

MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

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A Study for Judaism • Christianity • Islam

DOCUMENT 210

THE NAME WRITTEN AND THE NAME SPOKEN

A Covenant Deep Dive into the Tetragrammaton — יהוה (Yahweh): Its Spelling, Its Pronunciation, and Its Rendering in English

How Were the Four Letters of the Covenant Name Written, Why Was Their Sound Withdrawn, and How Has English Tried to Recover It? — A Three-Religion Covenant Response

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The Message is Sent to the World

REACHING JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM

☆ JUDAISM	† CHRISTIANITY	☩ ISLAM
Judaism preserves the four letters יהוה exactly in the written text but has, since the Second Temple period, withdrawn their spoken sound, reading <i>Adonai (my Lord)</i> in prayer and saying <i>HaShem (the Name)</i> in ordinary speech.	Christianity inherited the non-pronunciation convention through the Greek Bible of the church, which reads <i>Kyrios (Lord)</i> . English Bibles follow it with " <i>LORD</i> " in small capitals, though some traditions restore <i>Yahweh</i> or " <i>Jehovah</i> ."	Islam does not transmit יהוה but reveres a comparable principle of a hidden divine name — <i>al-Isim al-A'zam (the Greatest Name)</i> — alongside the ninety-nine recited names, addressed here only as comparative witness.

DOCTRINAL AUTHORITY — STANDING RULE OF MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

The sole binding authority of Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution is the *Tanakh* — the written covenant of **Yahweh**. No Talmudic tractate, Church council decree, papal encyclical, hadith collection, or extra-biblical tradition carries doctrinal weight equal to or greater than the written Torah. Where any tradition conflicts with the written covenant, the written covenant governs without exception. The Talmud, New Testament, and Qur'an are cited as historical reference and comparative witness — never as superseding authority. Miqdash Bethel uses the Written Tanakh as its sole source for four reasons: it

is the only text Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all recognize as originally given by **Yahweh**; it predates and underlies the Talmud, New Testament, and Qur'an, so testing those traditions against it follows the evidentiary direction of **Deuteronomy 19:15** — the earlier witness governs the later commentary; every later tradition that departs from the Tanakh does so by addition or reinterpretation, never by overturning the text itself, so the text remains the fixed standard; and **Yahweh**'s own words declare the covenant unchanging (Malachi 3:6; Psalms 119:89), making the written covenant — not evolving institutional interpretation — the only stable ground for doctrine. All three great covenant traditions — Judaism, Christianity, and Islam — are addressed simultaneously and equally in every Miqdash Bethel document, because **Yahweh**'s covenant belongs to every nation that will receive it. The **Deuteronomy 19:15** two-or-three-witness evidentiary standard governs all textual claims in this document.

HOW TO READ THIS DOCUMENT

This document applies the sole authority of the written Tanakh to the Tetragrammaton itself — the four Hebrew letters that form the personal covenant Name of **Yahweh** — and asks three questions: how it is spelled, how it was pronounced, and how English has rendered it. **Yahweh** (יהוה) and **Elohim** (אלהים) appear in bold throughout. Tanakh books and Hebrew personal names are given in English. Hebrew transliterations appear in *bold italic* with English meaning in parentheses. Scripture references are bold. Verse numbers follow the English version; where the Hebrew numbering differs, it is given in brackets on first citation. Because the pronunciation question turns on manuscript and inscription evidence, the two-or-three-witness standard is applied to each pronunciation claim, and each finding is graded **Corroborated** (two or more independent witnesses), **Single witness**, or **Not in the text / Not corroborated**. Three audiences are addressed simultaneously: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Rabbinic commentary, church writers, Greek papyri, and Islamic material are cited as historical and linguistic evidence — not as binding authority. The Written Tanakh governs all conclusions.

TANAKH BOOKS CITED IN THIS DOCUMENT

DIVISION	BOOKS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
Torah	Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy	Calling on the Name; the Name revealed to Moses; the misuse prohibition; the blasphemy case; the priestly blessing; swearing by the Name; the two-or-three-witness standard

DIVISION	BOOKS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
Nevi'im (Prophets)	Isaiah, Jeremiah, Joel, Malachi	The Name forgotten and called upon; the unchanging Name
Ketuvim (Writings)	Psalms, Ruth	Yah in praise; calling on the Name; the Name in everyday greeting

COMPARATIVE TEXTS CITED — HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE REFERENCE ONLY

CATEGORY	TEXTS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
Inscriptions and papyri	Mesha Stele (c. 840 BCE); Soleb list of Amenhotep III (14th c. BCE); Elephantine papyri (5th c. BCE, incl. the petition of 407 BCE); Greek magical papyri	The Name outside the Tanakh; the short form Yahu; Greek vowel renderings
Dead Sea Scrolls and early Greek copies	Paleo-Hebrew Name in square-script scrolls; tetrapuncta; 4Q120 (Greek Leviticus, <i>Iao</i>); P. Fouad 266 and the Nahal Hever Greek Minor Prophets (Name in Hebrew letters)	How scribes wrote and guarded the Name
Rabbinic literature	Mishnah Sotah 7:6; Tamid 7:2; Yoma 3:8, 6:2; Berakhot 9:5; Talmud Yoma 39b; Masoretic pointing (6th–10th c. CE)	Where and when the Name was spoken in the Temple; the reading tradition
Church writers	Clement of Alexandria, Stromata 5.6; Epiphanius, Panarion 40.5; Theodoret, Questions on Exodus 15	Greek transcriptions <i>Iaoue</i> and <i>Iabe</i>
Latin and English sources	Raymundus Martini, Pugio Fidei (c. 1270); Porchetus de Salvaticis (1303); Petrus Galatinus (1518); Tyndale (1530); King James Version (1611); American Standard Version (1901)	How " <i>Jehovah</i> " entered Latin and English
Islamic tradition	<i>al-Isim al-A'zam (the Greatest Name)</i> ; the ninety-nine names	A comparable reverence for a withheld name
Modern scholarship	BDB; HALOT; Gesenius; Gerard Gertoux; Encyclopaedia Judaica; Jewish Encyclopedia	Reconstruction of <i>Yahweh</i> and the minority readings

I. FRAMING THE QUESTION — THE NAME WRITTEN, SPOKEN, AND RENDERED

I-A. The Questions as They Are Usually Asked

First: how are the four letters of the Name written, and has that spelling ever been in doubt?

Second: how was the Name pronounced, and how sure can anyone be?

Third: why did its spoken sound disappear, and how did English end up with *"LORD," "Jehovah,"* and *"Yahweh"* all at once?

I-B. The Questions in the Tanakh's Own Terms

The Tanakh does not treat the Name as a secret. It treats it as a memorial meant to be remembered and called upon:

"This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations" (Exodus 3:15)

From the days of Enosh *"people began to call on the name of Yahweh"* (Genesis 4:26), and the prophet promises that *"everyone who calls on the name of Yahweh shall be delivered"* (Joel 2:32 [Heb. 3:5]). A name that is to be called on must be spoken. Every finding below is graded by the two-or-three-witness standard (Deuteronomy 19:15).

II. THE WORD STUDY — WHAT THE HEBREW SAYS

HEBREW TERM	STRONG'S	CORE MEANING	KEY TEXT
Yahweh, יהוה	H3068	The personal covenant Name; about 6,828 times in the Tanakh	Exodus 3:15; 6:3
hayah / havah (to be), היה	H1961	The verb <i>"to be, become, come to pass,"</i> on which the Name is built	Exodus 3:14
Ehyeh (I will be), אֶהְיֶה	H1961	Yahweh's first-person self-disclosure at the bush	Exodus 3:14
Yah (Yah), יָה	H3050	The short form of the Name, as in <i>Hallelu-Yah (praise Yah)</i>	Exodus 15:2; Psalm 68:4 [Heb. 68:5]
Adonai (my Lord), אֲדֹנָי	H136	The title read aloud in place of the Name	Psalms 110:1 (as title)
shem (name), שֵׁם	H8034	Name; reputation; the identity a person bears	Exodus 20:7; Numbers 6:27

HEBREW TERM	STRONG'S	CORE MEANING	KEY TEXT
<i>zekher</i> (<i>memorial</i>), זִכָּר	H2143	That by which one is remembered and invoked	Exodus 3:15; Psalm 135:13
<i>lashav</i> (<i>in vain / emptily</i>), לִשְׁוֹא	H7723	Emptily, falsely — the misuse the Torah forbids	Exodus 20:7

Two lexical observations govern what follows.

First, the Name is a verb-name. It is built on *bayah* (*to be*): **Yahweh** speaks of Himself in the first person as *Ehyeh* (*I will be*), and Israel speaks of Him in the third person as **Yahweh** — “*He is*” or “*He causes to be*” (Exodus 3:14–15).

Second, the command about the Name forbids its *lashav* (*empty / false*) use (Exodus 20:7). The Torah never forbids speaking it. It commands the opposite: “*You shall fear Yahweh your Elohim ... and swear by His name*” (Deuteronomy 6:13; 10:20).

III. THE FOUR LETTERS — WHAT יְהוָה IS AND WHERE IT COMES FROM

III-A. The Text Itself

The personal covenant Name **Yahweh** (יהוה) is written with four Hebrew consonants — *yod*, *be*, *vav*, *be* — read right to left. It is the most frequent name in the Tanakh, occurring roughly 6,828 times, far outnumbering **Elohim**. Unlike **Elohim**, a title for deity shared across the ancient Near East, יהוה is unique to Israel’s covenant — a personal name, not a title.

III-B. The Root: “To Be”

Grammatically, יהוה is built on the verb *bayah* (*to be*), in its older form *bavah* (*to be, to come to pass*). It is the same root behind *Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh* (*I will be who I will be*) at the burning bush:

אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה

“*Elohim said to Moses, I will be who I will be ... Say this to the children of Israel: I will be has sent me to you*” (Exodus 3:14)

יהוה is best read as a third-person form of the same verb — “*He is*” or “*He causes to be.*” The One who calls Himself *Ehyeh* is called by Israel **Yahweh**.

III-C. The Name Given, Not Merely Known

“I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as El Shaddai, but by My name Yahweh I did not make Myself known to them” (Exodus 6:3)

This is the covenant’s own claim: the four letters are not an ordinary word for deity but a personal disclosure, given at a specific covenant moment, carrying a weight the patriarchal title did not.

III-D. The Earliest Outside Witness

The earliest generally accepted appearance of the Name outside the Tanakh is the Mesha Stele (the Moabite Stone), about 840 BCE. In it a Moabite king boasts of taking the vessels of **Yahweh** from Nebo, spelling the Name with the same four consonants — independent corroboration from a hostile source that Israel’s **Elohim** bore this four-letter Name centuries before the Babylonian exile.

Finding — the spelling: The four consonants יהוה are fixed in every Hebrew manuscript tradition and are confirmed outside the Tanakh by the Mesha Stele. **Corroborated.**

IV. HOW THE NAME WAS WRITTEN — FROM PALEO-HEBREW TO THE MASORETIC TEXT

IV-A. Paleo-Hebrew Letters and the Four Dots

Among the Dead Sea Scrolls, several manuscripts written in the later square script preserve יהוה in the older paleo-Hebrew letters — a visible mark setting the Name apart. Others replace the four letters with four dots, the *tetrapuncta*, a signal not to pronounce the Name as written. A Greek copy of Leviticus from Qumran (4Q120) renders the Name **Iao** rather than translating it, and other early Jewish Greek copies write the Name in Hebrew letters inside the Greek text. Second Temple scribes guarded the Name; they did not replace it.

IV-B. The Masoretic Vowel Points: Written and Read

The consonantal text was fixed long before vowel marks were added. Between roughly the sixth and tenth centuries CE the Masoretes pointed the whole Tanakh. Rather than supply the Name’s own vowels, they pointed יהוה with vowels from the word the reader was to say aloud — ordinarily **Adonai** (*my Lord*), or **Elohim** when **Adonai** already stands beside the Name. This is *ketiv / qere* (*written / read*) carried to its most consistent extreme: on every occurrence, what is written and what is read are different words. Scholars call it a *qere perpetuum* (*permanent reading*).

Finding — the Masoretic vowels: The vowels printed with יהוה in Hebrew Bibles are a reading cue for a substitute word, not the Name's own vowels. Carried by the Masoretic practice itself and by the variation of the pointing when Adonai precedes. **Corroborated.**

V. HOW THE NAME WAS SPOKEN — THE EVIDENCE FOR PRONUNCIATION

Applying the **Deuteronomy 19:15** standard, the pronunciation question must be settled by converging independent evidence, not by preference. Six kinds of evidence exist; each is weighed on its own terms.

Witness One — theophoric names. Hundreds of Hebrew personal names carry a short form of the Name: Elijah (*Eliyahu*, "my El is Yahu"), Isaiah (*Yeshayahu*, "Yah saves"), Joshua (*Yehoshua*, "Yeho saves"). The prefix form is *Yeho-* or *Yo-*; the suffix form is *-yahu* or *-yah*. Names are not liturgical substitutes; they are how people called one another every day. This large, old, independent body of evidence points to an opening *Yah-*.

Witness Two — the Elephantine papyri. A colony of Jewish soldiers on the Nile island of Elephantine kept its own temple to the **Elohim** of Israel in the fifth century BCE. Their Aramaic letters — including the priest Yedoniah's petition of 407 BCE to the Persian governor Bagohi to rebuild the temple — write the Name in the short form *Yahu*, יהו. It is the closest thing to a contemporary record from ordinary covenant people, and it corroborates the *Yah-/Yahu-* of the names.

Witness Three — an Egyptian place list. A list from the reign of Amenhotep III (fourteenth century BCE) at Soleb names "*the Shasu of Yhw*," read roughly *Yahwi* or *Yahwa*. If it refers to the same Name, it is centuries older than the other evidence, but the link is debated and it cannot stand as a witness on its own.

Witness Four — the Greek church writers. Theodoret of Cyrus (fifth century) states that the Samaritans pronounce the Name *Iabe*, Ιαβε — roughly *Yahweh*. Epiphanius of Salamis gives the same form, *Iabe*, and Clement of Alexandria (second century) gives *Iaoue*, roughly *Yahweh*. The Samaritans kept a priestly line separate from rabbinic practice and still spoke the Name when these writers heard it, which gives Theodoret's report particular weight.

Witness Five — Greek transliterations and magical papyri. Jewish Greek copies and pagan magical papyri from Egypt render the Name with vowel strings — *Iao*, *Iaoouee* and similar. These are

late, and the magical texts are syncretistic, so they carry less weight; but they consistently hear the Name as a vowel-carrying word.

Witness Six — the grammar of Exodus 3:14. A third-person form of *hayah (to be)* built on the simple active stem gives *yahweh (he is / he causes to be)*, which matches the *Ehyeh* of the burning bush exactly.

V-A. What the Evidence Converges On — and Where It Does Not

Weighed together, the theophoric names, the Elephantine papyri, the Greek church writers, and the grammar of **Exodus 3:14** converge on an opening *Yah-* and a form built on *hayah (to be)*. The modern scholarly reconstruction, *Yahweh*, יְהוָה, reads the Name as "*He is*" or "*He causes to be.*" It is the strongest-supported reconstruction, and this document follows it.

Honesty requires stating what the evidence does not settle. The short forms — *Yahu*, *Yebo-*, *Iao* — end in an *o* or *u* sound, not in the *-eh* of *Yahweh*, and the final vowel of the full Name is the least certain part of the reconstruction. That tension is real and is not fully resolved.

V-B. Minority Positions Recorded for the Record

Two other pronunciations are argued in covenant communities today and deserve honest mention. *Yahuah* (also *Yahuwah*) is argued from the *-yahu* endings, read as the Name's own internal vowels rather than a shortened form. *Yehovah* is argued by Gerard Gertoux and others from the vowel pattern of the Masoretic manuscripts and from three-syllable readings. Neither has the convergence of independent witnesses that *Yahweh* has, but both are argued from evidence rather than invented, and they are recorded here rather than excluded.

Finding — the opening syllable Yah-: Carried by the theophoric names, the Elephantine papyri, the short form Yah in the Tanakh itself (**Exodus 15:2**), and the Greek transcriptions. **Corroborated.**

Finding — the full form Yahweh: Carried by Theodoret and Epiphanius (Iabe), Clement (Iaoue), and the grammar of Exodus 3:14; the final vowel remains contested. **Corroborated, with the final vowel open.**

Finding — Yahuah and Yehovah: Each rests on one line of argument without independent convergence. **Single witness.**

VI. WHY THE PRONUNCIATION WAS WITHDRAWN — THE FENCE AROUND THE NAME

VI-A. The Misuse Prohibition

“You shall not take the name of Yahweh your Elohim in vain, for Yahweh will not hold guiltless the one who takes His name in vain” (Exodus 20:7)

The command targets *lashav* (*empty / false*) use — false oaths, empty invocation, profanation — not the act of speaking the Name. The wider withdrawal of pronunciation came later, in the Second Temple period, as a protective fence around this command.

VI-B. The Blasphemy Case

“Whoever blasphemes the name of Yahweh shall surely be put to death” (Leviticus 24:16)

The severity of this case, set in the narrative of **Leviticus 24:10–16**, supplied the legal seriousness that later practice cited when it extended caution from misuse of the Name to avoiding ordinary pronunciation.

VI-C. The Tanakh’s Own Record That the Name Was Spoken

The written covenant shows the Name in the mouths of priests and ordinary people alike. The priests are to bless Israel with the Name three times, and **Yahweh** says, *“So they shall put My name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them”* (**Numbers 6:24–27**). Israel is commanded to swear by the Name (**Deuteronomy 6:13; 10:20**). And in the fields of Bethlehem, Boaz greets his reapers:

“Yahweh be with you. And they answered him, Yahweh bless you” (Ruth 2:4)

Jeremiah names the opposite as the sin: prophets *“who think to make My people forget My name ... as their fathers forgot My name for Baal”* (Jeremiah 23:27).

VI-D. Post-Biblical Practice and the Rise of Substitution

Rabbinic sources, cited here as historical reference, show the practice narrowing over time. The Mishnah records that in the Temple the priests pronounced the Name *“as it is written”* in the daily priestly blessing, and used a substitute only outside the Temple (Mishnah Sotah 7:6; Tamid 7:2). On the Day of Atonement the high priest spoke the Name in the confessions over the bull and the goat and at the drawing of the lots, in the Temple court (Mishnah Yoma 3:8; 6:2). A later report says the priests ceased to bless with the Name after the death of Simeon the Righteous (Talmud Yoma 39b). In place of speaking it, the reading tradition substituted *Adonai* (*my Lord*) in prayer and reading, and

HaShem (the Name) in everyday speech. This document treats that practice as a fence built out of care for **Exodus 20:7**, not as evidence that the Name was never meant to be spoken.

VI-E. The Greek Bible and Kyrios

The oldest surviving Jewish Greek copies of the Torah and Prophets do not translate the Name. They write it in Hebrew letters inside the Greek text, or transliterate it as *Iao* (P. Fouad 266; the Nahal Hever Minor Prophets; 4Q120). The rendering *Kyrios (Lord)*, Κύριος, is universal in the copies made by Christians from the second century CE onward. From there it passed into the Latin *Dominus* and the English *"LORD,"* fixing the substitution in the Greek-, Latin-, and English-speaking world for nearly two thousand years.

Finding — that the Tanakh forbids speaking the Name: The Torah forbids its empty use (**Exodus 20:7**) and blasphemy (**Leviticus 24:16**), while commanding swearing and blessing by it (**Deuteronomy 6:13; Numbers 6:27**) and recording it in ordinary greeting (**Ruth 2:4**). **Not in the text.**

VII. HOW “JEHOVAH” ENTERED ENGLISH

VII-A. The Hybrid Reading

Because the Masoretes pointed יהוה with the vowels of *Adonai* as a reading cue — never meant to be read as its own word — a reader who did not know the convention could join the consonants *Y-H-W-H* to those vowels and produce a new word: *Yehowah*, Latinized as *"Jehovah."*

VII-B. The Historical Record

The reading appears in Latin sources by the thirteenth century. The Dominican Raymundus Martini wrote *Yohoua* in his *Pugio Fidei* (about 1270), and Porchetus de Salvaticis used *Iohouah* in 1303 — both before Petrus Galatinus (1518), who is often, and wrongly, credited with inventing the form. William Tyndale brought *"Iehouah"* into the English Bible in 1530, and the 1611 King James Version prints *"Jehovah"* on its own four times (**Exodus 6:3; Psalm 83:18; Isaiah 12:2; 26:4**), rendering the Name *"LORD"* everywhere else.

VII-C. The Grammatical Verdict

Whatever its long history, *"Jehovah"* is a hybrid by construction: the consonants of one word joined to the vowels of another, a combination the Masoretes never meant to be pronounced. This document records it as a documented and long-used English convention, not as the original pronunciation.

Finding — Jehovah as the original pronunciation: The form arises from reading a substitute word's vowels with the Name's consonants. **Not corroborated.**

VIII. ENGLISH SPELLING CONVENTIONS TODAY — A SURVEY

English renderings of יהוה fall into six broad conventions. The table states the basis and the drawback of each without declaring any English spelling beyond dispute.

ENGLISH FORM	BASIS / WHERE USED	PRINCIPAL DRAWBACK
LORD (small capitals)	KJV, ESV, NASB, NIV, and most English Bibles; follows the <i>Kyrios / Dominus</i> substitution	Translates a personal Name as a title, hiding that the Hebrew is a name, not the word " <i>Lord</i> "
Yahweh	Jerusalem Bible and New Jerusalem Bible; the modern scholarly reconstruction; the form used throughout the Miqdash Bethel library	The final vowel is the most contested part of the reconstruction (V-A)
Jehovah	American Standard Version (1901); the New World Translation; older hymns and preaching	A hybrid of the Name's consonants and <i>Adonai</i> 's vowels (VII)
YHWH (untransliterated)	Some Jewish and academic publications; avoids choosing a pronunciation	Leaves the English reader no way to say the Name
Yahuah / Yahuwah	Some Sacred Name communities; argued from the <i>-yahu</i> endings	Minority position without the convergence of witnesses behind <i>Yahweh</i>
Yehovah	Argued by Gerard Gertoux and others from the vowel pattern of Masoretic manuscripts	Minority position among linguists; most transliteration evidence favors two syllables

Miqdash Bethel writes **Yahweh**, with the Hebrew יהוה, because it rests on the strongest convergence of evidence (V-A). This document keeps "*Jehovah*" and the minority forms in the record rather than erasing them, because the two-or-three-witness standard requires full disclosure of the evidence rather than premature certainty.

IX. THREE-RELIGION AUDIT — THE NAME ACROSS JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM

The table sets the three traditions against the Tanakh’s own findings. Comparative texts are cited as historical reference only, in keeping with the standing rule of this document.

ELEMENT	✧ JUDAISM	† CHRISTIANITY	☉ ISLAM
Written form	Preserves יהוה exactly in the consonantal text; never alters the four letters.	Preserves יהוה in Hebrew scholarship; English Bibles usually translate it "LORD."	Does not transmit יהוה; uses <i>Allah (the Deity)</i> for the Elohim of Abraham.
Spoken form	Withdrawn from ordinary speech since the Second Temple period; <i>Adonai</i> and <i>HaShem</i> substituted.	Most traditions follow <i>Kyrios / Dominus / "LORD"</i> ; some restore <i>Yahweh</i> or <i>"Jehovah."</i>	Reveres <i>al-Isim al-A'zam (the Greatest Name)</i> as hidden from common knowledge — a parallel reverence, not the same name.
Covenant strength	Kept every letter of the Name in every copy for over two thousand years; the Mishnah itself records the Name spoken "as it is written" in the Temple.	Some translations restore the Name; the scholarship that reconstructed <i>Yahweh</i> grew largely in Christian universities.	Constant spoken use of the divine name alongside deep reverence shows the two belong together.
Covenant departure	A fence around Exodus 20:7 became a rule against speaking the Name at all, which the Tanakh does not give (see Doc 255).	A Christian-era Greek convention (<i>Kyrios</i>) replaced the Name in most Bibles; <i>"Jehovah"</i> spread as if it were the original.	The personal Name Yahweh , given as a memorial forever (Exodus 3:15), is not used.

X. CORRECTIONS TO EARLIER LIBRARY MATERIAL

The Library’s rule is that its own earlier work is tested by the same standard as everyone else’s. The August 2026 edition of this study needed the following refinements, now made in the text above.

Correction 1 — where and when the Name was spoken in the Temple. Flagged by **Doc 255**.

The August edition said that by the Second Temple period the Name **"was spoken only by the High Priest, only in the Holy of Holies, only on Yom Kippur."** The Mishnah records the priests saying the Name **"as it is written"** in the daily priestly blessing in the Temple, and the high priest’s

utterances on the Day of Atonement took place mainly in the Temple court. The report about Simeon the Righteous shows the practice narrowing over time (Section VI-D).

Correction 2 — the Septuagint and Kyrios. The August edition said the Septuagint translators rendered the Name as *Kyrios*. The oldest Jewish Greek copies keep the Name in Hebrew letters or as *Iao*; *Kyrios* is universal in the later Christian copies (Section VI-E).

Correction 3 — the Greek church writers. The August edition said Clement, Theodoret, and Epiphanius each attributed *Iabe* to the Samaritans. Theodoret is the one who names the Samaritans; Epiphanius gives *Iabe*, and Clement gives *Iaoue* (Section V).

Correction 4 — the final vowel. The August edition argued that the final *be* could not be a vowel letter because vowel letters came later. Final vowel letters are already in use in the Mesha Stele, so that argument is withdrawn. The real open question is that the short forms end in *-o* or *-u* (Section V-A).

Correction 5 — Raymundus Martini's spelling. The August edition gave his form as "*Jehova*." His manuscript spells it *Yohoua* (Section VII-B).

Correction 6 — the first declaration. The first covenant declaration in the August edition had lost its opening words. It is restored in Section XI.

XI. SEVEN COVENANT DECLARATIONS ON THE NAME

Per the **Deuteronomy 19:15** standard, no doctrine may stand on a single text. Each declaration below draws on more than one witness.

#	COVENANT DECLARATION	BASIS
I	The four letters יהוה are the personal covenant Name of Yahweh , disclosed at a specific covenant moment and distinct from the title Elohim .	Exodus 3:13–15; 6:2–3
II	The Name is built on the verb " <i>to be</i> " and declares that Yahweh is, causes to be, and does not change.	Exodus 3:14; Malachi 3:6
III	The Name was given to be remembered and called upon, not hidden.	Genesis 4:26; Exodus 3:15; Joel 2:32
IV	The Torah forbids the empty and blasphemous use of the Name, and commands blessing and swearing by it.	Exodus 20:7; Leviticus 24:16; Numbers 6:27; Deuteronomy 6:13

#	COVENANT DECLARATION	BASIS
V	Yahweh is the best-evidenced pronunciation; its final vowel remains open, and no English spelling may be treated as beyond dispute.	Deuteronomy 19:15 ; Section V
VI	<i>"Jehovah"</i> is a documented English convention built from a reading cue, not the original sound, and should be identified as such.	Exodus 6:3 (KJV history); Section VII
VII	Making the people forget the Name is the prophets' charge against false teachers; restoring it is covenant work.	Jeremiah 23:27 ; Psalm 105:1 ; Isaiah 12:4

XII. THE COVENANT RESPONSE — WHAT THE TANAKH SAYS TO THE ONE WHO ASKS

This study asked how יהוה is spelled, how it was pronounced, and how English has tried to render it. The honest answer to each is different in kind. The Tanakh's answer to the one who asks is fivefold.

First: the spelling is not in dispute. The four letters stand unchanged in every Hebrew manuscript, from the Mesha Stele forward (Section III).

Second: the pronunciation is a matter of converging evidence. Theophoric names, the Elephantine papyri, and the Greek church writers point to **Yahweh**. The final vowel is still open, and *Yahuah* and *Yehovah* are argued from real evidence (Section V).

Third: the English is the most fluid of all. *"LORD,"* **Yahweh**, *"Jehovah,"* and *YHWH* each have a history, a community, and a drawback. None of them is the final word on a question the manuscripts leave partly open (Section VIII).

Fourth: the weight of the Name does not depend on its spelling. Whether a reader was taught **Yahweh**, *"Jehovah,"* or *"LORD,"* the claim behind the four letters is the same: a personal Name, self-disclosed at the burning bush, built on the verb *"to be"* (**Exodus 3:14–15**).

Fifth: call on the Name with reverence, not as a weapon. Write **Yahweh** as the best-evidenced form, record the other readings honestly, and let reverence for the Name be shared ground among Judaism, Christianity, and Islam rather than a point of division.

The four letters were written once, by covenant, and are not waiting on English to finish arguing over how to say them.

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Psalms 135:13	Your memorial through all generations	II

“This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.”

Exodus 3:15 — The Written Covenant of Yahweh

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