner’s Handbook to Biblical Hebrew*, Marks and Rogers, Abingdon Press, 1958, p.7. *How the Hebrew Language Grew*, Horowitz, KTAV Publishing, 1960, pp. 333-334.

Consider the following:

Josephus frequently altered Hebrew names, spelling them after the fashion of the Greeks, to please his Greek readers. Wrote Josephus: “It is the Greeks who are responsible for this change in nomenclature.” *Antiquities of the Jews, 1. 5. 1.*

“I have one thing to add, of which the Greeks are perhaps unaware, before reverting to the narrative where I left it. With a view to euphony* and my readers’ pleasure these names have been Hellenized. The form in which they appear is not that used in our country, where their structure and termination remain always the same.” *Antiquities of the Jews, 1. 6. 1.*

* *Euphony* - n. the effect produced by words so combined as to please the ear. **Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 1974.**

“Why Josephus speaks of ‘four vowels’ is uncertain. The first and third letters are probably ‘by nature vowels’ (*i* and *u*), though by usage consonants (Gesenius, *Heb. Grammar*, ed. Cowley, pp.26, 45). He is perhaps thinking of a Greek form (IAUE).” *Jewish Wars 5. 5. 7. footnote; edition Loeb Classical Library*

Indeed, the Greeks render the Tetragrammaton as four vowels. So do the Assyrians who transcribed the Sacred Name as Ya-u-a. (*The Scriptures p. xii* - from South Africa) The “Y” in Yaua is sometimes written with an “I” by other scholars, so again we have four vowels. But according to Hebrew grammar rules and usage, spelled together, Y-H-V-H are **not** four vowels.

Rule #1 - YHV (׃ ך ן) are definitely consonants. It is agreed, they can also be vowels.

Rule #2 - The “ך can never be a vowel letter in the middle of a word.” *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar p. 56.* “The ך is stronger and firmer than ך, and never loses its consonantal sound in the middle of a word.” *ibid, p. 81.*

This means that this letter יהי must be a consonant, and have a vowel sound following it. This rule already excludes the name Yahweh, because in Yahweh the “h” acts as a vowel being silent, instead of being a consonant and it is not followed by a vowel sound (being followed by the w).

Since the ה in the middle of the word is always a consonant, this means that there must be three syllables in the Sacred Name.

Rule #3 - Unless the ה is dotted with the mappiyq, “at the end of a word it is always a mere vowel letter.” *Gesenius Hebrew Grammar p. 81*

Yehovah fits all three of these rules. Other Hebrew scholars have said that pronouncing יהוה (YHVH) as “Yahweh” just does not fit Hebrew linguistics.

“We use Yahweh because it is the best representation of the original letters of the Name transliterated in to English. We are 99 and 44/100% positive of this form, although our minds are not closed should new evidence be introduced by scholarship.” *Jacob O. Meyer, Assemblies of Yahweh, quoting his Hebrew professor.*

Why wait upon “scholarship” to introduce truth? Are we unable to find truth independent of scholarship? This is Jesuit thinking and I will not hear of it! The carpenter from Nazareth said it best, “*I thank Thee, O Father, Sovereign of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.*” **Matthew 11:25**

1. Every word must have its proper bearing on the subject presented in the Bible;
2. All Scripture is necessary, and may be understood by diligent application and study;
3. Nothing revealed in Scripture can or will be hid from those who ask in faith, not wavering;
4. To understand doctrine, bring all the scriptures together on the subject you wish to know, then let every word have its proper influence; and if you can form your theory without a contradiction, you cannot be in error;
5. Scripture must be its own expositor, since it is a rule of itself. If I depend on a teacher to expound to me, and he should guess at its meaning, or desire to have it so on account of his sectarian creed, or to be thought wise, then his guessing, desire, creed, or wisdom is my rule, and not the Bible.” *Review & Herald, 11-25-1884* [The author gave William Miller the credit for this quote. Emphasis my own.]

Yahweh cannot be proven from Scripture; it must lean on Greek scholars, the arm of flesh. The Father’s Name was not revealed to Greek writers. Jehovah was the name Catholic scholars unleashed on humanity, now Catholicism promotes Yahweh as the correct pronunciation. Is this another Catholic tradition handed down to us to lead us astray? Satan obscured the names in the first place, so he wouldn’t hesitate to put a red herring along the way to confuse and mislead even honest truth seekers who believe that His Sacred Name is not God or Lord? If you do not want to be misled then you are compelled to seek the guidance of the Set-Apart Spirit. What Satan sought to eradicate, the Word will reveal. YHVH will not be without a witness!

**Josephus altered Hebrew Names to make them sound pleasing to his Greek readers.
For more evidence ask for the study entitled, *The “ah” / “eh” Argument.***