

# What's in a Name?



## ***Much!!!***

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As I was reading and studying in the Book of Acts I was struck by the statements that were made by Peter in Acts 3:16; Acts 4:17 and Acts 10:43. I write these scriptures out below so that we may easily refer to them.

*Acts 3:16 - And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.*

*Acts 4:10 - Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, [even] by him doth this man stand here before you whole.*

*Acts 10:43 - To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.*

In each of the above scriptures I would like to direct our attention for the purpose of this discussion, to the words Peter speaks concerning “the name.” He uses the phrase “His name” or the “Name of Jesus...” In expressing the Good News of salvation through Jesus, Peter made it a point to say it in a very specific manner. He did not just say that salvation was in Jesus, which it is. He specifically declares that it is in “the name” of Jesus. This point was highlighted to me by the words spoken by the Pharisees and religious leaders in the rebuke of Peter as found in Acts 4:17, 18 – “*But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.*” The Pharisees and religious leaders made it a specific point to say to Peter that they were not to speak or teach “in the name of Jesus.” You may be saying to yourself by this time something to the effect like, “Okay Ray get on with it. We all know that salvation comes in and through the Name of Jesus.” However, I say to you that I could not get past these scriptures. Something was prompting me to look into this further. So what did I do? I looked into it further.

I decided to begin my journey in exploring my inquisitiveness through looking into strictly Jewish thought concerning the idea of “names” and their significance in Jewish thought. I did not want to get a “Christian perspective” on this. After all, I have been in the Body of Christ for many years and I understand and grasp the Christian thought of the power and authority there is in the Name of Jesus. I was not questioning that. I just had an “unction” within me that there may be more that I would find as the Holy Spirit was prompting me in this. After all, Jesus and His disciples were Jews and they were dealing with Jewish people and their culture and thought. Not being a Jew, I thought I may be missing something.

**A**s I searched, I found some very interesting observations which brought a greater depth and understanding to why, as we read previously in the above scriptures, that they were so specific in the usage of the terms they used concerning "the name." Below are excerpts from an article entitled "Names and their Significance" by Rabbi Paysach Krohn

"In Judaism, a name is not merely a conglomeration of letters put together as a convenient way to refer to someone. Ideally, it is a **\*definition of the individual - a description of his personality and an interpretation of his traits**. It may even be a portent of the person's future, or perhaps a prayer that the person bearing this particular name shall live up to the potential expressed in the name.

To label something properly is to define its nature. Rabbeinu Bachya comments that Adam revealed his great wisdom when he named all species of creation. With his superior intellect, every name that he chose, together with the **\*combination of its letters**, defined the nature and characteristic of that creature.

For example, he named the lion "Aryeh." The letters Yud-heh - which are part of the name of God, the King of kings and Ruler of the universe - represent the lion's role as king of the jungle.

Another example: Adam named the ordinary weak-minded donkey "Chamor," a word that is cognate with "chomer" - simple elementary matter. "Chomer" is also a measure of volume (see Hoshea 3:2), signifying the load which the donkey forever carries on its back. At the outset of mankind, to name meant to define.

It was just this kind of definition that Moses sought when he asked God at the burning bush, (Exodus 3:13) "When I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they will then say to me, 'What is His Name?' what shall I answer?" Nachmanides comments that it could not have been merely a literal name that Moses sought, for if Israel were to question the existence of God, it would be inconsequential for Moses to reveal a name to them. Rather, Moses requested a Divine Name that would signify the existence of His supervision and benevolent nature, for that would assure the Jews of their redemption. "What is His Name?" meant, "What is His main characteristic?"

\*Bold text style added by Ray Tripi

**T**his immediately grabbed my attention. In Jewish thought the name of a person was a description of the very essence of that person. In the above excerpt, it mentions the encounter that Moses had with God in Exodus 3. When God revealed to Moses His name, He was declaring who He was, who He is and who He forever will be. We know this name as the tetragrammaton, יהוה which we refer to as YHVH. This Name is found 6,823 times in the Hebrew Scriptures. It is commonly changed to and read in scripture as "Adonai" and then translated into our English Bibles as "LORD."

**W**e have a tendency to become religious and say that the reason why the Jewish people do not mention God's Name (the tetragrammaton) is because they reverence the Name and do not wish to, by chance, desecrate the name. We also think that it is in direct obedience to the commandment of "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD (literally - YHVH) thy God (literally - Elohim) in vain; for the LORD (literally - YHVH) will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." (Exodus 20:7) As Christians we have taken this position and we do not commonly declare the name of Yahweh. We do not realize that this is mere "Jewish tradition." When the translators of the King James Bible were assigned to translate the Old Testament they had no other choice than to go to the rabbis being that it was in Hebrew. The translators

accepted this tradition as fact and included in the English Version the idea that the scriptures did indeed translate YHVH into "Adonai" and therefore it is in our Bibles today as "LORD."

Below is an excerpt from another Jewish source that I found fascinating. It is from an article entitled, "Pronouncing the Name of God" found at the following link - <http://www.jewfaq.org/name.htm>.

**"\*Nothing in the Torah prohibits a person from pronouncing the Name of God.** Indeed, it is evident from scripture that God's Name was pronounced routinely. Many common Hebrew names contain "Yah" or "Yahu," part of God's four-letter Name. The Name was pronounced as part of daily services in the Temple.

**\*The Mishnah confirms that there was no prohibition against pronouncing The Name in ancient times.** In fact, the Mishnah recommends using God's Name as a routine greeting to a fellow Jew. Berakhot 9:5. **\*However, by the time of the Talmud, it was the custom to use substitute Names for God. Some rabbis asserted that a person who pronounces YHVH according to its letters (instead of using a substitute) has no place in the World to Come, and should be put to death.** Instead of pronouncing the four-letter Name, we usually substitute the Name "Adonai," or simply say "Ha-Shem" (lit. The Name).

Although the prohibition on pronunciation applies only to the four-letter Name, Jews customarily do not pronounce any of God's many Names except in prayer or study. The usual practice is to substitute letters or syllables, so that Adonai becomes Adoshem or Ha-Shem; Elohaynu and Elohim become Elokaynu and Elokim; Eil becomes Keil, etc.

With the Temple destroyed and the prohibition on pronouncing The Name outside of the Temple, pronunciation of the Name fell into disuse. Scholars passed down knowledge of the correct pronunciation of YHVH for many generations, but eventually the correct pronunciation was lost, and we no longer know it with any certainty. We do not know what vowels were used, or even whether the Vav in the Name was a vowel or a consonant. Some religious scholars suggest that the Name was pronounced "Yahweh," but others do not find this pronunciation particularly persuasive. Historian Flavius Josephus, who was born a kohein at a time when the pronunciation of the Name was still known, said that the name was four vowels (War of the Jews, Book V, Chapter 5), probably referring to the fact that each of the four consonants in the name can serve in Hebrew as a vowel or vowel marker. See Hebrew Alphabet.

Some people render the four-letter Name as "Jehovah," but this pronunciation is particularly unlikely. The word "Jehovah" comes from the fact that ancient Jewish texts used to put the vowels of the Name "Adonai" (the usual substitute for YHVH) under the consonants of YHVH to remind people not to pronounce YHVH as written. A sixteenth century German Christian scribe, while transliterating the Bible into Latin for the Pope, wrote the Name out as it appeared in his texts, with the consonants of YHVH and the vowels of Adonai, and came up with the word JeHoVaH ("J" is pronounced "Y" in German), and the name stuck."

\*Bold text style added by Ray Tripi

**WOW!!!** We can see the power of the name of YHVH. It is so powerful, that for centuries the devil has tried so diligently to stop that name from being declared into the atmosphere - even by His own people - both Jew and Christian. Tradition has caused us to play into the enemy's plan of stifling God's Covenant Name from going forth and being decreed into the atmosphere. We all know the power of the words we speak. We know, as Christians the power of the name of Jesus. How much more powerful would the declaration of the Name of YHVH, the God of the Universe, the Creator, the All Powerful One, The One and only true God, as well as the name of Jesus be, together, as it is continually spoken into the atmosphere.

As I had mentioned, the idea of “banning” the use of the Name of our Covenant God has been extended into the Christian realm. The following is a directive from the Vatican concerning the ban of the use of the name YHVH in the Roman Catholic Church. It is from “Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments” issued on June 29, 2008 found at the following link:  
<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=8400>

“By directive of the Holy Father, in accord with the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, this Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments deems it convenient to communicate to the bishops' conferences the following as regards the translation and the pronunciation in a liturgical setting of the divine name signified in the sacred Tetragrammaton, along with a number of directives.

## II. Directives

In the light of what has been expounded, the following directives are to be observed:

1. **\*In liturgical celebrations, in songs and prayers the name of God in the form of the Tetragrammaton YHWH is neither to be used nor pronounced.**
2. For the translation of the biblical text in modern languages, destined for the liturgical usage of the church, what is already prescribed by No. 41 of the instruction *Liturgiam Authenticam* is to be followed; **\*that is, the divine Tetragrammaton is to be rendered by the equivalent of Adonai/Kyrios: Lord, Signore, Seigneur, Herr, Señor, etc.**
3. In translating in the liturgical context, texts in which are present, one after the other, either the **\*Hebrew term Adonai or the Tetragrammaton YHWH, Adonai is to be translated Lord and the form God is to be used for the Tetragrammaton YHWH, similar to what happens in the Greek translation of the Septuagint and in the Latin translation of the Vulgate.**”

As we read the above directive I would like to make it very clear that I am not pointing a finger at the Roman Catholic Church alone. Unfortunately, The above ban of the usage of the name YHVH, though not in such an official manner, may be seen and experienced in many of our Protestant denominations including many Pentecostal and “Full Gospel” ministries, fellowships and churches. Again this falls into the strategy of the enemy whose desire is to stifle and extinguish the powerful name of our God, YHVH, from being declared, not just in the Jewish and secular realm, but in the Body of Christ, as well.

In further study of the name YHVH, I came upon another fascinating aspect of His Name. As I researched, I found that in ancient, Biblical Hebrew, every letter had a symbol as well as a number assigned it. The symbol is known as an “ideogram.” The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines the term, *ideogram* as “a picture or symbol used in a system of writing to represent a thing or an idea but not a particular word or phrase for it; one that represents not the object pictured but some thing or idea that the object pictured is supposed to suggest.” For our discussion this means that every letter of the Hebrew alphabet has an ideographic (symbolic) meaning.

The following are two separate charts as well as an explanation from another source of “Biblical Hebrew” of the letters that make up the tetragrammaton, “YHVH,” that express the ideas of these “ideographic” meanings of the Hebrew alphabet which I found from non-Christian, Jewish sources. What I discovered is nothing short of astounding. Please, follow this through.

## Hebrew Letter Charts

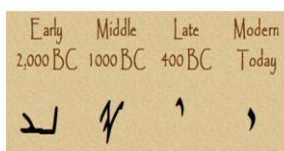
NAME	BO-OK	CUR-SIVE	BO-LD	RA-SHI	HA-ND	NUM-BER	Sound	Literal Meaning	Symbolic Meaning
Aleph	א	א	א	א	א	1	a	ox, bull	strength, leader, first
Bet /Vet	ב	ב	ב	ב	ב	2	b/v	tent, house	household in, into
Gimel	ג	ג	ג	ג	ג	3	g	camel	pride, to lift up
Dalet	ד	ד	ד	ד	ד	4	d	door	pathway, to enter
He	ה	ה	ה	ה	ה	5	h	window, fence	"the", to reveal
Vav	ו	ו	ו	ו	ו	6	u	nail	"and", add, secure, hook
Zayin	ז	ז	ז	ז	ז	7	z	weapon	cut, to cut off
CHet	ח	ח	ח	ח	ח	8	CH	fence, hedge, chamber	private, to separate
Tet	ט	ט	ט	ט	ט	9	t	to twist, a snake	to surround
Yud	י	י	י	י	י	10	i	closed hand	deed, work, to make
Kaf/ Chaf	כ	כ	כ	כ	כ	20	j	arm, wing open hand	to cover, allow, strength
Lamed	ל	ל	ל	ל	ל	30	l	cattle goad, staff	prod, go toward, tongue
Mem	מ	מ	מ	מ	מ	40	m	water	massive, overpower chaos
Nun	נ	נ	נ	נ	נ	50	n	fish (moving)	activity, life
Samech	ס	ס	ס	ס	ס	60	x	a prop	support, turn
Ayin	ע	ע	ע	ע	ע	70	o	eye	see, know, experience
Pe/Fe	פ	פ	פ	פ	פ	80	p/f	mouth	speak, open, word
Tzadi	צ	צ	צ	צ	צ	90	c	fish-hook	harvest, desire
Kof	ק	ק	ק	ק	ק	100	q	back of the head	behind, the last, least
Resh	ר	ר	ר	ר	ר	200	r	head	person, head highest
Sin/ Shin	ש	ש	ש	ש	ש	300	s/sh	teeth	consume, destroy
Tau	ת	ת	ת	ת	ת	400	t	sign, cross	covenant, to seal

From: <http://amerisoftinc.com/hebletr1.htm>

NAME OF LETTERS	INTERPRETATION OF SYMBOL, WORD, OR LETTER Rendered in English
ALEPH	An Ox or Bullock, a sacrifice or at-one-ment. Its numerical value is ONE.
BETH	A House or Tent, a dwelling or tabernacle, in, among, within, etc.
GIMEL	A Camel, like a camel's hump, heap, collect, high.
DALETH	A Door or Gate, lid, valve.
HE	Lo, see, behold, (therefore) a lattice or window for that purpose
VAV	A Peg, Nail or Hook, therefore, wherefore, then, that, in order that, so that, etc.
ZAYIN	A Weapon, a shining sword, brightness, light.
CETH	An Enclosure, fenced in, ark, refuge.
TETH	A Serpent, like a serpent, rolled, twisted, entwined.
YOD	The Hand, the right hand, to strike or pierce, a stroke, a blow.
KAPH	The Hollow or Palm of the Hand, curved, concave, a valley or basin.
LAMEDH	A Goad, towards, into, unto, until, upon, even to, besides, etc.
MEM	Water, waves, a flood.
NUN	A Fish, to sprout, to put forth, Noah, (as one from whom all are propagated).
SAMEKH	A Fulcrum, prop, lever, to help, to sustain, to uphold, the hinge of a mason's apron, a ladder or line connecting the lower with the higher, the Holy Ghost.
AYIN	The Eye, to flow, to flow out, a fountain.
PE	The Mouth, to breathe, to blow, a side or quarter of the heavens, region, part, quarter.
TSADHE	A Scythe or Reaping-hook, just, pertains to the harvest or retribution. Tsadok is Jupiter or justice (in Sanscrit, karma).
QOPH	Occiput, back of the head, to move in a circle.
RESH	Head, first, foremost, beginning, front. Rosh means a foremost or most northern nation.
SHIN	Tooth, a sharp rock, cliff, crag. The Almighty (Shaddi) if seen from the front, but Satan if seen from behind.
TAU	A Sign or Mark, cross, a symbol, a token.

From: [http://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/ubp/v15n11p635\\_symbolic-meaning-of-the-hebrew-letters.htm](http://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/ubp/v15n11p635_symbolic-meaning-of-the-hebrew-letters.htm)

Yad (Yud) - [http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/5\\_yad.html](http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/5_yad.html)  
By Jeff A. Benner



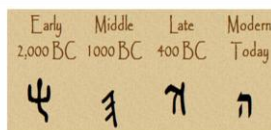
### Characteristics

	Ancient	Modern
Image	Arm and closed hand	
Meaning	Work, Throw	
Name	Yad	Yud
Sound	y, i (ee)	y

### History & Reconstruction

The Early Semitic pictograph of this letter is א, an arm and hand. The meaning of this letter is work, make and throw, the functions of the hand. The Modern Hebrew name "yud" is a derivative of the two letter word "yad" meaning "hand", the original name for the letter.  
The ancient and modern pronunciation of this letter is a "y".

Hey - [http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/5\\_hey.html](http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/5_hey.html)  
By Jeff A. Benner



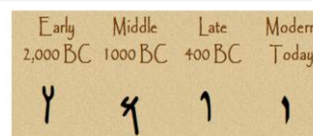
### Characteristics

	Ancient	Modern
Image	Man with arms raised	
Meaning	Look, Reveal, Breath	
Name	Hey	Hey
Sound	h, eh	h

### History & Reconstruction

The original pictograph for this letter is ה, a man standing with his arms raised out. The Modern Hebrew and original name for this letter is "hey". The Hebrew word "hey" means "behold", as when looking at a great sight. This word can also mean "breath" or "sight" as one does when looking at a great sight. The meaning of the letter ה is behold, look, breath, sigh and reveal or revelation from the idea of revealing a great sight by pointing it out.  
The Modern Hebrew sound for this letter is "h". Originally this letter doubled as a consonant, with an "h" sound, or as the vowel sound "eh". When the Greeks adopted this letter it became the "epsilon" with an "eh" sound.

Waw (Vav) - [http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/5\\_vaw.html](http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/5_vaw.html)  
By Jeff A. Benner



### Characteristics

	Ancient	Modern
Image	Tent Peg	
Meaning	Add, Secure, Hook	
Name	Waw	Vav
Sound	w, o, u	v

### History & Reconstruction

The original pictograph used in the Early Semitic script is a ו, a picture of a tent peg. The tent pegs were made of wood and may have been Y-shaped to prevent the rope from slipping off.  
The Modern Hebrew name for this letter is "vav", a word meaning "peg" or "hook". This letter is used in Modern Hebrew as a consonant with a "v" sound and as a vowel. As the pictograph indicates, this letter represents a peg or hook, which are used for securing something. The meaning of this letter is to add or secure.

If we take the ideogram and symbolic meaning for each letter of the name YHVH from the above charts and graphics, it reveals an awesome and powerful aspect to the Name of our Covenant God and His only begotten son Yeshua (Jesus)

**Y**= the Hebrew letter “Yod,” “Yad” or “Yud” which symbolically means “the hand”

**H**= the Hebrew letter “Hey” or “He” which symbolically means “to behold,” “to look at,” “reveal”

**V**= the Hebrew letter “Waw,” “Vav” or “Yud” which symbolically means “a nail,” “a peg”

**H**= the Hebrew letter “Hey” or “He” which symbolically means “to behold,” “to look at,” “reveal”

- YHVH becomes, “ideogram wise,” and symbolically stating: “The hand - Behold” “The nail - Behold” or we can simply say- “Behold the hand, Behold the nail.” YHVH, the covenant name of our God points to the redemptive work of Jesus through His crucifixion.
- The name “Jesus” is the English translation from the Greek, “*Iēsous*” which is the Greek Translation of the Hebrew Name, עֵשׂוּיָהוּ = *Yēhowshuwa`or Yeshua*.
- If we take the meaning of the name יהוֹשׁוּעַ = *Yēhowshuwa`or Yeshua*, it means “Yahweh is our salvation.”
- To get a better visual of the above, I encourage you to view a brief video that reviews what we just discussed. The link is: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wiBtYITrxM>
- YHVH’s name points directly to Yeshua. The Names declare and decree the unity of purpose and plan for the redemption of not just God’s people, the Jews, but for the whole world through the Final Sacrifice of His only begotten son Yeshua. This plan, revealed in His Name would ultimately bring God’s prized creation back into relationship with Him.

Since revealing His Name to Moses in Exodus 3, YHVH opened up the realm of redemption to Israel, not only in the natural realm but also in the spirit realm. The name YHVH contains in it the very essence of the promise of redemption. When YHVH declared His name to Moses it was as if He was telling Moses and His people that “I will be there,” which establishes a promise of the His divine presence through all the events, not just of the Exodus, but forever. God’s very name, YHVH, then becomes His promise to his people. To me it infers and references the covenant promise of God made throughout the scriptures - “I will be your God and you will be my people.” His plan of redemption is also His plan of salvation out of the grips of not only physical Egypt at the time we read of in the Book of Exodus, but what the bondage of Egypt and its result represent - the grip and wages of sin resulting in spiritual death. YHVH’s desire is to set the captives free and to restore the relationship between YHVH and Man.

Taking what we just discussed, it makes the scriptures that we originally began with back in the beginning of our discussion take on even greater meaning for us. We can truly understand why Peter specifically stated that salvation comes only in and through this Yeshua - the One who died, took the punishment for the sins of the world, triumphed over the forces of darkness, defeated death, rose from the grave and is now seated at the right hand of YHVH, Father God. The name Yeshua (Joshua = Jesus) was not an uncommon name in the Jewish culture. However, this Yeshua, the one that was nailed by His hands and feet and hung on the cross, was the **only** One that truly accomplished what His name meant. YHVH, the Covenant God, pointed to the One who would redeem us and bring salvation through His sacrifice. Through the fulfillment of His plan of redemption, God has now established a new and better covenant with even better promises (Hebrews 8:6) to anyone who allows Yeshua (Jesus) to be their Lord and Savior.

The scriptures are clear.

Psalm 116:13 - “*I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD (YHVH).*”

Romans 10:13 - “*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord (Yeshua) shall be saved.*”

What’s in a Name??? I think we can say - **MUCH!!!**