01380 יהוה found in TWOT #484a

0484.0 הָוָה (*hāwâ*) II, the older form and rare synonym of *hāyâ* (q.v.), **be, become.** (ASV and RSV similar, but RSV, lie, Eccl 11:3.)

(484a) יהוה (*yhwh*) **Yahweh.**

(484b) יָהּ (*yāh*) **Yahweh.**

The root signifies either existence, e.g. of a tree trunk, being at rest where it falls (Eccl 11:3), or development, e.g. of Nehemiah's alleged scheme to become king of Judah (Neh 6:6). Only three other instances of *hāwâ* II are preserved in the Hebrew OT (Gen 27:29; Eccl 2:22; Isa 16:4), though *hāwā'* remains as the standard form of the verb "to be" in biblical Aramaic.

Yahweh. The Tetragrammaton YHWH, the LORD, or Yahweh, the personal name of God and his most frequent designation in Scripture, occurring 5321 times (TDNT, III, p. 1067) in the OT (KJV and ASV, the Lord, or, in those contexts where the actual title "Lord" also occurs, GOD, except KJV, Jehovah, in seven passages where the name is particularly stressed (Exo 6:3; Psa 83:18 [H 19]; Isa 12:2; Isa 26:4] or combined with other elements, such as Jehovah Jireh (Gen 22:14; cc Exo 17:15; Jud 6:24; ASV, consistently Jehovah)).

yāh. A contracted form of Yahweh. Occurs fifty times (rendered in English as above, except KJV, Jah, in Psa 68:4 [H 5], where the name is particularly stressed).

Also numerous proper nouns compounded with shortened forms of the divine name "Yahweh," e.g.: *yᵉhônātān*, Jehonathan, "Yahweh has given"; abbreviated yônātān "Jonathan," a substitute name for the same person (compare 1Sam 13:2-3 with 1Sam 14:6, 8; 2Sam 17:17, 20 with 1Kings 1:42-43); and *yᵉhôshāpāt*, Jehoshaphat, "Yahweh

has judged"; alternatively *yôshāpāt*, "Joshaphat," applied only to two subordinates of David (1Chr 11:43; 1Chr 15:24).

The theological importance of hāwâ II stems from its derived nouns, which identify the personal name of deity, Yahweh, or its contractions.

The tetragrammaton YHWH is not ordinarily written with its appropriate Hebrew vowels. But that the original pronunciation was *YaHWeH* seems probable, both from the corresponding verbal form, the imperfect of *hāwâ*, anciently *yahweh*, and from later representation of YHWH in Greek *iaoue* or *iabe*. An apocopated form of *hāwâ* in the imperfect, that occurs in Eccl 11:3, is *yᵉhû'* (otiose aleph, GKC, p. 211). This in turn may account for the shorter name YHW in the fifth century B.C. Elephantine papyri and the initial elements, *yᵉhô-*, *yô-*, and *yē-* (KB, p. 369) in such names as Jehozadak, "Yahweh (is) righteous," or Joel, "Yahweh (is) God.".

[An alternative possibility for the original pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton should be mentioned. Actually, there is a problem with the pronunciation "Yahweh." It is a strange combination of old and late elements. The first extra-Biblical occurrence of the name is in the Moabite Stone of about 850 B.C. At that time vowel letters were just beginning to be used in Hebrew. If YHWH represents a spelling earlier than 900 B.C. (as would seem likely), the final " h " should have been pronounced. The pronunciation Yahweh assumes the ending of a *lamed-he* verb, but these verbs in Moses' day ended in a " y " (cf. for *bānâ* the Ug. impf. *ybny*). So the ending "*eh*" is a late form. But in Hebrew in late times a "w" that began a word or syllable changed to "y" (as in the *pe-waw* verbs and the verb *hāyâ* itself). So the "w" of Yahweh represents a pre-mosaic pronunciation but the final "*eh*" represents probably a post-davidic form.

In view of these problems it may be best simply to say that YHWH does not come from the verb *hāwâ* (presumably *hawaya* in

its early form) at all. There are many places in the OT where it is now recognized that the parallel of a name and its meaning is not necessarily etymological. For instance, 1Sam 1:20 probably does not mean that the name Samuel is derived from the verb *shāma*ʿ "to hear." Genesis 11:9 does not mean that Babel comes from the verb *bālal* "confusion" but only that the two words sound somewhat alike. Likewise Jacob is said to mean both "heel" (Gen 25:26) and "supplanter" (Gen 27:36). There are many other examples of this device which is to be taken as a paranomasia, a play on words, rather than as an etymology. Therefore we may well hold that YHWH does not come from the verb *hāwâ* which is cited in the first person *'ehyeh* "I will be," but is an old word of unknown origin which sounded something like what the verb *hāwâ* sounded in Moses' day. In this case we do not know what the pronunciation was; we can only speculate. However, if the word were spelled with four letters in Moses' day, we would expect it to have had more than two syllables, for at that period there were no vowel letters. All the letters were sounded.

At the end of the OT period the Elephantine papyri write the word YHW to be read either *yāhû* (as in names like Shemayahu) or *yāhô* (as in names like Jehozadek). The pronunciation *yāhô* would be favored by the later Greek from *iaō* found in Qumran Greek fragments (2d or 1st centuries B.C.) and in Gnostic materials of the first Christian centuries. Theodoret in the fourth century A.D. states that the Samaritans pronounced it *iabe*. Clement of Alexandria (early 3d century A.D.) vocalized it as *iaoue*. These are quite late witnesses and seem to contradict the much earlier Jewish witness of Elephantine and the name elements, none of which end in "*eh*.".

As to the meaning of the name, we are safer if we find the character of God from his works and from the descriptions of him in the Scripture rather than to depend on a questionable etymology of his name. See further the writer's remarks in "The Pronunciation of the Tetragram" in *The Law*

and the Prophets, J. H. Skilton, ed., Presbyterian & Reformed, 1974, pp. 215-24. R.L.H.].

Among the commonest names with this element are *y^ehônātān* "Jonathan," the name of seventeen different OT characters (ISBE, III, pp. 1580, 1730). These include Moses' treacherous (great) grandson Jonathan (Jud 18:30, ASV), David's faithful friend Jonathan, the son of Saul (1Sam 18:1), and David's young courier Jonathan the son of Abiathar (2Sam 15:27; 1Kings 1:42). *y^ehôshāpāt* "Jehoshaphat," identifies six individuals (ISBE, III, pp. 1581-1582, 1743), including Israel's recorder under David and Solomon (2Sam 8:16; 1Kings 4:3) and Judah's fourth king after the division, 872-848 B.C. The name reappears in Joel's prediction of the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joe) Joel 3:2, 12 [H4 2,12]), where God will overcome the nations gathered to oppose his advent in glory. But rather than designating the site of King Jehoshaphat's ancient victory (Beracah between Hebron and Bethlehem, 2Chr 20:26), this title seems to identify a spot beside Jerusalem (Joel 3:17 [H 4.17]), traditionally the Kidron, below Olivet (Zech 14:4). It may be less a place name than prophecy's description of the event of *y^ehôshāpāt*; "Yahweh has judged.".

y^ehôshûã-yēshûã` designates ten Hebrew leaders (ISBE, III, pp. 1622, 1743) from Moses' successor Joshua (KJV, Jehoshua in Num 13:16; 1Chr 7:27) to the post-exilic high priest Jeshua (Ezra 3:2; Neh 12:10). The former's name was changed from the Hiphil infinitive, Hoshea, "salvation," to Joshua, with its deeper spiritual connotation of "Yahweh (is) salvation" (Num 13:8, 16). Both men are called "Jesus" in Greek (Acts 7:45; 1Esd 5:48), i.e., *yeshûa`* is our Lord's Hebrew name, "for he will save his people from their sins" (Mt 1:21). This may be a shortened form with the divine element omitted, meaning "he will save.".

The shortened independent form of the divine name, Yah, occurs primarily in poetry and in the exclamation, *Hallelu-yah*, praise Yahweh. It serves also as a terminal element

in proper nouns like Elijah: " *'ēlîyâ* (or *'ēlîyāhû*), "God (is) Yahweh.".

In the post-biblical period, reverence for the ineffable name "Yahweh" caused it to be supplanted in synagogue reading (but not in writing) with the noun *'ădōnāy*, "my master," or Lord. Next, when medieval Jewish scholars began to insert vowels to accompany the consonantal OT text, they added to YHWH the Masoretic vowel points for *'ădōnāy* ; and the actual writing became an impossible *YăHōWāH*, the ASV "Jehovah.".

God's name identifies his nature, so that a request for his "name" is equivalent to asking about his character (Exo 3:13; Hos 12:5 [H 6]). Critical speculation about the origin and meaning of "Yahweh" seems endless (cf. L. Kbhler, OT Theology, pp. 4246; IDB, 11, pp. 409-11); but the Bible's own explanation in Exo 3:14 is that it represents the simple (Qal) imperfect of *hāwâ* "to be," I am [is] what I am. The precise name Yahweh results when others speak of him in the third person, *yahweh* "He is." Albright, it is true, has championed a causative rendering, "I cause to be, I create" (*From the Stone Age to Christianity*, 2d ed., 1946, p. 198; D. N. Freedman, *JBL*, 79: 151-56); but this is rightly criticized as "conjuring up a nonexistent Hiphil form" (N. Walker, *JBL*, 79: 277).

Some have gone on to suggest that the Qal meaning of Yahweh must be God's unchangeableness toward his people (Exo 3:15; G. Vos, *Biblical Theology*, p. 134). But, as Moses himself indicated (Exo 3:13), the fact that he was the ancient God of the fathers was insufficient to answer Israel's need at that time; and, in any event, the OT has little to say concerning abstractions such as "the changelessness of deity" (though in the NT Jesus did use Exo 3:14 to introduce the thought of his eternal divine existence, Jn 8:58), God's immediately preceding promise to Moses had been, "Certainly I will be with you" (Exo 3:12). So his assertion in verse 14 would seem to be saying, "I am present is what I am." Indeed, the fundamental promise of his testament is, "I will be their God, and

they will be my people" (Exo 6:7; etc.; contrast Hos 1:9); thus "Yahweh," "faithful presence," is God's testamentary nature, or name (Exo 6:2, 4; Deut 7:9; Isa 26:4).

The use of Yahweh as a divine name goes back to earliest times (Gen 4:1, 26; Gen 9:26), although the documentation for its employment among other early cultures appears questionable (IDB, II, p. 409). In Exo 6:3 the Lord explains to Moses that by his name Yahweh he had not been "known" to the patriarchs, meaning "know" (see *yāda*ʾ) in its fullest sense: the name was in use (Gen 12:8; Gen 15:2, 7, 8) but was not appreciated in the redemptive significance that it acquired under Moses (J. A. Motyer, *The Revelation of the Divine Name*). For even the so-called P document, which critics have hypothesized as contradicting the Bible's claims to the earlier use of Yahweh (ibid., pp. 3-6), utilizes it in premosaic proper nouns (Jochebed, Exo 6:20; Num 26:59).

Commencing with the later judges (1Sam 1:3), the name Yahweh is often combined with *ṣᵉbāʾ̄ôt*, "hosts" (armies, q.v.). The Tetragrammaton occurs in every OT book except Eccl and Est. It appears in the ninth century Moabite inscription of Mesha (line 18). From the eighth century onward the element "*Yau-*" is employed in Aramaic names and in Mesopotamian references to Hebrew rulers, Only in pre-NT times was God's personal name replaced with the less intimate title *ʾădōnāy* (Gr., *kurios*) "Lord.".

Scripture speaks of the Tetragrammaton as "this glorious and fearful name" (Deut 28:58) or simply "the name" (Lev 24:11). But it connotes God's nearness, his concern for man, and the revelation of his redemptive covenant. In Genesis 1 through Genesis 2:3, the general term 'ĕlōhîm (q.v.) "deity," is appropriate for God transcendent in creation; but in Gen 2:4-25 it is Yahweh, the God who is immanent in Eden's revelations. In Gen 9:26-27, Elohim enlarges Japheth, but Yahweh is the God of Shem; the latter is especially used in references to the God of Israel. In Psa 19 the heavens declare the glory of El (vv. I -6); but the law of Yahweh is

perfect, and Yahweh is "my strength and my redeemer" (vv. 7-14 [H 8-15]; cf. G. T. Manley, *The Book of the Law*, p. 41). Yet the distinction is not pervasive: Psalms 14 and Psalms 53 are practically identical except for the divine names employed; book I of the Psalter (Psa 1-41) simply prefers Yahweh, and book II (42-72), Elohim. Ultimately the connotations of the name Yahweh are fulfilled in the "covenant of peace," when the God who has been present from the first will be fully present at the last (Isa 41:4); cf. Ezekiel's stress upon God's "sanctuary in the midst of them forevermore" (Ezek 37:26) and his eschatological city's being named YHWH *shāmmâ* "Yahweh is there."

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