

In the Third Edition of *Jehovah's Witnesses Defended: An Answer to Scholars and Critics*, Greg Stafford takes up the familiar defense of subjects having to do with the use and pronunciation of the divine name, the identity of the biblical God Jah and of Jesus of Nazareth, as well as issues and questions having to do with salvation, God's sovereignty and mankind's "free will." This edition also contains discussions of several controversial issues, including questions related to abortion, a person's sexual orientation, and regarding uses of blood.

Most significantly, this book puts forth not only a defense of some the biblical teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses associated with the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, but it also further introduces the Christian Witnesses of Jah, Jehovah's Witnesses who reject human traditions when these can be shown to contradict what is based on the best available reasons. Thus, a call is made to all Jehovah's Witnesses, to all Christians, indeed, to "every breathing thing" to bear witness to and to praise the biblical God Jah, and to acknowledge what can be shown to be true for good reasons about Jesus of Nazareth.—Psalm 150:6; Isaiah 29:13; 43:10, 12; Acts 18:24-28; Galatians 1:10; Revelation 19:1, 3, 4, 6.

GREG STAFFORD is also the author of *Three Dissertations on the Teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses* and of various articles and debates on biblical Christianity and the history and the beliefs of the Watchtower Society and Jehovah's Witnesses. He is a Christian Witness of Jah, one of Jehovah's Witnesses who rejects traditions and beliefs that are not based on the best available evidence.



Cover design by George Foster

Religion

ISBN: 978-0-9659814-0-6



9 780965 981408

Jehovah's Witnesses Defended

AN ANSWER
TO SCHOLARS
AND CRITICS

THIRD
EDITION

GREG
STAFFORD



Jehovah's Witnesses Defended

AN ANSWER
TO SCHOLARS
AND CRITICS

— THIRD EDITION —

GREG STAFFORD

Jehovah's
Witnesses
Defended

— THIRD EDITION —

Jehovah's Witnesses Defended

— THIRD EDITION —

AN ANSWER
TO SCHOLARS
AND CRITICS

GREG STAFFORD



Murrieta, California

Jehovah's Witnesses Defended:
An Answer to Scholars and Critics, Third Edition
Copyright © 2009 by Elihu Books, LLC.

Published by Elihu Books, LLC.

www.elihubooks.com

Mailing address:

39252 Winchester Road, Suite #107-404
Murrieta, CA 92563

Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations from the Old and New Testaments of the Bible are from the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures With References*, Revised, Copyright © 1984. At times, however, the author will present his own translation of these and of other related texts.

All rights reserved. Except for brief quotations embodied in printed reviews or critical articles, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or computer of any kind, transmitted in any form or by any means (printed, written, photocopying, visual, electronic, audio, or otherwise), without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Printed in the United States of America by
Angel Printing, Inc., Oceanside, California

*This printed edition may differ in form and in content from pre-publication copies of some of the material released online by the author. Only the printed forms of this book contain the published edition.

Publisher's Cataloging-in-Publication
(Provided by Quality Books, Inc.)

Stafford, Greg G.

Jehovah's Witnesses defended : an answer to scholars
and critics / by Greg Stafford. -- 3rd ed.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

LCCN 2008905531

ISBN-13: 978-0-9659814-0-8

ISBN-10: 0-9659814-0-1

1. Jehovah's Witnesses--Doctrines. 2. Jehovah's
Witnesses--Apologetic works. I. Title.

BX8526.S69 2009

289.9'2

QBI08-600184



“Jehovah” and Jehovah’s Witnesses

Jehovah’s Witnesses are unique in their extensive public and private use of the name of the God of ancient Israel, which in modern English is pronounced, “Jehovah.” Jehovah’s Witnesses who are either associated with the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society or with the Christian Witnesses of Jah have not only used this name in more than three hundred languages, but they also regularly use, discuss, and defend the significance of God’s name in their literature and in their world-wide ministry.¹ Truly, Jehovah’s Witnesses are *known* for their use of God’s name, more so than any other religious group active on earth today or over the past eighty years or so.²

While you may have heard that “Jehovah” is a modern English pronunciation of the biblical God’s name, unless you are one of Jehovah’s Witnesses or a Christian Witness of Jah you may have also been taught that it is not an “accurate” pronunciation. Indeed, given the fact that many popular English reference works have

¹ For more information regarding the languages in which Witnesses who are associated with the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society publish literature containing God’s name, see <http://www.watchtower.org/languages.htm>. To learn more about the Christian Witnesses of Jah, see my “Christian Witnesses of Jah,” *IN MEDIO*, October 1, 2007, which is available online at <http://www.elihubooks.com>. See also the web site <http://christianwitnessesofjah.org>.

² For additional arguments in support of my claim here that the Witnesses are unique among all other religious groups on earth today in their use of the divine name, see my *Three Dissertations on the Teachings of Jehovah’s Witnesses* (Murrieta, CA: Elihu Books, 2002), pages 163-170. Though publications of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society used the name “Jehovah” before 1931, it was in that year that they began to call themselves “Jehovah’s witnesses” (then later, “Jehovah’s Witnesses”) whereas before 1931 they were known primarily as “Bible Students.” See “Equipping the New World Organization,” *The Watchtower*, July 15, 1950, page 211, par. 1.

suggested as much, some even going as far as to claim that the name “Yahweh” should be used rather than “Jehovah,”³ it would not be surprising at all to find that many people today are more reserved than they probably should be when it comes to the use of God’s name. I say “probably should be” because these same English reference works do not seem to have considered (and they certainly do not present) all of the relevant historical information on this subject, information that if fully considered would likely result in a much different conclusion regarding the pronunciation of the Judeo-Christian God’s name.

People throughout much of the past two thousand years or more have offered a variety of excuses for not using the name of the biblical God in their Bibles or in their public and private worship. Some people choose not to use the name without offering any good, biblical reasons for their non-use. They have simply accepted certain traditions that have no support from the Bible. But if there are no biblical reasons supporting non-use of the divine name, then the good, biblical reasons for using the name of Abraham’s, Isaac’s, Jacob’s, Moses’, and even Jesus’ God (Exodus 3:6-7; Micah 5:4) should be accepted. This is particularly true if those who do not use the name claim to worship this same God, for his name is found and used explicitly throughout the Bible.

In Chapter 1 of this book I am going to present the best available reasons for and against pronouncing the divine name today. I will also present and discuss a variety of other issues related to ancient and to modern pronunciations of the biblical God’s name, and in the process provide what I consider to be the best available evidence that I believe can help resolve any lingering concerns over the pronunciation and use of God’s name.

³ The erroneous belief that “Yahweh” is to be preferred over “Jehovah” according to the Hebrew language (as if “Jehovah” is a Hebrew form of the name!) can be found in almost any English dictionary. For example, in *Webster’s II, New Riverside University Dictionary* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1994), page 651, we are told that “Jehovah” is an “Alteration of Heb. *Yahweh*,” and, “The form *Jehovah* did not exist as a Hebrew word.” But, again, no one claims that “Jehovah” is “a Hebrew word”! Rather, “Jehovah” is the Anglicized form of the Hebrew name of God which name is nowhere in Hebrew, Aramaic, or in any ancient Greek form of the divine name (see discussion below) clearly pronounced, “Yahweh.”

In this light, I will explore the reasons given by some against use of God’s name in translations of the Old and New Testaments, in particular as it relates to the use of the name in the 1984 Reference Edition of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society. Finally, I will discuss the possible meaning(s) of the biblical God’s name and what this means for those who worship him.

It is my hope that in discussing these issues here and by providing a defense for the use and pronunciation of the divine name by Jehovah’s Witnesses based on the best available evidence, that there will be a greater overall appreciation for the use and for the meaning of the divine name in ancient and in modern times.

Pronouncing the Divine Name

Excuses for not using the divine name found in the Old Testament. There is no disputing the fact that there is a distinct name for God found thousands of times in the Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament (hereafter, OT). Specifically, according to a popular modern edition of the Hebrew Bible (the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* [BHS]), the four-letter form of the divine name (in printed or square script, יהוה) occurs 6,828 times.⁴ Additionally, the name “Jah” (Hebrew: יה) occurs as a stand-alone name 49 times in the same Hebrew text.⁵ Thus, standing alone as a separate word the divine name as represented by both of these forms occurs a total of 6,877 times in the Hebrew OT. This is apart from any use of these forms of the divine name as a part of place or other personal names in the Bible (such as, “Jahaz” [Numbers 21:23] and “Jehohanan” [Ezra 10:6]).

What is in dispute is whether there are good reasons in the Bible itself for not using one or more forms of these names in modern translations of the Bible, or when speaking about the

⁴ This is the number of occurrences according to John R. Kohlenberger III and James A. Swanson, *The Hebrew English-Concordance to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998), page 630.

⁵ Kohlenberger and Swanson, *The Hebrew English-Concordance to the Old Testament*, page 623.

biblical God. Also in dispute is whether certain popular forms of the divine name should be used, such as the Anglicized (English) form "Jehovah," or what is claimed to be the most accurate pronunciation of God's name in Hebrew, the transliteration "Yahweh."⁶

I intend to show from the Bible itself that there is no reason whatsoever to avoid using modern translation equivalents of the divine name, just as there is no reason to avoid using modern pronunciations of any other ancient biblical name, such as the name "Jesus" (as explained in note 6). Further, in this chapter I will provide what I consider to be good reasons for rejecting the belief that we do not have a reasonably accurate understanding of how the divine name was pronounced in ancient times. I also believe (based on good reasons that I will present below) that an agreement can be reached today among most if not among all of those biblical scholars who study the divine name, when it comes to the best form and pronunciation of the divine name for use in Bible translation and in worship of the biblical God.

It should first be noted that there are no biblical laws against respectful use of the divine name in writing, in worship, or when speaking to others. There are, however, several biblical laws against *misuse* of Jehovah's name (for example, Exodus 20:7

⁶ A word is transliterated if its letters in one language are represented "in the corresponding characters of another alphabet" (*Webster's II, New Riverside University Dictionary*, page 1227). For example, the name represented by the Greek letters Ιησους is "transliterated" into English as *Iesous*. This is not, however, the English form of the name, but the Greek form represented in the English "corresponding characters." "Jesus" is the Modern English or Anglicized form of the Greek name which was first transliterated from Greek into the corresponding Latin form, *Iesus*. A word is "Anglicized" if it is made to "become English or similar to English in form, pronunciation, idiom or character" (*Webster's II, New Riverside University Dictionary*, page 108). "Jesus" is not a name that any Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek speaking Jew or Christian in the first century CE would have known about or used. There is no "j" sound in any of these languages. Rather, "Jesus" is the form of the name of the New Testament Christ that has been made to "become English or similar to English." Knowledge of Anglicization as explained above by *Webster's II, New Riverside University Dictionary* is what makes its comments regarding "Jehovah" not existing as a "Hebrew word" (quoted above [note 3]) so surprising. Such comments put doubt on the name "Jehovah" when in fact one is equally justified in saying that "Jesus" is not a 'Hebrew or a Greek word'! Yet, no one hesitates to use it in the Bible today or when speaking to others.

[“Jehovah will not leave the one unpunished who takes up his name in a worthless way”]; Leviticus 19:12 [“you must not swear in my name to a lie”]; Leviticus 24:11 [you must not “abuse the name” by ‘calling down evil upon it’]). Again, there is no biblical law that prohibits the general use of the divine name and there is no biblical law that requires use of the divine name only according to a strict, exact pronunciation in one language. Only misuses of the divine name are prohibited in the Bible.⁷

However, several centuries after the Jews were released from Babylon in the sixth century BCE, Hellenized rabbinic influence gave rise to different treatments of and restrictions on the use of the divine name in greetings, in temple services, in biblical literature, and in biblical commentary. In harmony with my conclusion in the preceding paragraph regarding biblical laws against use of the divine name, A. Marmorstein writes, “Neither in Egypt, nor in Babylonia, did the Jews know or keep a law prohibiting the use of God’s name, the Tetragrammaton, in ordinary conversation or greetings.” In line with my opening remarks in this paragraph, Marmorstein adds, “Yet, from the third

⁷ There has been much discussion over the meaning of texts such as Lev 24:11 and Amos 6:10, as well as their translation into Greek. Some believe these texts may be early attempts to prohibit the mere use of the divine name (see, for example, J.B. Gabel and C.B. Wheeler, “The Redactor’s Hand in the Blasphemy Pericope of Leviticus XXIV,” *VT* 30.2 [1980], pages 227-229). But see the excellent survey and discussion of possible meanings of the Hebrew text of Lev 24:10-23 by Rodney R. Hutton, “The Case of the Blasphemer Revisited (Lev. XXIV 10-23),” *VT* 49.4 (1999), pages 532-541, who argues that the condemnation in the Leviticus account is of the one who uses the divine name “illegitimately in some way (perhaps in a false accusation or a curse) ... [with the result that] he ‘degraded’ or ‘dishonored’ (God)” (page 540). Even in the LXX the context of the translation of verses 11 and 16 is that of “cursing” (see the use of *κατάρσῳμαι* [*katara’omai*] in verses 11, 14, and 15) in association with “naming the name.” Thus, contrary to Martin Rösel (“The Reading and Translation of the Divine Name in the Masoretic Tradition and the Greek Pentateuch,” *JSOT* 31.4 [June, 2007], page 418) there is no real possibility of a “self-contradiction” in the LXX translation of Lev 24:16 if it, as in 4QLXXLev^b (see below), used *Ιαω* (*Iao*) or any other form of the divine name. Again, it is clear from the context just what type of “naming” is involved (again, “cursing” or ‘dishonoring’). The same is true for Lev 18:21 (note the use of *βεβηλόω* [*bebelo’o*], which means to “desecrate” or “profane”). For some reason, Rösel does not consider either the use of *bebelo’o* or *katara’omai* in his discussion. Regarding Amos 6:10, the context is clearly also one where the use of the name is not appropriate because of Jehovah’s judgment against those whom he is about to “strike down.”—Amos 6:11.

century [BCE] till the third century [CE] such a prohibition existed and was partly observed.”⁸

According to Samuel Cohon, the tradition of not using the name in greetings began after the death of “Simon the Just” (291 or 270 BCE if this is Simeon I., son of Onias, or 199 BCE if the reference is to Simeon II., son of Onias II.). This was either due to reverence or “possibly because of Hellenistic persecution.”⁹ Cohon also notes that the Greek government was “bent on the Hellenization of the Jews” and “forbade them to mention God’s name” in writing.¹⁰ After the Maccabean victory (around 165/164 BCE), however, “the old practice was restored.”¹¹ But even here groups like the Pharisees “upon gaining the upper hand, abolished the practice on the ground that the notes, when cancelled, would be thrown away and the name would thus be defiled.”¹² On the other hand, Ephraim Urbach points out:

There is a tradition, it is true, that declares ‘when Simon the Just died, they ceased to use the Name in the benediction but in another version it is merely stated that ‘after the festival he was ill for seven days and died, and his colleagues refrained from using the Name in the benediction.’ The meaning may simply be that on account of their grief and mourning the priests refrained for some time after his death from using the Name in the priestly benediction. At any rate, we must not regard this tradition as fundamental and infer from it, in contradiction of all other sources, that a law was promulgated forbidding the use of the Name in the priestly benediction in the Temple. And undoubtedly this tradition did not antedate the enactment [200 CE, from the Mishnah], ordaining ‘that a man should use the Name in greeting his fellow’ (*M. Berakhot* ix. 5).¹³

⁸ A Marmorstein, *The Old Rabbinic Doctrine of God*, vol. 1, *The Names and Attributes of God* (New York, NY: Ktav Publishing House, 1968), page 19.

⁹ Samuel S. Cohon, “The Name of God, A Study in Rabbinic Theology,” *HUCA* 23.1, Seventy-fifth Anniversary Publication (1950-1951), page 588 [10] (see also page 591 [13]).

¹⁰ Cohon, “The Name of God, A Study in Rabbinic Theology,” page 588 [10].

¹¹ Cohon, “The Name of God, A Study in Rabbinic Theology,” page 589 [11].

¹² Cohon, “The Name of God, A Study in Rabbinic Theology,” page 589 [11].

¹³ Ephraim E. Urbach, *The Sages: Their Concepts and Beliefs*, trans. Israel Abrahams (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987), page 128.

Urbach references *Berakhot* 9.5 in the Mishnah, which reads, “And it was ordained that a man should salute his fellow with [the use of] the Name [of God].”¹⁴ After this Ruth 2:4 is quoted where Boaz addresses the harvesters upon his arrival with the words, “Jehovah be with you,” and the harvesters in return address Boaz with, “Jehovah bless you” (NWT). I will return to the discussion of the different uses and prohibitions regarding the divine name later in this chapter, when it is time to discuss the use of the divine name in the New Testament (hereafter, NT). The point I want to make here is that there is no clearly stated biblical law or ancient, established practice against use of the divine name in worship or in social situations with others by the Jews in general prior to 200 CE. There are only biblical laws (and, hence, likely a general Jewish practice) against certain *misuses* of God’s name.

Using “Lord” or “God” for the Hebrew Bible’s use of the divine name “does not represent the intention of the Hebrew writers themselves, but reflects a device of theologians in post-biblical times by which the utterance of the name of God was to be avoided.”¹⁵ In fact, the Bible not only uses the divine name explicitly in nearly seven thousand instances, but it also speaks clearly, repeatedly, and emphatically about how God *wants* his people to use his name. Yet, few Bible translations today help make this possible by using a form of the name itself.

By contrast, the *New World Translation* (NWT) published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society uses “Jehovah” in 6,827 of the 6,828 occurrences of the name in BHS.¹⁶ Compare this also with the popular *New International Version* (NIV), which does not use the divine name even one time! The NIV does not use “Jehovah”; it does not even use “Yahweh”; NIV also does not use “Jah” for either the shorter form of the divine name (see below) or when translating the expression “Hallelujah” (meaning, “Praise Jah”) in either the OT or the NT. Instead of translating the divine

¹⁴ Herbert Danby, *The Mishnah* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933), page 10.

¹⁵ J. Obermann, “The Divine Name *YHWH* in the Light of Recent Discoveries,” *JBL* 68 (1949), page 304.

¹⁶ The one exception is Judges 19:18, where the NWT Reference Bible (1984) has a note stating that the reason “Jehovah” was not used is because of textual uncertainty.

name with a modern language equivalent or using a transliteration of the Hebrew name according to a preferred pronunciation, the NIV uses "Lord" or "God" for the divine name or "Praise the LORD" in the OT and "Hallelujah" in the NT.¹⁷ Why, though, did the NIV committee choose not to use an actual form of the divine name in its translation? Here is one written explanation:

THE **N**^{ew}
HOLY **I**^{nternational}
BIBLE **V**^{ersion}

Edwin H. Palmer, Th. D., Executive Secretary

28 White Oak Lane, Wayne, N.J. 01470

Executive
Committee

Kenneth I. Barker
Dallas Theological
Seminary

Ralph Larle
Nazarene Theological
Seminary

Burton L. Cockland
Lambton University
Theological Seminary

K. L. Harris
Covenant Theological
Seminary

Larl S. Kalland
Conservative Baptist
Theological Seminary

Younger R. Kintherg
New York International
Bible Society

Richard N. Longenecker
Wycliffe College

William J. Martin
Regent College

Stephen W. Paine
Houghton College

Robert Preis
Comstock Theological
Seminary

Charles C. Ryrie
Dallas Theological
Seminary

John H. Stick
Calvin Theological
Seminary

Larry L. Walker
Southeastern Baptist
Theological Seminary

J. C. Wenger
Goshen Biblical Seminary

Martin H. Woudstra
Calvin Theological
Seminary

Miss Julie Moore
3531 Cortez
Klamath Falls, Oregon 97601

Dear Miss Julie,

Thank you for your letter and concern about the fact that the NIV did not use the name Jehovah in the Old Testament.

Here is why we did not: You are right that Jehovah is a distinctive name for God and ideally we should have used it. But we put 2½ million dollars into this translation and a sure way of throwing that down the drain is to translate, for example, Psalm 23 as, "Yahweh is my Shepherd." Immediately, we would have translated for nothing. Nobody would have used it. Oh, maybe you and a handful others. But a Christian had to be also wise and practical. We are the victims of 350 years of the King James tradition. It is far better to get two million to read it — that is how many have bought it to date — and to follow the King James, than to have two thousand buy it and miss the grand truth in the Bible on every page because they are following an old fashion translation and have the correct translation of Yahweh.

Furthermore, we do not know if we should say Jahu or Yahweh or Jehovah.

And we do cover ourselves in the preface.

It was a hard decision, and many of our translators agree with you.

Cordially yours,

E. Edwin H. Palmer

Edwin H. Palmer

¹⁷ See, for example, the NIV's translation of Psalm 146:1, 10; 147:1, 20; 148:1, 14; 149:1, 9; 150:1, 6, where in the footnotes to "Praise the LORD" NIV shows that it is translating two separate Hebrew words, *halelu* and *Yah* (or "Jah").

Above I have reproduced a letter written by Edwin Palmer, Executive Secretary of the NIV translation committee, in which he answers the question I asked at the end of the preceding paragraph. As amazing as it may seem, Palmer admits that the NIV committee “should have” used the divine name, but it did not. The reason? According to Palmer it is because doing so would have been a “sure way of throwing [2¼ million dollars] down the drain”! Palmer further states that if the committee had used a form of the divine name in the NIV then they would have “translated for nothing.” So instead they decided “to follow the King James” and mistranslate the Bible in nearly seven thousand instances, though they ‘cover themselves in the preface.’ Palmer and the NIV committee appear to have given little to no thought at all about how Jehovah himself might feel about their decision.

What Palmer and the NIV committee really accomplished was a further ‘victimization’ of the public by mistranslating or not translating the divine name at all thousands of times. Palmer’s excuses are shocking and the NIV’s mistreatment of the divine name, all apparently for the sake of money, is offensive to any worshiper of Jehovah, the God of the Bible. But Palmer is right about one thing: If the NIV had used “Jehovah,” or even “Yahweh,” Jehovah’s Witnesses would have bought and used the NIV more often than they probably do now, not just for this reason, though it is an important consideration to say the least!

Palmer’s excuses and the NIV committee’s decision to not use the divine name for the reasons he gives show how distant many Evangelicals and other Christian groups are from the divine name. Palmer’s remarks also show that many of these same people are quite aware of the unique love Jehovah’s Witnesses have for God’s name. This is a distinction that cannot help but make one think of James’ words in Acts 15:14 regarding the Gentiles, “God for the first time turned his attention to the nations to take out of them *a people for his name*” (emphasis added).

Surely it is no accident that we find God’s name in the Old Testament at least 6,877 times. It is intentional, purposeful. There is also no reason to think that it was anything but intentional for Jehovah to select “a people for his name” from the nations in the first century CE. It would, therefore, not be surprising at all to find

him collecting “out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues” those who today “glorify [his] name.”—Revelation 7:9; 15:4.

Reasons for using the divine name found in the Old Testament. In addition to the 6,877 reasons given previously for using the divine name in the Old Testament, the Bible also speaks openly about God's name and how it should be used. Therefore, unless someone can present to me a greater authority on the use of God's name in the Bible than what we read in the Bible itself, I intend to listen to what it says without regard for any “tradition” that says otherwise. Whether it is the tradition of the Jews, the tradition of the King James Version, or the tradition carried on by the NIV and other modern Bible translations and their committees, if the tradition ‘invalidates the Word of God’ then it should not be followed.—Matthew 15:6.

As for the Bible itself, this is what it says according to a translation that obviously was more concerned about what the text actually says regarding God's holy name, than it was about any traditions concerning the divine name in Jewry or in Christendom:

Exodus 9:16 (NWT)

But, in fact, for this cause I have kept you in existence, for the sake of showing you my power and in order to have my name declared in all the earth.

Jehovah felt so strongly about the ‘declaration of his name in all the earth’ that he allowed Pharaoh to remain in existence for this very reason. The glorification of his name would be accomplished in this instance through the demonstration of Jehovah's power against Pharaoh and on behalf of his people, which demonstration of power and deliverance continues to be “declared” even to this day. Yet, in spite of the name's occurrence in and its association with this biblical account, few today tell the story of the Exodus by using the name of the God that is actually a part of that history. They remember the story, but they have forgotten the God of the story.

Is the reason people today choose not to use Jehovah's name as a part of the Exodus story because Jehovah himself decided

that it was no longer necessary? Did Jehovah at any time decree that his name no longer needed to be “declared in all the earth”? There is no evidence for this, as the name still remains in copies of the ancient Hebrew text of Exodus available today. Yet, relatively few people choose to use God’s biblical name. By doing this, certain people of the earth are knowingly or unknowingly taking away from the Bible text the glorification that it gives to God’s name because of his acts of greatness and of love. Consider:

Exodus 15:1-3 (NWT)

At that time Moses and the sons of Israel proceeded to sing this song to Jehovah and to say the following: “Let me sing to Jehovah, for he has become highly exalted. The horse and its rider he has pitched into the sea. My strength and [my] might is Jah, since he serves for my salvation. This is my God, and I shall laud him; my father’s God, and I shall raise him on high. Jehovah is a manly person of war. Jehovah is his name.”

Will anyone truly sing the song of Moses without using the actual name of Moses’ God in the song itself? Can you imagine Moses doing so? In effect, Palmer and other scholars of this world who agree with him say to Moses, “People today no longer use God’s name, except for a handful of people like Jehovah’s Witnesses or more recently the Christian Witnesses of Jah, so instead of ‘translating for nothing’ we will not use it either since we would rather have people read or sing your song without God’s name in it than to lose all of the money that we put into making the translation itself. Because if we use God’s name then many people will not read it, or sing your song.” Can you imagine how Moses might reply? Like this, perhaps:

Deuteronomy 31:30-32:1-3 (NWT)

And Moses proceeded to speak in the hearing of all the congregation of Israel the words of this song until their completion: “Give ear, O heavens, and let me speak; and let the earth hear the sayings of my mouth. My instruction will drip as the rain, my saying will trickle as the dew, as gentle

rains upon grass and as copious showers upon vegetation. For I shall declare the name of Jehovah.

Moses spoke to the heavens and to the earth, in the hearing of “all the congregation of Israel” he declared “the name of Jehovah.” How anyone today could translate Moses’ words and at the same time silence his declaration of God’s name by removing that name from the words he declared is something only those devoted to the use of the NIV and other translations similarly devoid of God’s name can comprehend. I admit: I cannot comprehend it.

But the NIV and other translations of the Bible that similarly refuse to translate the name of God in the Old Testament text do not stop with the words of Moses. They also gut the song of David. Thankfully, however, the NWT is one popular and available Bible translation that rights this wrong in many places. For example:

Psalm 9:10 (NWT)

And those knowing your name will trust in you, for you will certainly not leave those looking for you, O Jehovah.

“Those knowing your name ...” Jehovah’s Witnesses know God’s name. The Christian Witnesses of Jah know his name and they proclaim it apart from traditions of men that invalidate his word (Matthew 15:6). Certainty over the precise pronunciation of the divine name is not a biblical requirement, nor is certainty needed for any other ancient name (including “Jesus,” as noted earlier). God’s name is not a magical word that must be inflected just right in order to unlock some special power. There is no biblical text or account that teaches or even suggests such a thing.

For those who believe that the Bible presents us with a real (but partial) history of God’s dealings with mankind, it is clear that Jehovah is the author of our linguistic capacities and expressions. This is because in the Bible Jehovah is the one who caused the division of earth’s first human language into many languages, languages that since that time have prevented the same capacity for effective human communication, the kind that is experienced between same-language users (Genesis 11:7). There is nothing to suggest that in doing so he prevented acceptable pronunciations of

his name in all the languages that were to come. If Jehovah did in fact lock up the only acceptable pronunciation(s) of his name in one language, or in one dialect of one language (see below, page 112, note 187), then how could his name be “declared in all the earth?”—Exodus 9:16; compare Romans 9:17.¹⁸

Ancient names have equivalents in other ancient languages and in modern languages to the extent that these other (non-original) languages can bear or represent the sounds of the translated (or transliterated [see page 4, note 6]) language’s name. But this does not always result in a phonetic correspondence between the two languages. Try representing a Semitic guttural sound, or capture precisely an ancient aspirant, or vocalize various other Hebrew consonant or vowel sounds in an ancient Indo-European language such as Greek, or in a modern language like English. It is often difficult, if not impossible, to do so and to be so sure that that is how it was done by the ancients.¹⁹

I will revisit questions related to the pronunciation of the divine name again in the next section. For now it is enough to remember that the most widely accepted English or Anglicized pronunciation of the Hebrew name for the biblical God is “Jehovah.” Jehovah’s Witnesses accept this and they continue the

¹⁸ Consider, too, the words of Origen (c. 185-c. 253 CE) in this regard:

Christians in prayer do not even use the precise names which divine Scripture applies to God; but the Greeks use Greek names, the Romans Latin names, and every one prays and sings praises to God as he best can, in his mother tongue. For the Lord of all the languages of the earth hears those who pray to Him in each different tongue, hearing, if I may so say, but one voice, expressing itself in different dialects. For the Most High is not as one of those who select one language, Barbarian or Greek, knowing nothing of any other, and caring nothing for those who speak in other tongues [*Against Celsus*, Book 8, Chapter 37, ANF 4, page 653].

¹⁹ See Ephraim Avigdor Speiser, “The Pronunciation of Hebrew Based Chiefly on the Transliterations in the Hexapla: The Laryngals,” *JQR* 23 [1932-33], pages 258-259, who shows that the “Greeks had no adequate equivalent for Hebrew ׀ [waw]” and that because of this the various transliterations offered for it in Origen’s Hexapla version of the Old Testament are “more conventional than phonetic.” Speiser, “The Pronunciation of Hebrew Based Chiefly on the Transliterations in the Hexapla: The Vowels,” *JQR* 24 (1933-34), page 33, also notes that “Origen had only one letter available for the representation of the Hebrew *a*-vowels: the Greek *a*,” making the transliterations in his Hexapla “powerless to indicate directly the quantitative differences of the Hebrew [*a*-sounds].”

biblical tradition of David, who 'trusted' in Jehovah (Psalm 9:10). The Christian Witnesses of Jah believe that Jehovah accepts modern language pronunciations of his name, especially where these pronunciations are based on the best available reasons. We recognize that in the Bible God's people use his name, and that God *wants* people to know it and to use it with respect (Psalm 74:10). There are, of course, biblical laws against *misuse* of the divine name, but there are no biblical laws against using the divine name in one's own language, a language created by God himself (Genesis 11:7). Using the divine name today will allow us to do what David did, at least in this respect:

Psalm 22:22-23; 34:3 (NWT)

I will declare your name to my brothers; in the middle of the congregation I shall praise you. YOU fearers of Jehovah, praise him! ... O magnify Jehovah with me, YOU people, and let us exalt his name together.

Hard pressed you will be to fulfill this scripture if you have allowed yourself to be 'victimized by the King James tradition'! By contrast, you would have no trouble at all joining in with David if you are using the *New World Translation* or a translation of the Bible that actually represents a form of the divine name that is in the text itself, or that is based on the best available reasons. Jehovah knows those who remember and those who forget his name:

Psalm 44:20-21 (NWT)

If we have forgotten the name of our God, or we spread out our palms to a strange god, will not God himself search this out? For he is aware of the secrets of the heart.

Most people on earth today have "forgotten the name of our God." It must be said that were it not for Jehovah's Witnesses, and now the Christian Witnesses of Jah, then Jehovah's name would to a noticeably greater extent be lost from the consciousness of the general public. Those who praise Jah's name should be given credit for not 'forgetting God's name.' But where some have

advanced false teachings in Jehovah’s name, as the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society has done on many occasions, they should acknowledge their errors and cease using God’s name in association with uncertain and ever-changing interpretations of Bible chronology,²⁰ unsupported views about the definition and use of blood (see Chapter 9), or in association with unscriptural uses of authority like we see today with the “Governing Body” associated with the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society.²¹ The

²⁰ For a discussion of the history of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society’s published views on Bible chronology, see my *Three Dissertations on the Teachings of Jehovah’s Witnesses*, Second Dissertation, pages 61-150.

²¹ The Watchtower Society teaches that in 1919 CE Jesus Christ appointed the “faithful and discreet slave” of Matt 24:45 as a class of people that has continued through to the present day, and that this group is represented by a smaller group from among this class that is itself known as the “Governing Body” (see “A Slave Who Is Both Faithful and Discreet,” *The Watchtower*, March 1, 2004, page 12, par. 18; “Jehovah Trains Shepherds for His Flock,” *The Watchtower*, May 1, 2006, page 26, par. 16). However, Matt 24:45-51 refers only to the ‘appointment’ by Jesus Christ of *individuals* (= “that slave,” “him” [verse 46], “him” [verse 47], “that slave,” “his heart” [verse 48], the third person singular verbs for “eating” and “drinking” [verse 49], “that slave,” the third person singular verbs for “expecting” and “knowing” [verse 50], and “him” again [(twice) verse 51]). Further, not only is this appointment made by Jesus Christ “on arriving” (or ‘when he comes’ [Greek: a form of *erchomai*], Matt 24:46; Lu 12:43), but any such appointment is subject to change based on how this “slave” treats his “fellow slaves” (Matt 24:49) and whether the “slave” follows “the will of his master” (Lu 12:47). Thus, in no sense is any such “slave” above correction by members of the congregations who follow the model of Matt 18:15-17. Yet, the Governing Body of the Watchtower Society does not subject itself to this model by members of its congregations:

We have sound reasons to be grateful for “the faithful and discreet slave” appointed by Jesus Christ over his belongings on earth. ... (Matthew 24:45-47) There certainly is no reason to murmur about it. [“Focus on the Goodness of Jehovah’s Organization,” *The Watchtower*, July 15, 2006, page 20, par. 4 (underline added).]

The only way to find out if there is “no reason to murmur” is to follow Jesus’ counsel to “bear witness concerning the wrong” (Joh 18:23) and ultimately, if necessary, bring the matter to the attention of “the congregation” (Matt 18:17). But the Watchtower Society teaches that “the congregation” here refers only to the organization’s “elders” (“You May Gain Your Brother,” *The Watchtower*, October 15, 1999, page 22, par. 18 [which is based on an alleged parallel to Deut 21:18-21, a text which does specify “the older men” while Matt 18:17 does no such thing]). So there is no way for Jehovah’s Witnesses associated with the Watchtower Society to “speak to the congregation” about any cause for complaint according to Jesus’ model, because the Society’s elders will view such ‘speaking’ as unjustified ‘murmuring’ before the complaint is even heard! The person(s) may then be “disfellowshipped” or excommunicated from the organization before he or she can “speak to the congregation.” Consider:

Christian Witnesses of Jah, who are also Jehovah's Witnesses (see Chapter 10), do not emphasize the necessity of any of these things nor do we recklessly associate them or our interpretations of them with God's holy name.

Psalm 45:17; 52:9; 61:8 (NWT)

I will make mention of your name throughout all generations to come. That is why peoples themselves will laud you to time indefinite, even forever. ... I will laud you to time indefinite, for you have taken action; and I shall hope in your name, because it is good, in front of your loyal ones. ... So I will make melody to your name forever.

God's name is to be 'mentioned throughout all generations to come.' In it his people 'will hope;' to it 'melodies' will be sung! 'It is good in front of his loyal ones.' It is not a name given only to translators of the divine word; "scholars" of this world are not the sole keepers of it. Indeed, it is "the afflicted one and the poor one" who will 'praise his name' (Psalm 74:21). These are the people of Jah! The "afflicted one and the poor one" will praise and call upon his name. Therefore, they must know and use his name in their language, a language Jah made possible so that with it we can speak his name:

Psalm 80:18-19; 83:18 (NWT)

And we shall not turn back from you. May you preserve us alive, that we may call upon your own name. O Jehovah God of armies, bring us back. ... That people may know that you, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth.

I cannot find any evidence from the Bible itself justifying the traditions of men who refuse to translate the divine name in

Many have become apostate because of allowing a complaining spirit to embitter them against Jehovah's organization. To avoid becoming like them, we must avoid complaining even about small things, "trifles," but need to be content with revealed truth from Jehovah [= from the organization, for who would not be 'content with truth from Jehovah?']. ["Finding Contentment with Jehovah's Organization," *The Watchtower*, August 1, 1967, page 470, par. 23 (underlining added).]

the Old Testament. There is no biblical basis whatsoever for taking Jehovah’s name out of the mouths of Moses, David, or from the mouths of ‘the poor and the afflicted.’ The name “Jehovah,” or “Jah,” must be returned to these songs and again be a part of the praise of God given to him in the Bible:

Psalm 113:1-3; 135:1, 3 (NWT)

Praise Jah, YOU people! Offer praise, O YOU servants of Jehovah, praise the name of Jehovah. May Jehovah’s name become blessed from now on and to time indefinite. From the rising of the sun until its setting Jehovah’s name is to be praised. ... Praise Jah, YOU people! Praise the name of Jehovah ... Praise Jah, for Jehovah is good. Make melody to his name, for it is pleasant.

Indeed:

Psalm 145:21; 148:12-13; 149:1, 3 (NWT)

The praise of Jehovah my mouth will speak; and let all flesh bless his holy name to time indefinite, even forever. ... YOU young men and also YOU virgins, YOU old men together with boys. Let them praise the name of Jehovah, for his name alone is unreachably high. ... Praise Jah, YOU people! Sing to Jehovah a new song, his praise in the congregation of loyal ones. ... Let them praise his name with dancing. With the tambourine and the harp let them make melody to him.

It is not just in the writings of Moses, nor is it only in the Psalms that the Old Testament makes clear just how God’s ancient servants felt about his name, or about how God himself feels about those who use it and those who love it. Consider what several other Old Testament books tell us about God’s name:

Proverbs 18:10; 30:4 (NWT)

The name of Jehovah is a strong tower. Into it the righteous runs and is given protection. ... Who has ascended to heaven that he may descend? Who has gathered the wind in the hollow of both hands? Who has wrapped up the waters in a mantle? Who has made all the ends of the earth to rise? What is his name and what the name of his son, in case you know?

It would not be much of a “tower” for anyone who does not know or use Jehovah’s name! But those who do know it and those who do use it can tell you for a certainty that it *is* a “strong tower,” one capable of sustaining you when it seems that all else in the world has failed. It is fitting, too, that we find “his name” paired with that of “his son,” since the name of “Jesus” and his other name, “the Word” (John 1:1; Revelation 19:13), have also been “given among men” for the salvation of those who know both the Son and his Father (John 14:6-7; Acts 4:10-12). But knowing only one of the two names will not allow you to answer Agur’s question, “What is his name *and* what is the name of his [S]on?” Both names should be known, and used.

Isaiah 12:4-5 (NWT)

And in that day YOU will certainly say: “Give thanks to Jehovah, YOU people! Call upon his name. Make known among the peoples his dealings. Make mention that his name is put on high. Make melody to Jehovah, for he has done surpassingly. This is made known in all the earth.

Who today is ‘mentioning that his name is put on high’ apart from the traditions of men? Who among the sons of men make ‘melody to Jehovah’ by singing of it with praise and making it known “in all the earth”? It is Jehovah’s Witnesses who are not loyal to the Watchtower Society *first*, before loyalty to God or to Jesus of Nazareth. Many of these Witnesses today call ourselves “Christian Witnesses of Jah” because we reject what are evidently traditions of men that invalidate what is in God’s Word.—Matthew 15:6.

However, just because I here reference those who call themselves “Jehovah’s Witnesses” or “Christian Witnesses of Jah” does not mean that there are not individuals within other Christian groups who share a similar love for God’s name. It also does not mean that those who claim to be Jehovah’s Witnesses or Christian Witnesses of Jah are immune from the wrath of God for any disrespect they may bring on his name for any false teachings we advance in God’s name. As some point, Jah God himself will determine who it is that has shown love for his name

in ways that he approves and he is the one will also address those who treat his name with disrespect, just as he did in times past:

Isaiah 52:5-6 (NWT)

“And now, what interest do I have here?” is the utterance of Jehovah. “For my people were taken for nothing. The very ones ruling over them kept howling,” is the utterance of Jehovah, “and constantly, all day long, my name was being treated with disrespect. For that reason my people will know my name, even for that reason in that day, because I am the One that is speaking. Look! It is I.”

Jehovah knows his people. He knows our sins and he knows the goodness of man, as far as any man or woman can be considered “good” (compare Revelation 3:4). Jehovah will speak to those who ‘know his name’; he will also speak to those who ‘take them for nothing’ and who treat his name ‘with disrespect’; Jehovah will speak to us all, someday. Better it is that he speak to us as those who ‘know his name’ than to have him address us as those who ‘treat it with disrespect.’

Isaiah 52:5-6 also shows that Jehovah does not view the fact that some disrespect his name as a good reason for others not to use it. The disrespect toward his name was, in fact, the very “reason [his] people will know [his] name.” Thus ends the unbiblical, Jewish, and wrongly retained “Christian” tradition of not using God’s name in order to keep it from being disrespected. But claiming to keep God’s name from being mistreated is not the only excuse some have given for causing God’s name to be forgotten:

Jeremiah 16:21; 23:24-27 (NWT)

“Therefore here I am causing them to know; at this one time I shall cause them to know my hand and my mightiness, and they will have to know that my name is Jehovah.” ... “Or can any man be concealed in places of concealment and I myself not see him?” is the utterance of Jehovah. “Is it not the heavens and the earth that I myself actually fill?” is the utterance of Jehovah. “I have heard what the prophets who are prophesying falsehood in my own name have said, saying, ‘I

have had a dream! I have had a dream!' How long will it exist in the heart of the prophets who are prophesying the falsehood and who are prophets of the trickiness of their own heart? They are thinking of making my people forget my name by means of their dreams that they keep relating each one to the other, just as their fathers forgot my name by means of Ba'al.

Whether we know it now or not, we will all know God's name someday. We will all know his name "and the name of his son" (Proverbs 30:4). But just as some in Jeremiah's time made others forget God's name "by means of Ba'al" (one of the meanings of which is, interestingly, "lord"), so, too, many today who profess belief in the God of the Hebrew Bible have made millions of people forget his great name by substituting it with "Lord" and "God," titles he is also given (Deuteronomy 10:17; Psalm 136:2) but neither of which are truly equivalent to or proper substitutes for his unique name. If anyone causes others to 'forget Jehovah's name,' it will not be forever lost:

Zephaniah 3:8 (NWT)

'Therefore keep yourselves in expectation of me,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'till the day of my rising up to [the] booty, for my judicial decision is to gather nations, for me to collect together kingdoms, in order to pour out upon them my denunciation, all my burning anger; for by the fire of my zeal all the earth will be devoured. For then I shall give to peoples the change to a pure language, in order for them all to call upon the name of Jehovah, in order to serve him shoulder to shoulder.'

Jesus himself fulfilled Bible prophecy respecting Jehovah's name, as is recorded in the book of Micah. He came 'in the name of his Father' (John 5:43), the one whom the Jewish religious leaders of his day 'said was their God' (John 8:54):

Micah 5:4-5 (NWT)

And he will certainly stand and do shepherding in the strength of Jehovah, in the superiority of the name of Jehovah his God. And they will certainly keep dwelling, for now he will be great

as far as the ends of the earth. And this one must become peace.

Each person has his or her own God, many gods, or no god at all. But those who follow Jesus Christ also worship his God, the Father, Jehovah. Religions of the world today follow other gods, none of whom “created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1), none of whom caused the Red Sea to “split apart” (Exodus 14:21), none of whom so graciously put before mankind the choices of “life and death” (Genesis 2:16-17; Deuteronomy 30:19), and none of whom sent his Firstborn Son (Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3) to give his life as a legal substitute for our sins, that we might live by means of him (1 John 4:14). Jehovah did these things, or at least there are good reasons to believe that he did them, more so than there are good reasons to believe anything that is said about or attributed to any other god.

There are still two groups of persons distinguishable on earth today when it comes the name of Jehovah: those who ‘will not lay it to heart to give glory to his name’ (Malachi 2:2) and ‘those loving his name’ (Psalm 5:11). The former group cannot ‘make melody to Jah, which is his name’ (Psalm 68:4). The latter group cannot keep from doing it. The latter group, together with the heavenly chorus of Revelation 19 (verses 1, 3, 4, 6) say, “Praise Jah!” The former group uses tradition to invalidate this praise and to rip it even from the shouts of the heavenly hosts. The latter cannot find any scriptural reason to keep Jehovah’s name out of the mouths of Moses and David, so they do not. Tradition does not make invalid the words of God for those who are truly witnesses of Jehovah and of Jesus Christ, and there is not enough money in the whole world to buy their silence.

The vowel points for “Lord” and “Jehovah” from the Masoretic text. As noted earlier, the most widely-known form of the divine name in English is “Jehovah.” This form is popular in large part because of Jehovah’s Witnesses. But why are they and the Christian Witnesses of Jah now practically the only groups giving widespread recognition to this form of God’s name? Further, why do so many Bible translators claim that the divine

name “was never intended by the Jews to be read as Yehowah (or Jehovah)?”²²

While each person must answer the first question based on the best available evidence, when it comes to Bible translators one of the reasons given for not using God's name is the mistaken belief that the form “Yehowah” (or “Jehovah” [Anglicized form]) “represents the vowels of Adonai [Hebrew: ‘Lord’] superimposed on the consonants [YHWH] of Yahweh.”²³ Again, setting aside for the time being the fact that “Yahweh” is Barker's preferred pronunciation for the divine name (to be discussed further below), Barker is simply wrong in his claim that the vowels of *'adonay* have been “superimposed” on the consonants of the divine name, as are all other scholars who have made and who continue to make this claim. Here are some of the good reasons why I believe this is true.

In the time of Jesus, vowel sounds were not represented by the different “points,” dots, and many other markings the way we find them in printed copies of the Hebrew Bible today. Below I will consider the available historical and linguistic evidence supporting the pronunciation of the divine name in the centuries just prior to and following the time of Jesus. But when vowel pointing the Hebrew Bible became a common practice around 1100 CE, the divine name was pointed with several different sets of vowel points, one of which corresponds to *YeHoWaH* (יהוה). Here the vowel points may correspond to the English sounds “e” (Hebrew: *shewa*, ְ), “o” (Hebrew: *cholem*, ֹ), and “a” (Hebrew: *qamats qatan*, ַ).

In contrast to this particular vowel pointing of the divine name, the Hebrew word for “Lord,” to which Barker refers, is pointed as *'aDoNaY* (אֲדֹנָי), with the vowel points representing the sounds “a” (Hebrew: *chataph patach*, ְ), “o” (Hebrew: *cholem*, ֹ), and another “a” sound (Hebrew: *qamats qatan*, ַ). The collection of vowel points used with *'aDoNaY* are, therefore,

²² Kenneth Barker, “YHWH Sabaoth: ‘The Lord Almighty,’” in *The NIV: The Making of a Contemporary Translation*, ed. Kenneth L. Barker (Colorado Springs, CO: International Bible Society, 1991), page 107.

²³ Barker, “YHWH Sabaoth: ‘The Lord Almighty,’” page 107.

not the same as those used in *YeHoWaH* as this simple comparison shows. In *YeHoWaH* the first vowel point can represent an “e” sound, or what is known in Hebrew as a vocal *shewa*. Together with the first consonant of the divine name (ׁ), which is called a *yod* (basically equivalent to the English “y,” as in “yellow”), this vowel point gives us the first syllable of the divine name, “Ye,” with a short “e” sound. The first vowel point in *'aDoNaY* (Hebrew: *chataph patach*, ׀) is known as a compound vowel point. This vowel point likely represents an “a” sound, or what is known in Hebrew as a *chataph patach*, which might be considered similar to the Modern English “a” in the word “hard.”

Further, though there is a *shewa* (.) vowel point symbol in the first syllable of both *YeHoWaH* and *'aDoNaY*, they are not used for the same purpose. *YeHoWaH* has an initial *shewa* or “e” sound, but it is not the same as the *shewa* used in *'aDoNaY*. This is because the *shewa* in *YeHoWaH* is “vocal” while the *shewa* portion of the *chataph patach* compound vowel point of *'aDoNaY* is silent. Again, the vowel pointing in the first syllable of each of these words is not the same, with a vocalized “e” sound in the first syllable of *YeHoWaH* versus an apparent “a” vowel point sound in the first syllable of *'aDoNaY*.²⁴ Freedman and O’Connor provide the following explanation for this difference:

The Masoretes did not, however, supply the precise vowel points required for their pronunciation, which would have yielded the form *y^ahōwāh*; this form would have violated the very taboo they sought to observe if the first syllable had contained an *a* vowel.²⁵

²⁴ I say “apparent” because we must always be careful not to rule out other possible sounds for Hebrew vowel points than what may be commonly accepted for them today.

²⁵ D.N. Freedman and M.P. O’Connor, “יהוה” *YHWH*,” TDOT 5 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986), page 501. S.R. Driver, “The original form of the name ‘Yahweh’: evidence and conclusions,” *ZAW* 46 (1928), page 20, note 1, makes a similar observation. He believes that the Masoretic vocalization of *Yeho-* and *Yo-* at the beginning of proper names was originally *Ya-* in proper names such as “Jehu” (= the Masoretic form *Yehu*, יהוּ). In Driver’s view, Assyrian transcriptions point to an original Hebrew pronunciation of “Jehu” as *Yahu* (the equivalent of the vocalization יהוּ), which was then changed to *Yehu* sometime between the seventh and the second centuries BCE (as Driver believes is clear from the LXX’s transliterations of “Jehu” by

Jöüon and Muraoka similarly remark that the vowel pointing of the divine name יהוה (YeHoWaH) “has an unusual simple shewa instead of [the *chataph patach*] of אֲדֹנָי [’aDoNaY].”²⁶ They also write, “In Codex L. the usual form is יהוה [YeH-WaH], based on the Aramaic שְׁמָא [She-Ma’, meaning “the name”], i.e. the Divine Name, but rarely יהוה [YeHoWaH].”²⁷ What this means is that in one of the three great representatives of the Masoretic tradition, the Leningrad Codex (B19) of the 11th century CE, the form of the divine name found most often is not יהוה (YeHoWaH), but יהוה (YeH-WaH).²⁸ Whether these are the points from the Aramaic word for “the name,” as suggested by Jöüon and Muraoka, is uncertain. What is certain is that in B19 the divine name is pointed as YeH-WaH in the book of Genesis alone 150 of the 165 times that it occurs.²⁹ In only 12 of the 165 occurrences of the divine name in Genesis in B19 is the divine name pointed as יהוה [YeHoWaH].³⁰ Twice יהוה (YeH-WiH) occurs,³¹ and in one instance the pointing of the divine name in B19 in the book of Genesis is not clear.—Genesis 2:16.

יהוה [Jeou], Eiou [Eiou], and Iou [Iou]) because the pronunciation *Yahu* for our “Jehu” was at that time “felt to resemble too closely the divine name.”

²⁶ Paul Jöüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, vol. 1 (Subsidia Biblica 14/1; Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2000), page 72.

²⁷ Jöüon and Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, vol. 1, page 73.

²⁸ Compare the NWT Reference Bible (1984) notes for Gen 2:8, 22; Lev 3:12; Deut 6:4, 18:5; Ps 18:30; 69:13; Prov 24:21; Isa 12:2. A select review of the Aleppo Codex in the photographic facsimile edition of Moshe H. Goshen-Gottstein, ed., *The Aleppo Codex* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Bible Project, 1976), shows that this same form (*YeH-WaH*) is used extensively. See, for examples, Eze 22:23; Zeph 1:6 (twice), 1:8.

²⁹ These numbers are based on my review of every instance of the divine name in the Genesis of *The Leningrad Codex: A Facsimile Edition*, David N. Freedman, ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), as listed by Kohlenberger and Swanson, *The Hebrew English-Concordance to the Old Testament*, pages 630-631, which I then compared with each entry in the *Biblia Hebraica Leningradensia*, Aron Dotan, ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001). From this comparison I also noted that *Biblia Hebraica Leningradensia* (BHL) does not follow B19 in its pointing of the divine name in Gen 3:14, 9:26, 18:17 (or Ex 3:2), where B19 has *YeHoWaH* and BHL has *YeH-WaH*.

³⁰ Gen 3:14; 4:15 (first occurrence); 6:3; 6:7; 9:26; 11:6; 13:10 (first occurrence); 15:7; 18:17; 19:24 (first occurrence); 24:12; 28:13 (second occurrence).

³¹ Gen 15:2, 8. This form has two of the three vowel sounds from *'elohim* (“God”). But it does not contain the “o” (Hebrew: *cholem*, ם) sound.

Many popular reference works that comment on the name of the biblical God rarely (if ever) mention the form of the name that is found most frequently in B19, again, *YeH-WaH* (יהוה).³² This is a significant point, for if it is the use of the vowels from “Lord” (*'aDoNaY* [hereafter, primarily, *'adonay*]) that such scholars claim is the basis for their using “Lord” instead of pronouncing the divine name with its Masoretic vowel points, and if in fact the precise vowel sounds from *'adonay* are not really ever used with the tetragrammaton, then why use “Lord” at all? Why not simply set aside the tradition of using surrogate titles and use a form of the divine name that is actually based on the vowel pointing of the text or (preferably) based on the best available linguistic and/or other historical evidence?³³

It is clear from our earlier review of evidence that the Masoretes did not use the “precise vowel points” from *'adonay* with the consonants of the tetragrammaton. For this reason, as George Wesley Buchanan writes, “this disputed pointing cannot

³² For example, the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 7 (Jerusalem, Israel: Keter Publishing House, 1971), on page 680, states: “In the early Middle Ages, when the consonantal text of the Bible was supplied with vowel points to facilitate its correct traditional reading, the vowel points for *'Adonai* with one variation—a *sheva* with the first *yod* of YHWH instead of the [*chataph patach*] under the *aleph* of *'Adonai*—were used for YHWH, thus producing the form *YeHoWaH*.” Though correctly noting the difference in vowel pointings between “Lord” and “Jehovah” in the Masoretic text, this encyclopedia does not mention the more frequently pointed form of the divine name, *YeH-WaH*. Similarly, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman, vol. 6 (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992), page 1011, states, “When the Jewish scholars (called Masoretes) added vowel signs to biblical [manuscripts] some time before the 10th century [CE], the Tetragrammaton was punctuated with the vowels of the word *'Adonai* or *'Elohim* to indicate that the reader should read *'Lord* or *'God* instead of accidentally pronouncing the sacred name.” Again, there is no mention of the form *YeH-WaH*. Finally, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1987), page 507, says that the Masoretes “left the consonants for *'Yahweh* in the text but put with them the vowels for *'Adonai* — *a*, *o*, *o*.” This is, as we have seen, simply not true.

³³ Rösel, “The Reading and Translation of the Divine Name in the Masoretic Tradition and the Greek Pentateuch,” pages 412-413, argues that even though the Masoretic text regularly has *YeH-WaH*, the scribes “read” or pronounced *'aDoNaY* (“Lord”). Regardless of what the Masoretes read when they came across *YeH-WaH*, the vowel points for any instance of the divine name in the Masoretic tradition do not correspond exactly to those of *'adonay*, as shown above. Further, there are no good biblical reasons supporting a tradition that prefers “Lord,” “God,” “the Name,” or anything but a pronunciation of the actual name of God used in the Bible text.

be used for evidence one way or the other.”³⁴ But Freedman and O'Connor offer an interesting opinion about why the Masoretes did not use the same vowel points from *'adonay* for the divine name. Again, as quoted on page 23 above, they claim that the reason there is such a difference is because using the precise vowel points from *'adonay* would have “violated the very taboo they [the Masoretes] sought to observe,” namely, pronouncing the divine name! Yet, as E.C.B. MacLaurin rightly asks:

If the name YHWH were too sacred to pronounce—so sacred that even the numerals 15, 16 were avoided because being YH, YW, they could be taken as abbreviations of YHWH, why was –yah used in theophoric names and, more seriously, why was Yah used independently ... as the Name of God?³⁵

For example, in Psalm 111:1 the NWT reads: “Praise Jah, you people! I shall laud Jehovah with all my heart.” The divine name “Jah” is here vowel pointed in the Masoretic text of B19 as *YaH* after a form of the Hebrew word לָלַחַד (*halal*), which means “praise.” From this word we get the expression “Hallelujah,” a combination of the Hebrew word *halal* (“praise”) and the form of the divine name *YaH*, or “Jah.” Here *YaH* is pronounced with an “a” vowel sound (called a *qamats qatan*, אַ), which in Modern Hebrew is basically the same as the “a” vowel sound of *'adonay* (known as a *chataph patach*, אָ). Thus, unless someone is going to argue that the difference between the “a” sounds of the *qamats qatan* and the *chataph patach* in biblical Hebrew is enough to protect the true pronunciation of the divine name, it is unlikely that the Masoretes were doing just that in not using the *chataph patach* of *'adonay* for the first syllable of the divine name.

However, there must be some reason for why the Masoretes chose not to use the “a” sound of *'adonay* (*chataph patach*) and instead used what is considered to be an “e” sound (a vocal *shewa* in the first syllable of the tetragrammaton). If the reason is

³⁴ George W. Buchanan, “Some Unfinished Business with the Dead Sea Scrolls,” *RevQ* 13 (1988), page 415.

³⁵ E.C.B. MacLaurin, “YHWH: The Origin of the Tetragrammaton,” *VT* 12 (1962), page 447.

there was an “a” sound associated with the *chataph patach* (ֿ) of *’adonay* which was different from the “a” sound of the *qamats qatan* (ָ), different in such a way that if used it would have “violated the very taboo [the Masoretes] sought to observe” (Freedman and O’Connor, as quoted earlier), then we can further isolate the Masoretic tradition’s pronunciation of the divine name by simply supplying the vowel point from *’adonay* that the Masoretes chose not to use!

If the pointing of the divine name as יהוהֿ (*YeHoWaH*) has anything to do with alerting the reader to use *’adonay* in place of the divine name, then the Masoretes were either trying to keep others from pronouncing the first syllable as *YaH* (that is, with the *chataph patach* [the initial short “a” sound of *’adonay*]), or they were trying to keep people from pronouncing the full form of the divine name as *YaHoWaH* (again, also with the initial *chataph patach* “a” sound). Or it may be that the Masoretes were trying to hide *both* forms or pronunciations of the divine name (*YaH* and *YaHoWaH*) since, again, the Masoretes could have used the short “a” sound (*chataph patach*, ֿ) of *’adonay*.

As noted earlier, instead of using the first syllable vowel point from *’adonay* for *YH* or for the first syllable in *YHWH*, the Masoretes used the “e” sound represented by the vocal *shewa* (ְ). But since we have the pronunciation *YaH* (with a *qamats qatan* “a” sound) used with *YH* as a stand-alone form, the use of a vocal *shewa* instead of the *chataph patach* “a” sound in some Masoretic pointings of the divine name is not likely a choice they made to protect against only a *slight* difference in pronunciation. Indeed, if as in Modern Hebrew these two vowel sounds were pronounced basically alike, then there was no way the Masoretes could have thought they were “preventing the very taboo they sought to observe” by using an “e” sound (vocal *sheva*, ְ) for *’adonay*’s initial “a” (*chataph patach*, ֿ) sound in *YeHoWaH*, and at the same time preventing the same “taboo” by using an “a” (*qamats qatan*, ָ) sound in *YaH* rather than a vocal *shewa* (ְ) or the *chataph patach* “a” sound (ֿ).

The only way it could be said that the Masoretes were ‘avoiding their own taboo’ by using a *qamats qatan* “a” sound in

place of a *chataph patach* “a” sound in *YaH*, would be if they recognized a distinct sound quality associated with their use of a *chataph patach* that they believed more closely represented the true pronunciation of the divine name. If this is true, then the sound (*chataph patach*, *ַ*) they sought to avoid associating with the first syllable of the divine name must be closer to if not *the* original, first-syllable sound of God's name in Hebrew!

It is good to review the evidence from the Masoretic tradition in this way. It helps answer some important questions and it should also help make us more aware of possible reasons for why the Masoretes treated the divine name the way they did. The best available evidence shows clearly that they did *not* use the precise vowel points of *'adonay* with the tetragrammaton. Ultimately, though, the evidence from the Masoretes is not very conclusive concerning the ancient, pre-Masoretic pronunciation of the divine name. But there is much better evidence from much earlier times regarding the pronunciation of the divine name that will now be presented and considered in relation to the use of “Jehovah” and other forms of the divine name today.

Early Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek forms of the divine name. The earliest recorded use of the divine name in the Bible is in Genesis 2:4, where Jehovah God is credited with the creation of the heavens and the earth. The earliest dateable use of the divine name outside of the Bible, but related to it, is found in the Moabite Stone. Discovered in 1868, this tablet supports events recorded in the biblical account of 2 Kings 3 regarding the conflict between Israel and Moab. It is dated to between 840-830 BCE.³⁶

On this stone tablet the divine name is written in four ancient Hebrew or Phoenician (an ancient dialect of Hebrew) letters on line 18, the translation of which appears to describe King Mesha of Moab as having ‘taken vessels of Jehovah and presented them before Chemosh.’³⁷ Speaking in reference to the use of the four-

³⁶ See J.A. Emerton, “The Value of the Moabite Stone as an Historical Source,” *VT* 52.4 (2002), pages 483-492.

³⁷ Compare Freedman and O'Connor, “יְהוָה *YHWH*,” page 502. A. Cowley, “A Passage in the Mesha Inscription, and the Early Form of the Israelitish Divine Name,” *JRAS* (April, 1920), pages 175-184, argues for a different reading of the inscription,

letter form of the divine on the Moabite Stone, Harris notes it “would be odd indeed if Mesha had copied the name of the Hebrew deity in a Moabite orthography and added letters that weren’t there.”³⁸

This suggests that this early four-letter form of the name on the Moabite Stone was likely an early Hebrew form. If so, this would provide us with the earliest written evidence of the tetragrammaton, *YHWH*, the full four-letter form of the divine name. But the ancient Hebrew used here does not contain any vowel points such as we find much later in the Masoretic Bible texts discussed above. Therefore, even though some of the letters may indicate certain vowel sounds, we cannot know for a certainty the ancient pronunciation of the four-letter form of the divine name used in the Moabite Stone at the time it was written.³⁹

namely, taking יהוה (the tetragrammaton) as a verb with the resulting restoration of the text being, “But I took away that which should be for myself and tore them in pieces before Kemosh” (Cowley, “A Passage in the Mesha Inscription,” page 184). Cowley bases this reading in part on the fact that the earliest forms of the divine name outside of the Moabite Stone are יו (YW) and יהו (YHW), and so יהוה must be the verb “to be” (= “that which should be for myself” rather than “that which [belonged to] Jehovah”). It is Cowley’s view that יו (YW) is the earliest form of the divine name, that the form יהו (YHW) represents “the same pronunciation (Yāw), and that at some point in time between the date of the ostraka from Samaria (say 900 B.C.) and the Aramaic papyri, the practice arose of writing a ה [heh] to represent a long vowel” (Cowley, “A Passage in the Mesha Inscription,” page 178). But while יו (YW) does appear as an early theophoric prefix and suffix in proper names (see note 55 below), it is never found as a stand-alone form of the divine name as are יה (YH), יהו (YHW), or יהוה (YHWH), forms I will discuss in more detail below. Further, there does not seem to be any reason for why we should think that King Mesha felt that the objects in view “should be” for himself when he subsequently ‘gives them’ to Chemosh! The contest appears to involve the taking of that which belonged to one God, Jehovah, and the giving of these same things to Chemosh. Thus, there are good reasons for regarding the occurrence of the tetragrammaton on the Moabite Stone as the earliest instance of the four-letter form of the divine name and not as an instance of the Hebrew verb “to be.”

³⁸ R. Laird Harris, “The Pronunciation of the Tetragram,” in *The Law and the Prophets: Old Testament Studies Prepared in Honor of Oswald Thompson Allis*, ed. John H. Skilton (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1974), page 223.

³⁹ Ancient Hebrew letters that indicate vowel sounds are known as *matres lectionis* (“mothers of reading”). For examples, see Ziony Zevit, *Matres Lectionis in Ancient Hebrew Epigraphs*, David Noel Freedman, ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1980), pages 12-15. However, according to Sandra Gogel, “When dealing with proper names in epigraphic Hebrew, one is uncertain of the

The four-letter form of the divine name is also found in Hebrew inscriptions discovered while excavating a citadel on the biblical Arad (Judges 1:16), as well as on inscriptions unearthed in southern Palestine in what is considered to be the biblical city of Lachish (Jeremiah 34:7), all of which are from the late sixth century BCE.⁴⁰ In these inscriptions the tetragrammaton occurs numerous times in salutations and in oaths. With respect to the Lachish inscriptions, which “provide glimpses of the workings of the royal administration, primarily military, in this period shortly before the Babylonian exile,” Dennis Pardee writes “that there is no indication in any of these texts that the divine name (the ‘tetragrammaton’) was not used currently nor that it was not pronounced as written, i.e., something along the lines of [‘Yahweh’].”⁴¹

However, though we can say how the divine name was “written” in such early texts, “the precise vocalization of the name is uncertain”⁴² since we cannot say for sure whether the letters in such early texts were purely consonantal or what vowels they for a certainty indicated in different places.⁴³ But early evidence for the use of the divine name does not only support the four-letter form of the divine name, the tetragrammaton. Other forms of God’s name are also represented in early Hebrew and Aramaic.

orthographic conventions followed.” Gogel also notes that even in theophoric affixes such as *-yhw* and *yw-* the view that some of the consonants are actually vowel sounds (“mothers of reading”) is an “assumption” that is “not absolutely certain” (Sandra Landis Gogel, *A Grammar of Epigraphic Hebrew* [Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1998], pages 57, 58 [but see the balance of her discussion on “Final” and “Internal” *matres lectionis* on pages 58-74]).

⁴⁰ See James B. Pritchard, ed., *The Ancient Near East: Supplementary Texts and Pictures Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), pages 321-322, 568-569; Freedman and O’Connor, “יהוה” *YHWH*,” pages 503-504.

⁴¹ Dennis Pardee, “Lachish Ostraca,” in *The Context of Scripture*, vol. 3, *Archival Documents from the Biblical World*, William W. Hallo, ed. (Leiden: Brill, 2002), page 78, note 3.

⁴² Pardee, “Lachish Ostraca,” page 78, note 3.

⁴³ See Gogel, *A Grammar of Epigraphic Hebrew*, pages 59-60, where it is observed that the final *heh* (which is the last letter in the tetragrammaton [יה]) can represent a long *a*, a long *e*, and a long *o* in epigraphic Hebrew, that is, in Hebrew found on ancient inscriptions.

For example, from the early fifth to the early fourth centuries BCE (from 495 to 399 BCE) there is “evidence for a Jewish garrison with a full-size Temple” on the island of Elephantine, near Aswan in Egypt.⁴⁴ This Jewish community made regular use of the form *YHW* (the first three letters of the tetragrammaton) for the name of God. However, though it is used as a part of place or personal names (concerning which, see below) in the Bible, it is not therein used as a stand-alone name of God (but see below on the use of the equivalent Greek, three-letter form of the divine name used in at least one very important Greek Bible manuscript). However, as noted earlier, the Bible does use both the four-letter tetragrammaton (*YHWH*) and a two-letter form of God’s name, *YH*

⁴⁴ Bezalel Porten, *The Elephantine Papyri in English: Three Millennia of Cross-Cultural Continuity and Change* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), page 18. For examples of the divine name in these papyri, see Porten, *The Elephantine Papyri in English*, pages 107, 140, 142, 143, 144, 146, 147, 151, 159, 160, 196, 205, 212, 213, 216, 217, 223, 237, 241, 242, 245, 246, 248, 249, 251, 266. The example on page 266, TAD B7.3, has *YHW* as a theophoric element in a longer name for the local god, “Anath*YHW*,” which could suggest that “Anath*YHW*” or even “*YWH*” was a creation of ‘Arameans from Israel who migrated to Egypt’ (Porten, *The Elephantine Papyri in English*, page 266, note 7). The form *YHH* is also found once as a part of a compound expression (1.2), once standing alone (13.14) in the Elephantine papyri (see A.E. Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.* [Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2005 (1923)], pages 1, 2, 37, 38, 40), and at least eight times in a formulaic expression in ostraca (pottery inscriptions) from the same site (see Freedman and O’Connor, “יהוה” *YHWH*,” page 504). Driver, “The original form of the name ‘Yahweh,’” pages 22-23, writes that this form is also found “on jar-handles of the 5th or 4th century B.C., found at Jericho and Jerusalem,” and on a coin “issued probably between 405 and 380 B.C., in Phoenicia or Philistia.” The form *YHH* is represented in figure 1.1 below as an equivalent to the Greek form Ιω (Iao). The reason for this is because this form (*YHH*) appears to use a second *heh* (ה) to represent the same sound indicated by the final *waw* (ו) in the form *YHW* (the other form of the name used in the Elephantine Papyri) which final sound is likely either “o” (as in “Ya[*YH*]-o[*H*]”) or “u” (as in “Ya[*YH*]-u[*H*]”). Compare D.D. Luckenbill, “The Pronunciation of the Name of the God of Israel,” *AJSLL* 50.4 (July, 1924), pages 281-282. In contrast, Driver, “The original form of the name ‘Yahweh,’” page 21, believes the *heh* in both *YHW* and *YHH* “serves the purpose only of maintaining the *a*-sound” (which Driver would represent as “Ya[*H*]H” [for *YHH*] and “Ya[*H*]W” [for *YHW*]), making both *YHW* and *YHH* representatives of “the same pronunciation to the tetragrammaton when standing independently,” as in the vocalization “Ya,” which is the name of God before the time of the Exodus according to Driver (“The original form of the name ‘Yahweh,’” page 25). Driver’s explanation, though possible, runs contrary to the apparently corresponding transliteration of such forms by the Greek *Iao*, which I will discuss further later in this section.

(*YaH*, or in English, “Jah”), as stand-alone names.⁴⁵ The Hebrew and Aramaic forms of the divine name that occur apart from place or personal names in the Dead Sea Scrolls are also either four-letter or two-letter forms.⁴⁶ These forms are written in Aramaic square script (as in 1QIsa^a) or in an older Hebrew script (as in 1QIsa^c).⁴⁷

Now that we have this ancient Hebrew and Aramaic evidence before us, what does it say about the pronunciation of the divine name? Since we do not know for sure whether certain letters in these early, pre-Masoretic texts represented vowel sounds (and if so which vowel sounds they may have represented), and since we do not know for sure whether we can rely on possible etymologies of the divine name for its proper pronunciation (see the discussion of Exodus 3:14 at the end of this chapter), we need additional evidence before reaching any further conclusions. Buchanan provides a helpful introduction to some of the remaining evidence:

When trying to find the correct pronunciation of an ancient name that worshippers stopped pronouncing, it seems methodologically reasonable to search ancient texts for possible

⁴⁵ See page 3, notes 4 and 5.

⁴⁶ For a list of the occurrences of these forms of the divine name in the Scrolls, see Martin G. Abegg, Jr., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Concordance*, vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), pages 296-297. There are also certain circumlocutions and surrogates in the Scrolls from Qumran and elsewhere, as in the Ben Sira Masada Scroll and the Cairo Genizah fragments. “Circumlocutions” are representational words or letters intended to avoid actual use of another word. For a discussion of the different treatments of the divine name in these scrolls and in other documents from the Judean desert, see George Howard, “The Tetragram and the New Testament,” *JBL* 96 (1977), pages 66-70; Emmanuel Tov, “4QLev^{c, e, g} (4Q25, 26a, 26b),” in *Pomegranates and Golden Bells: Studies in Biblical, Jewish, and Near Eastern Ritual, Law, and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom*, David P. Wright, David Noel Freedman, and Avi Hurvitz, eds. (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1995), pages 265-266; D.W. Parry, “4QSam^a and the Tetragrammaton,” in *Current Research and Technological Developments on the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Donald W. Parry and Stephen D. Ricks, eds. (STDJ 20; Leiden Brill, 1996), pages 106-125; and Parry, “Notes on Divine Name Avoidance in Scriptural Units of the Legal Texts of Qumran,” in *Legal Texts and Legal Issues, Proceedings of the Second Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies Cambridge 1995*, Moshe Bernstein, Florentino Martínez and John Kampen, eds. (STDJ 23; Leiden: Brill, 1997), pages 437-449.

⁴⁷ For a discussion of the different scripts used for the divine name in the Qumran scrolls, see Jonathan P. Siegel, “The Employment of Paleo-Hebrew Characters for the Divine Names at Qumran in the Light of Tannaitic Sources,” *HUCA* 42 (1971), pages 159-172.

clues that would give some hints. These can be found in Greek translations of the Hebrew before the pronunciation was discontinued, in proper names that include the divine name, in poetry whose meter depends on the number of syllables involved, and the pronunciation of the last syllable.⁴⁸

Before considering the available evidence from early and late Greek forms of the divine name, let us first consider the forms of the divine name that are included in proper names in the Bible and in ancient inscriptions as early as the ninth century BCE. Then we can review Buchanan’s findings relative to poetry and “the pronunciation of the last syllable.” Finally, we will consider the Greek evidence for the pronunciation of the divine name.

When used as part of other proper names, the two-letter (יה) [YH] or even יו [YW]) and three-letter (יהו) [YHW]) forms are found in early Hebrew, Aramaic, and Assyrian sources.⁴⁹ The clearest textual evidence for the pronunciation of these forms of the divine name comes from the vowel pointing of the Masoretic text. But as is true of the Masoretic evidence for the stand-alone, four-letter form of the name (the tetragrammaton), we cannot be certain of the accuracy of the vowel sounds indicated by the Masoretes for forms of the divine name that are used as part of other proper names. Still,

⁴⁸ Buchanan, “Some Unfinished Business with the Dead Sea Scrolls,” page 418.

⁴⁹ Driver, “The original form of the name ‘Yahweh,’” pages 7-19; Luckenbill, “The Pronunciation of the Name of the God of Israel,” pages 278-279; Freedman and O’Connor, “יהוה YHWH,” pages 506-509; A.R. Millard, “YW and YHW,” *VT* 30.2 (1980), page 210; Ziony Zevit, “A Chapter in the History of Israelite Personal Names,” *BASOR* 250 (spring, 1983), pages 1-14; Buchanan, “Some Unfinished Business with the Dead Sea Scrolls,” page 417; Gogel, *A Grammar of Epigraphic Hebrew*, Appendix: Texts and Seals, pages 385-494. Zevit provides twenty-three examples of “twinning names,” that is, where biblical names such as “Ahaziah,” “Amaziah,” “Adonijah,” and other names occur with both the two-letter (יה-) and the three-letter (יהו-) theophoric suffixes (Zevit, “A Chapter in the History of Israelite Personal Names,” pages 10-13). Regarding the “stages in the development of [the use of the forms of the names] in these texts,” Zevit writes that “they are beyond reconstruction” (Zevit, “A Chapter in the History of Israelite Personal Names,” page 13). He also notes that: “Sociolinguistic processes, which are beyond reconstruction but which had both synchronic and diachronic aspects, gave rise to situations in which different texts or types of texts referred to the same person by either the long or short form of the same name” (Zevit, “A Chapter in the History of Israelite Personal Names,” page 14).

with this qualification of the Masoretic evidence in mind, consider the following:

Although the pointing of the Masoretic Tetragrammaton may not be reliable, there are scores of proper names that include parts of the Tetragrammaton. Names like Jonathan in Hebrew is *Yaho-nathan*, “*Yaho* has given.” If one syllable was dropped by contraction, it was not the *ô* but the *â* sound that suffered. Yahonathan was sometimes spelled Yonathan. John was spelled, *Yaho-ghanan*, “*Yaho* has been gracious.” Elijah’s name was *Eli-Yahu*, “My God is *Yahu*.” *Yaho-shapat* was spelled *Yaho-shapat*, “*Yaho* has judged.” Some names have variant spellings. For example, sometimes Jeremiah’s name is *Yeremi-Yahu* and sometimes *Yeremi-Yah*; Zecharia is sometimes *Zekar Yahu* and sometimes *Zekar Yah*, showing that abbreviation was permissible, but throughout the entire Hebrew Scripture, there is no proper name, using the Tetragrammaton either at the beginning or at the ending that comes out “*Yahweh*,” omitting the middle syllable. It is reasonable to think that when parents named their children after deities they would have pronounced their names the way they understood the deity’s name to have been pronounced. Names like *Ishbaal*, “Man of Baal,” and *Baalyasha*, “Baal has saved,” for example, were probably pronounced according to the true pronunciation of Baal, and *Obed-Yahu*, “Slave of *Yahu*,” was probably pronounced according to the true pronunciation of *Yahu*, with the possible addition of an unspelled aspirant *ah*, “*ObedYahuwah*,” or abbreviated to “*Obed-Yah*.”⁵⁰

One of Buchanan’s points is that where the three-letter form of the divine name is used (as part of proper names in the Bible) there is a second syllable in the pronunciation. This means also that when the divine name has a fourth letter (*heh*, the final *H* [ה]) it may have had three syllables (as in *YaHuWaH* or *YaHoWaH*). Or the fourth letter (again, the final *H*) may have represented

⁵⁰ Buchanan, “Some Unfinished Business with the Dead Sea Scrolls,” page 417. See also George Wesley Buchanan, “How God’s Name Was Pronounced,” *BAR* 21.2 (March-April 1995), page 31.

something else. Later in this section I will put forth a new theory for the pronunciation of the divine name that builds on existing theories and evidence. I will also suggest a form of the name for the biblical God around which I believe a pronunciation most will agree can be accepted without dispute, for personal and for public use, and in Bible translation.

There are some (including me) who believe that certain letters of the divine name may indicate vowel sounds rather than stand for consonants. For example, Luckenbill argued that the final letter of *YHWH* from the Moabite Stone indicates a long “o” sound, which results in something like “Yaho” as the pronunciation of *YHWH*.⁵¹ This pronunciation is consistent with the use of the three-letter form of the divine name in proper names in the Bible and in other early literature, as well as with its use as an independent word in the Elephantine papyri.⁵² A Hebrew/Aramaic pronunciation of “Yaho” is also consistent with ancient and well-known Greek forms of the divine name, such as *Ιαω* (*Iao*), which are presented in figure 1.1 below. But, again, the form of the divine name on the Moabite Stone may be consonantal or some of the letters may indicate certain vowel sounds. The answer is still uncertain, though I will come back to this question later in this section.

Now comes the evidence from Hebrew poetry, “whose meter depends on the number of syllables involved.” Buchanan refers to and cites several texts from the song of Moses and the sons of Israel after God destroyed the Egyptians as they attempted to cross the Red Sea. This song is recorded in Exodus Chapter 15. Here are several of the examples given by Buchanan, reproduced with most of the diacritical marks that he presented in his article⁵³ which will

⁵¹ Luckenbill, “The Pronunciation of the Name of the God of Israel,” pages 280-283.

⁵² Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B. C.*, page xviii, says that this name (יהו), *YHW* “is not an abbreviation of יהוה [YHWH], but an earlier form, and only another way of writing the earliest [in Cowley’s opinion] form יו [YW, ‘Yo,’ or ‘Ya-o,’ or ‘Ya-u’].” See note 37 above for more on Cowley’s view of the earliest form of the divine name and its relationship to other forms. See note 55 below for more on the use of *YW* as a theophoric element in other proper names.

⁵³ Buchanan, “Some Unfinished Business with the Dead Sea Scrolls,” page 418. See also Buchanan, “How God’s Name Was Pronounced,” page 31.

allow those familiar with these marks to see the precise vocalic representation indicated. Those unfamiliar with such marks can simply pronounce the letters as they recognize them, though I suggest the use of an aspirated (in this case, a “breathing out” sound for) “ah” when this element occurs in a word-final position:

Exodus 15:1:	'Ašîrâh laYâhweh kî ga'oh gâ'âh.
Exodus 15:1:	'Ašîrâh laYahôwâh kî ga'oh gâ'âh.
Exodus 15:6:	Yemînekâ, Yâhweh, ne'ddârî bakkoah; yemînekâ, Yâhweh, tir'as 'ôyêb.
Exodus 15:6:	Yemînekâ, Yahôwâh, ne'ddârî bakkoah; yemînekâ, Yahôwâh, tir'as 'ôyêb.
Exodus 15:17:	Mâkôn lešibttekâ pâ'alттâ, Yâhweh.
Exodus 15:17:	Mâkôn lešibttekâ pâ'alттâ, Yahôwâh.

I believe that anyone reading the above will agree with me and with Buchanan that the lines “sound rough and unrhythmical when the Tetragrammaton is pronounced ‘Yahweh’ but smooth and poetic when pronounced ‘Yahowah.’”⁵⁴ With that in mind, let us look closer at some of the other evidence involving other Hebrew and Aramaic forms of the divine name. Then we will consider the Greek evidence.

As discussed previously, the primary Hebrew and Aramaic forms of the Jewish name for God inside and outside of the Bible, standing alone or as a part of proper names, are the forms *YH*, *YHW*, *YHWH*, with some early use of *YW*.⁵⁵ In the Bible the

⁵⁴ Buchanan, “Some Unfinished Business with the Dead Sea Scrolls,” page 418.

⁵⁵ Driver, “The original form of the name ‘Yahweh,’” pages 7-8, notes that on Israelite ostraca dated to “the latter half of the 9th cent. B.C. or, less probably, to the first half of the following century, the divine name always takes the form יׁ [YW], both at the beginning and at the end of proper names.” Zevit (*Matres Lectionis in Ancient Hebrew Epigraphs*, page 12, note 14) states well the complications involved in the development and use of *YW* in proper names:

The history of the pronunciation of this theophoric element in personal names is extremely difficult to trace for any number of reasons: 1) The data in inscriptions are distributed chronologically over many centuries, linguistically over many languages and dialects, and are represented in many orthographic systems involving unique conventions. Although equations may be established between the representation of the element in one system and its representation in another, phonetic equivalence may not

primary stand-alone form (by a large margin!) is *YHWH* (English: “Jehovah”). It occurs 6,828 times in the standard Hebrew text (BHS) of the Bible used for most translations of the OT today. The stand-alone form *YH* (English: “Jah”) occurs a respectable number of times (49) in the OT. The form *YHW* only occurs once in the OT as a stand-alone name for God, and this is in the Greek form *Iao* that is found in an ancient fragment of the LXX of Leviticus (4QLXXLev^b). It is possible, however, that the Greek *Iao* was used to represent the four-letter name of God, as I will soon explain. But apart from this three-letter Greek form, the three-letter Hebrew or Aramaic form *YWH* does not stand alone in the Bible as a name for God. Still, it is used as such in the Aramaic papyri from Elephantine (as is the three-letter form *YHH*), and the forms *YHW* and *YH* both occur as part of place and personal names in- and outside of the Bible at different times from as early as the ninth century BCE.⁵⁶

But in pre-Masoretic times it is unclear just what precise Hebrew, Aramaic, or other ancient language pronunciations were given to these forms in various locations, at the same or different times or in different dialects. Though the Masoretic evidence provides us with a basis for certain older and some modern pronunciations of the name, it is not clear which pronunciations (if any) in the Masoretic text may be correct indications of a particularly ancient (or original) pronunciation when standing alone or when used as a part of other proper names. The evidence from the use of the divine name in the Masoretic text’s pointing of the two- and three-letter forms of the divine name (*YH* and *YHW*, respectively) in proper names supports a second syllable pronunciation of *Hu* (as in *Ya-Hu*) or *Ho* (as in *Ya-Ho*). The lack

be assumed unless worked out by inner reconstruction from within each system. 2) The significance of the element in Israelite personal names from the biblical period onward may have resulted in socio-linguistic factors complicating the issue even more. Archaic or archaizing pronunciations may have been maintained which diverged from the apparent phonetic realization of a conventionalized orthography, or *vice versa*, an archaic, nonphonetic orthography may have been maintained after sound changes had affected the pronunciation. This is exemplified in the post-Exilic books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles.

⁵⁶ See the references in note 44 for dates on the various early uses of these forms.

of the four-letter form of the divine name as a part of other proper names could mean the fourth letter stands for or marks something already represented by the three-letter form (*YHW*).

In other words, it could be that the fourth letter in *YHWH*, the final *heh* (ה [H]), simply serves as a vowel indicator for what may be the three-letter form's final-syllable vowel sound. If this is so, then it would make *YHWH* the equivalent of *YHW* by being vocalized along the lines of *YaH-Wo(H)*. Here the final *heh* serves as a vowel indicator (a *mater lectionis*) and not as a consonant. This would then explain why *YHWH* never occurs as a part of other personal names while *YHW* does, that is, because they both represent the same name pronounced the same way!

My review of the evidence suggests that the final letter of the three-letter form of the divine name (*waw* [ו]) may also represent an aspirated "o" sound.⁵⁷ This is consistent with the likely pronunciation of the best Greek representation of the divine name available, namely, Ιαω [*Iao*]). This could mean that both the two-letter (*YH*) and three-letter (*YHW*) forms of the divine name that occur in proper names in- and outside of the Bible, may in fact represent the two independently pronounced forms of the divine name *inclusive* of the pronunciation associated with the four-letter tetragrammaton.

Of course, it is also possible that the final *heh* in *YHWH* represents an aspirated "ah" sound, or some other "breathed out" sound in addition to the "o" or "u" sound indicated by the third letter of the tetragrammaton, *waw* (ו). As noted above, with examples provided by Buchanan, the evidence from the pointing of the Masoretic text in poetic sections of the OT supports a pronunciation of three syllables for the four-letter form of the divine name (*YHWH*), with the same final aspirant that was observed with "Yahowah" in the selections from Exodus 15. In those texts, "Yahowah" sounds much more rhythmical than "Yahweh." But what would these same selections look like, or more appropriately *sound* like with "Yah-wo(h)" in place of

⁵⁷ See note 43. Also, compare note 44 regarding the use of final *heh* in the three-letter form of the divine name *YHH* in the Elephantine Papyri.

“Yahowah”? You can make the substitute yourself by using the examples provided on page 36 above. In my opinion, with my substitutions, Exodus 15:1 still sounds ‘smooth and rhythmical’ with “Yah-wo(h)” and in 15:6 or 15:17 “Yah-wo(h)” also sounds acceptable, especially with a “breathed out” final syllable.

What, though, does the evidence from early Greek forms of the divine name tell us about the name’s early pronunciation by Jews, by Christians, and by others? Consider figure 1.1 below, which contains a listing of different Greek forms of the divine name occurring in literature that speaks to the early use and/or the early (pre-Masoretic) pronunciation of the divine name.

Figure 1.1

Greek Forms of the Divine Name and their Corresponding Hebrew/Aramaic Forms with English Transliterations

GREEK FORMS	HEBREW / ARAMAIC FORMS	ENGLISH TRANSLITERATIONS AND APPROXIMATE PRONUNCIATIONS
Ιαω	יהוה, יהה, יהר	Greek: <i>Ia-o</i> , from “Yah-wo(h),” “Ye-wo(h),” “Ya-ho(h)” or “Ya-ho,” all of which could represent pronunciations of any of the corresponding Hebrew/Aramaic forms listed.
Ιαωια Ιαη	יהו+יה יה	Greek: <i>Ia-o-ia</i> , from a combination of the Hebrew “Yah” or “Ye-ho” and “Yah.” Greek: <i>Ia-e</i> or <i>Ia</i> , from the Hebrew “Yah” (see note 65)
Ιαου Ιαουε	יהר יהרה	Greek: <i>Ia-ou</i> or possibly <i>Ia-o</i> , from “Ya-hu,” “Ye-hu,” “Ya-ho,” or “Ye-ho.” Greek: <i>Ia-ou-e</i> or possibly <i>Ia-o-e</i> , from “Ya-hu-weh” or “Ye-hu-weh,” or “Ya-ho-weh” or “Ye-ho-weh.”
Ια	יה	Greek: <i>Ia</i> , from the Hebrew “Yah.”
Ιεω Ιευ	יהוה יהר	Greek: <i>Ie-u-o</i> , possibly from a Hebrew “Ye-hu-wo(h).” Greek: <i>Ie-u</i> , possibly from “Ye-hu.”
Ιαωθ	יהר, יהרה	Greek: <i>Ia-oh</i> , from “Ya-ho” or “Ye-ho,” with the Greek <i>theta</i> (θ) serving as a sign of aspiration (see note 69). ⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Some believe that this form (Ιαωθ) is a combination of the shortest form of the divine name, “Yah,” and the ending of the Hebrew word **צְבָאוֹת** *sabaoth*, which is transliterated into Greek as *σαβαωθ* (*sabaoth*, meaning “hosts” or “armies,” as in ‘Jehovah of armies’). But see the explanation of the ending of the Greek form of the divine name with *theta* (θ) by Irenaeus in note 69 below.

Ιαηλ	יְהוָה	Greek: <i>Ia-el</i> , from a combination of “Yah” and <i>'el</i> (the Hebrew word for “God”). ⁵⁹
------	--------	---

In the above chart, in the discussion preceding it, and in the discussion which now follows I have attempted to give as much relevant information about Greek forms of the divine name and their equivalents in Hebrew/Aramaic as I think is practical to here give. I believe that the good reasons I here present will allow me to make reasonable conclusions regarding the ancient and the modern pronunciation of the divine name, particularly as it relates to the use of the Anglicized names “Jehovah,” “Jaho,” and “Jah.”

Ιαω occurs in one of the earliest and best representatives of the Greek translation of the Old Testament, known as the Septuagint (or LXX). In 4QLXXLev^b (dating from the first century BCE [see page 67, note 113]), there are two occurrences of this form of the divine name, namely, in Leviticus 3:12 and in 4:27. This text, its implications for the use of the divine name in the LXX in general and even in the NT where it quotes from the OT, will be considered later in this chapter. Ιαω also occurs in the writings of Diodorus Siculus,⁶⁰ Tertullian,⁶¹ Origen (see note 65),

⁵⁹ M.D. Johnson, “Life of Adam and Eve,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 2, James H. Charlesworth, ed. (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1985), page 285, note 29b; L. Wells, “The Books of Adam and Eve,” in *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English*, R.H. Charles, ed., vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1964 [1913]), page 148, note “4. Jael.” This Greek form of the divine name is similar to the form of the divine name used in the Hebrew of 3 Enoch for the angel Metatron, who is also known as the “lesser YHWH” (3 Enoch 12:5) in contrast to the “greater YHWH” (3 Enoch 48B:1[44]). It is also used of an archangel who is actually named “Yaho’el,” which “probably originated in speculation about the angel in whom God’s name resides, according to Exodus 23:20f.,” which angel is identified in 3 Enoch 12:5 as “Metatron.” See P. Alexander, “3 (Hebrew Apocalypse of) Enoch,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 1, James H. Charlesworth, ed. (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1983), page 244. This form of the name is similar to the “Iaoel” of the Apocalypse of Abraham, a work that may have originally been written in Hebrew (but preserved today only in Slavonic) in the late first or early-to-middle second century CE (see 10:3 and 17:3 in R. Rubinkiewicz and H.G. Lunt, “The Apocalypse of Abraham,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 1, pages 693, 697).

⁶⁰ Around 30 BCE Diodorus completed a famous “Library of History” in which he writes that among the Jews Moses “referred his laws to the god who is invoked [ἐπικαλούμενον] as Iao [Ἰαώ]” (1.94.2; LCL series of Diodorus’ works, vol. 1, page 321). This reference from Diodorus is also cited by Justin Martyr (who died around

Varro,⁶² Jerome,⁶³ and in early Onomastica.⁶⁴ $\text{I}\alpha\omega\text{I}\alpha$ and $\text{I}\alpha\eta$ both occur in the writings of Origen.⁶⁵ $\text{I}\alpha\omega$ and $\text{I}\alpha\omega\epsilon$ are from the

165 CE) in his *Hortatory Address to the Greeks* (see ANF 1, chap. 9, page 277). Frank Shaw, “The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of $\text{I}\alpha\omega$,” (Ph.D. diss.: University of Cincinnati, 2002), pages 45-74, notes that Diodorus’ use of *Iao* in this passage suggests that he was using a term that his audience could relate to since they were familiar with it the same as they were familiar with other groups and figures mentioned by Diodorus, namely, the early “Arians,” “Hestia,” and the “Good Spirit.”

⁶¹ In his *Against the Valentinians* (ANF 3, chap. 14, page 511) Tertullian (c. 160-c. 220 CE) refers to the use of the name *Iao* which “comes to be found in the Scriptures [Latin: *inde inuenitur Iao in scripturis*]” (see *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, vol. 47, Aemilii Kroymann, *Q. Sept. Florent. Tertulliani Opera*, part 3 [Academiae Litterarum Caesareae Vindobonensis, 1906], page 193).

⁶² In a fragment preserved by John Lydus (a mid-6th century CE Constantinople official), the Roman scholar Varro (116-27 BCE) when defining the Jewish God “says he is called *Iao* [$\text{I}\alpha\omega$] in the Chaldaean mysteries.” Lydus connects this *Iao* to Herennius Philo of Byblos’ (concerning whom, see note 68 below) claim that the meaning of this name “in the Phoenician language” is “intelligible light” (Menahem Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, vol. 2 [Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1980], page 141, under 324; see also Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, vol. 1 [Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1976], page 211, under 75).

⁶³ Jerome (c. 342-c. 420 CE), in his “Commentary on Psalm 8,” writes: “The name of Lord in Hebrew language contains four letters, Yod He Waw He; it is the proper name of God and can be pronounced as *Yahō* [Latin: *legi potest IAHO*]” (as translated by G.J. Thierry, “The Pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton,” *Oudtestamentische Studiën* 5 [1948], page 34; see also the same reference in A. Lukyn Williams, “The Tetragrammaton—Jahweh, Name or Surrogate?” *ZAW* 54 [1936], page 266, under 1). This truly remarkable comment, where Jerome directly states that the full four-letter form of the divine name can be pronounced as “*Yaho*,” fits perfectly with my theory that the four-letter form of the divine name is actually the pronunciation equivalent of the three-letter form of the name found in the Elephantine Papyri and represented in Greek by the form $\text{I}\alpha\omega$ (*Iao*).

⁶⁴ “Onomastica” are defined as “a division of a larger genre called glossae,” which were “Greek literary tools meant to explain words and expressions either no longer used in living language or foreign to the reader due to dialectical variation” (Shaw, “The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of $\text{I}\alpha\omega$,” page 20). For example, P.Oxy 2745, published as an “Onomasticon of Hebrew Names” in *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, vol. 36 (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1970), page 3, has *Iao* eight times in a column that provides “an etymological interpretation” of Old Testament Hebrew names translated into Greek. This portion of the papyrus is dated to the third century CE and it is likely the product of a Christian scribe since, in addition to the use of *Iao* throughout, the Greek word for “God” is contracted in column B, line 5, in what is known as a *nomen sacrum* (“sacred name”), which is believed to be a post-apostolic Christian invention that I will discuss later in this chapter in relation to the use of the divine name in the NT. Shaw’s study is an excellent presentation of the use of *Iao* and, in addition to P.Oxy 2745, he notes occurrences of *Iao* in the following onomastica: The Heidelberg Papyri, dated to the late third or early fourth century CE, which has

nine instances of *Iao* and two instances of *Iω* (*Iō*, corresponding to the Hebrew י; see notes 37, 52, and 55 above; compare the reading of Vat. 174.81 [see Shaw, "The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of *Iω*," page 35, note 69, page 36, note 70, and page 38, note 82]). This papyrus roll, like P.Oxy 2745, contains an instance of the Greek word for "God" as a *nomen sacrum*. Further, it also incorporates a quotation of Matt 27:46 or Mark 15:34 and violates the alphabetical listing of words in favor of *Ιησους* ("Jesus"). These facts mark the papyrus as a Christian document (Shaw, "The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of *Iω*," page 22, note 8). Codex Marchalianus (Q) is a sixth century LXX manuscript that contains "onomastic notes in its marginalia" (Shaw, "The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of *Iω*," page 26). Twice in the notes for Eze 1:2 and 11:1 *Iao* is used. According to Shaw the use of *Iao* in these onomastica, which are based on the Greek names used in the LXX, probably indicates "an early time when *Iω* was being read and employed by Jews" (Shaw, "The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of *Iω*," page 27). We could also say this is true among early Christians based on the Christian character of some of these onomastica, in particular P.Oxy 2745 and the Heidelberg Papyri, as noted above. Shaw notes an additional instance of *Iao* in "another apparently old onomasticon" in the "marginalia of an uncial palimpsest of Genesis and Exodus from the Vatican collection of Pius II (Gr. 15), dated to the ninth century [Ralphs 662]," but the interpretations of which "date to the time or milieu of Origen due to certain agreements (one unique) between this onomasticon and name expositions given in Origen" (Shaw, "The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of *Iω*," page 32). Shaw also cites the Onomasticum Coislinianum of the sixth century CE, which is "comprehensive for the entire Bible," and it has "the most [ten] instances of *Iω* in the non-papyrological Greek onomastica." There is also the Onomastica Vaticana (dated prior to the sixth century CE) which contains some form of *Iao* in several instances, and the Glossae Colbertinae (dated to between the third and sixth centuries CE) which contains two instances of *Iao* (Shaw, "The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of *Iω*," pages 32-37). Several other onomastic sources, some as late as the fifteenth century (!), are also cited by Shaw ("The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of *Iω*," pages 37-38). Shaw also notes instances of *Iao* in other language onomastica, including six instances of *Iao* and two instances of *Ia* in the Syriac onomastica, which are mostly from the sixth or seventh centuries CE, but "clearly translated from Greek *Vorlagen* [= underlying texts] since they retain the order of the Greek, not the Syriac, alphabet in their listing of names" (Shaw, "The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of *Iω*," pages 39-41 [the quote is found on page 40 of his dissertation]). For the instances of the divine name in the Ethiopian onomastica, see note 69 below.

⁶⁵ In his *Commentary on John*, Origen (c. 185-c. 253 CE) explains the meaning of "Jeremiah" as μετεωρισμός *Iω* (*meteorismos Iao*, "Iao means 'lifting up'"). Compare the translation in ANF 10, page 322, Book II, second column ("IAO means etymologically lifting up, elation"). See also G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), page 865, under μετεωρισμός. The forms *Iao* and *Iaioia* also derive support from the possible readings of *Contra Celsus* 6.32, where Origen refers to those involved in the magical arts who took the name *Iao* or *Iaioia* "from the Hebrew scriptures," which is the "name used by the Hebrews" (ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν Ἑβραϊκῶν γραφῶν τῶν Ἰαωία παρ' Ἑβραίοις ὀνομαζόμενον). See Henry Chadwick, *Origen: Contra Celsum* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), page 349. The form *Iaioia* is listed in the main text of Paul Koetschau's *Origenes Werke*, vol. 1 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1899). Chadwick (*Origen: Contra Celsum*, page 349,

tradition of Clement of Alexandria.⁶⁶ Ια is represented by Origen, Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, Theodoret, and Epiphanius.⁶⁷

note 1) cites both *Iao* and *Iaouia* as Greek forms of the divine name used in this citation. Thus, both forms are listed in figure 1.1 as having been associated with the usage of the “Hebrews” in the ancient world. The form Ιαη (*Iae*) is found in Origen’s commentary on Psalm 2, as found in J.P. Migne, *Patrologiae Graeca* (Paris, 1857-66), vol. 12, column 1104, which is translated in relevant part by Leslie John McGregor, *The Greek Text of Ezekiel: An Examination of Its Homogeneity* (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1985), page 208, note 7, as follows:

Mention must be made of the word pronounced ‘Kurios’ by the Greeks and ‘Adonai’ by the Hebrews. God is given ten names by the Hebrews. One of these is ‘Adonai’ and is translated as ‘Lord’ [Kurios]. In some places it is pronounced ‘Adonai’ by the Hebrews and ‘Kurios’ by the Greeks, the form of what has been written in Scripture dictating this. When Iae [Ἰαῆ] is found, it is pronounced ‘Kurios’ by the Greeks, but not by the Hebrews, as in ‘Praise the Lord, for praise is good’ [LXX: Ps 146.1]. ‘Lord’ [Kurion] is said there instead of Iae [Ἰαῆ]. The beginning of the Psalm is ‘Allelouia’ according to the Hebrews.

Here the use of Ιαη (*Iae*) is clearly tied to the use of *Allelouia* in the Greek of Psalm 146:1, with *Iae* serving as “a transcription of *Yah*” (Roland de Vaux, “The Revelation of the Divine Name YHWH,” in *Proclamation and Presence: Old Testament Essays in Honour of Gwynne Henton Davies*, John I. Durham and J.R. Porter, eds. [Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1970], page 52, note 16). This form (*Yah*) is also represented by the *-ia* in the Greek *Allelouia*. The Greek letter *eta* (η) appears to be an attempt to represent the Hebrew *heh* (ה) in *YaH*. This may have something to do with “the earliest forms of the Greek alphabet” where “η was a mark of aspiration” (Speiser, “The Pronunciation of Hebrew Based Chiefly on the Transliterations in the Hexapla: The Vowels,” page 24).

⁶⁶ In his work, *The Stromata* (ANF 2, Book 5, chap. 6, page 452), Clement (c. 150- c. 220 CE) writes concerning the temple and the name of God:

Again, there is the veil of the entrance into the holy of holies. Four pillars there are, the sign of the sacred tetrad of the ancient covenants. Further, the mystic name of four letters [τὸ τετράγραμμον] which was affixed to those alone to whom the adytum was accessible, is called Jave [Ἰαου], which is interpreted, “Who is and shall be” [ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἐσόμενος] The name of God, too, among the Greeks contains four letters [τετράδα περιέχει γραμμάτων].

The reading Ιαου (*Iaou*) in figure 1.1 is based on J.P. Migne, *Patrologiae Graeca* (Paris, 1857-66), vol. 9, column 60, which is supported by the eleventh century Greek Codex Laurentianus. Some editions of Clement’s *Stromata* read Ιαουε (*Iaoue*) instead of Ιαου (*Iaou*) in the main text of Clement based on less than convincing evidence (see *Stromata* 5.6.34 in Alain Le Boulluec, ed., *Les Stromates*, Stromate V, Tome 1 [Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1981] and in O. Stählin and L. Früchtel, eds., *Stromata I – VI* [Berlin, 1960]). But not only is the reading *Iaoue* textually uncertain but it also appears to contradict the comparison between the “four letters” of the divine name and the “four pillars” (κίονες τέταρες) Clement refers to as “the sign of the sacred tetrad [τετράδος] of the ancient covenants,” since *Iaoue* has five letters whereas the form *Iaou* has four letters. *Iao* has three letters, but it could involve a fourth unwritten letter

Ιεω and Ιευ are found in the tradition of Herennius Philo of Byblos.⁶⁸ Ιαωθ is used by Irenaeus.⁶⁹ And the form Ιαηλ is from The Books of Adam and Eve.⁷⁰

if the final *heh* in Hebrew merely marks the final “o” vowel sound of the Hebrew *waw*. Or perhaps the final *heh* indicates a breathing out of the final “o” sound, which in Greek was not represented by a letter or by some other mark during this time. Thus, *Iao* could again represent a pronunciation of the full four-letter written Hebrew/Aramaic form of the divine name, the tetragrammaton (see note 63).

⁶⁷ Edwin Hatch and Henry A. Redpath, *A Concordance to the Septuagint*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), page 73, states that Aquila (early to middle second century CE) and Symmachus (middle to late second century CE) use *Ia* in their translations of Ps 67(68):5 and Isa 12:2. Further on the use of *Ia* by Aquila in Ps 67(68):5, in the possibly early fifth century CE work *Hypomnestikon Bibliion Ioseppou* (or “Notebook of Josephus [or ‘Joseph’]”) we read that “Lord is his name” is rendered by Aquila as “Ia [Iα] is his name” (151:4 in Robert M. Grant and Glen W. Menzies, *Joseph's Bible Notes [Hypomnestikon]*, Harold W. Attridge, ed. [Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1996], page 331). Aquila also uses *Ia* twice in Isa 38:11. Theodotion (late second century or early third century CE) uses *Ia* in Ps 67(68):5, Isa 12:2, and twice in Isa 38:11. The fifth column of Origen's Hexapla (produced between 230 and 240 CE) also uses *Ia* in Ps 67(68):5. According to the critical edition by Natalio Fernández Marcos and Angel Sáenz-Badillos, *Theodoret's Cyrensis Quaestiones in Octateuchum* (Madrid, 1979), page 112 (15.17-18), Theodoret (c. 393-c. 468) wrote, Καλοῦσι δὲ αὐτὸ σαμαριεῖται μὲν Ἰαβέ, ἰουδαῖοι δὲ Ἰα, which can be translated, “The Samaritans pronounce it [the divine name mentioned in 15.15] ‘Iabe’ [Iαβε], but the Jews pronounce it ‘Ia’ [Iα].” Epiphanius of Salamis (c. 315-c. 403 CE) also lists *Ia* and *Iabe* (see *The Panarion* 1.3.40) among the names of God.

⁶⁸ This form of the divine name (*Ieuo*) is preserved in Eusebius of Caesarea's (c. 260-c. 340 CE) *Preparation for the Gospel* 1.9.20-21, where Eusebius quotes Porphyry's (c. 232-c. 305 CE) work *Against the Christians*, in which work Porphyry gives a translation into Greek by Philo of Byblos (c. 70-c. 160 CE) of Sanchuniathon of Berytus' (believed to have lived in pre-Trojan times, anywhere from 2000 to 1300 BCE) history of the Jews. With respect to this history it is said that Sanchuniathon “received the records from Hierombalus the priest of the god Jeuo [Ἰεωῶ]” (E.H. Gifford's translation of Eusebius' *Preparation* as found in Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, vol. 2, page 139; see also George H. van Kooten, “Moses/Musaeus/Mochos and His God Yahweh, Iao, Sabaoth, Seen from a Graeco-Roman Perspective,” in *The Revelation of the Name YHWH to Moses: Perspectives from Judaism, the Pagan Graeco-Roman World, and Early Christianity*, George H. van Kooten, ed. [Leiden: Brill, 2006], pages 119-120). However, the form *Ieuo* from this passage from Philo of Byblos is “changed into ‘Iao’ in Theodoretus of Cyrhus in Syria (c. AD 393-466), *Graecarum affectionum curatio* 2.44” (van Kooten, “Moses/Musaeus/Mochos and His God,” page 120, note 32; see also Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, vol. 2, page 140, note for 21, Ἰεωῶ). Indeed, elsewhere John Lydus (see note 62 above) references Varro's use of the name *Iao* and says that Philo of Byblos defines this name “in the Phoenician language” (Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, vol. 2, page 141, under 324; van Kooten, “Moses/Musaeus/Mochos and His God,” page 127). This “shows that Philo of Byblos

While forms of the divine name found in literature devoted to the use of magic are sometimes the same as some of the Greek forms of the divine name referenced in figure 1.1 above, novel or unusual Greek forms of the divine name found in magic texts are not listed in figure 1.1. This is because “these prayers and incantations in the magical papyri mix all sorts of sounds

“appears to have known the Jewish God not only as ‘Ieuo’ ... but also as ‘Iao’” (van Kooten, “Moses/Musaeus/Mochos and His God,” page 127). *Ieu* is listed in figure 1.1 above because of the reference to this form by Stern (*Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, vol. 2, page 141, note for 21, Ἰεϋώ) as occurring in codex A of this text’s manuscript history in place of *Ieuo* in the text of Eusebius translated by Gifford (quoted earlier in this note). See also William F. Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan: A Historical Analysis of Two Contrasting Faiths* (Winona Lake, Eisenbrauns, 1968), page 263, note 155, who cites these two variants (*Ieuo* and *Ieu*), as well as the reading *Iao* from Theodoret.

⁶⁹ Irenaeus (c. 130-c. 200 CE), in his work *Against Heresies* (ANF 1, pages 412-413), refers to the four-letter form of the “name of God ... among the Greeks” as Ιαωθ (*Iaoth*). Here Irenaeus also refers to different meanings for Greek forms of the divine name (each having four letters) but where the two referenced forms differ with respect to the pronunciation of the last syllable. The form “Jaōth” (given in Latin, but with a Greek omega [ω] and presumably an understood Greek *theta* [θ] at the end) is said to be “long and aspirated” while the form “Jaoth” (with a Greek *omicron* and a final *theta*) is said to be “written shortly.” Again, each of these forms of the divine name, in Greek, would have four letters: *iota, alpha, omega, and theta*, or *iota, alpha, omicron, and theta*. The Greek forms Ιαωθ and Ιαωτ (*Iaot*), both with an *omega*, are found in several Greek papyri (see G. Adolf Deissmann, *Bible Studies* [Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1988 (1901)], page 327), and also in a thirteenth century CE Ethiopian *onomasticon* (Frank Wutz, *Onomastica Sacra*, vol. 2 [Leipzig: J.C. Hinriches'sche Buchhandlung, 1915], pages 1004, 1005). Shaw notes that the form cited by Wutz as *Iao* is actually equivalent to Ιαηλ (*Iael*) in two manuscripts (α and γ) and Ιαα (*Iaa*) in one other (β), and that the presence of these forms, together with the form Ιαωθ in the Ethiopian *onomastica*, “likely shows that the influence of much earlier usage of Ιαω in Jewish *onomastica* had long range effects” (Shaw, “The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of Ιαω,” pages 41, 42). But the fact that Irenaeus speaks of one form being “long and aspirated” and another form “written shortly” should be noted.

⁷⁰ *A Synopsis of the Books of Adam and Eve*, Gary A. Anderson and Michael E. Stone, eds., Second Revised Edition (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1999), page 72, verse 29:4, and page 79, verse 33:5. This work is believed to have been of Jewish origin and originally composed in Hebrew and then later translated into Greek, Latin, and other languages. The date of the original Hebrew composition is thought to have been between 100 BCE and 200 CE, with the Greek text having been produced “between that time and A.D. [CE] 400” (Johnson, “Life of Adam and Eve,” page 252; see also Wells, “The Books of Adam and Eve,” pages 126-127). As observed in the latter half of note 69 above, this form also appears in two manuscripts (α and γ) of an Ethiopian *onomasticon* (see Shaw, “The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of Ιαω,” page 41).

together.”⁷¹ Thus, such forms of the divine name are not always useful when it comes to isolating non-incantational Jewish, reportedly Jewish, or early Christian pronunciations of the name.⁷² I have therefore given little attention to the use of the name in such texts for the purposes of this discussion.

Other Greek forms of the divine name associated with Jewish and Samaritan usage. The Greek forms used in reference to the Samaritan use of the divine name are also not listed in figure 1.1, because they are distinguished by the early writers who use them from the reported Jewish pronunciation. However, in addition to the five-letter Greek variant *Iaoue* discussed above from Clement of Alexandria (which reading is uncertain and does not fit well the context of Clement's remarks), it is the Greek forms representing the Samaritan pronunciation that are considered to be “the earliest concrete testimony to the pronunciation ‘Yahweh.’”⁷³ It is these forms and some other information concerning the Jewish use of the divine name that we will now consider.

As noted previously, the Greek form *Iaoue* in Clement of Alexandria's writings is a variant reading from one of his texts that seems to represent a Hebrew/Aramaic pronunciation such as “Ya/e-Ho/u-WeH.” But in spite of the textual and contextual problems this Greek form presents (as discussed in note 66), if we accept the form *Iaoue* as original to Clement then this form, unlike “Yahweh,” appears to ‘maintain the middle vowel’!⁷⁴ Therefore, though it may be possible that the *ou* in *Iaoue* represents the Hebrew *waw*, even this Greek variant form (*Iaoue*) does not necessarily support the pronunciation of “Yahweh,” because in “Yahweh” there is no middle vowel.

This brings us to the Samaritan forms of the divine name, namely, the Greek forms *Iabe* (Ιαβε) and *Iabai* (Ιαβαί) used in the works of Epiphanius of Salamis (c. 315-c. 403 CE) and Theodoret

⁷¹ Buchanan, “Some Unfinished Business with the Dead Sea Scrolls,” page 415.

⁷² See Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, pages 321-336, for a good survey of Greek forms of the divine name including some from selections of the magical papyri.

⁷³ Sean M. McDonough, *YHWH at Patmos: Rev. 1:4 in its Hellenistic and Early Jewish Setting* (Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 1999), page 118.

⁷⁴ Buchanan, “Some Unfinished Business with the Dead Sea Scrolls,” page 416; Buchanan, “How God's Name Was Pronounced,” page 31.

of Cyrrhus (c. 393-c. 468).⁷⁵ However, as we can see from the quotation of Theodoret above (at the end of note 67), he does not use either of these forms for the *Jewish* pronunciation of the divine name. Rather, Theodoret uses *Iabe/Iabai* to represent the reported Samaritan pronunciation *in contrast to the reported Jewish pronunciation!*

The Greek form *Ia*, which Theodoret represented as being the Jewish pronunciation of the divine name, appears clearly to be a transliteration of the two-letter form of the divine name in Hebrew, namely, יָה (YH, “YaH,” or in English, “Jah”). As noted earlier, this form of the divine name stands alone in the Hebrew Bible at least 49 times and it is used frequently as a prefix and as a suffix in compound names in- and outside of the Bible. It is also used at least 9 times standing alone or as a part of the expression “Hallelujah” (Hebrew: הַלְלֵי־יָה [*halelu* and *Yah*]) in the Dead Sea Scrolls.⁷⁶ Further, this expression of praise for “Jah” is also found 4 times in the New Testament book of Revelation (19:1, 3, 4, 6; Greek: Ἀλληλουιά [*allelou* plus *Ia* (= transliteration of *Yah*, Anglicized today as “Jah”)]).

One of the variants listed for the Jewish use of *Ia* in the reference from Theodoret in note 67 above is the Greek word Ἀϊά (*Aia* [“A-i-a”]). This variant appears to be a Graecized form of the Hebrew word *'ehyeh* (“I will be”) found twice in Exodus 3:14. This form may have been represented elsewhere by some Jews in Theodoret’s time with the form Ιαβαί (*Iabai*).⁷⁷ It is possible, then, that the form *Iabe* comes from the Jewish use of *Iabai* for *Aia*, the Greek form of *'ehyeh*. Whether this is the origin of *Iabe* among the Samaritans or not (that is, it may derive ultimately from *'ehyeh* and *not* from a form of the divine name

⁷⁵ Williams, “The Tetragrammaton—Jahweh, Name or Surrogate?” page 264, notes that Epiphanius lists not only *Iabe* as a name for God but also a variant reading of *Iaue*.

⁷⁶ Abegg, Jr., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Concordance*, vol. 1, page 296. The divine name *Yah* (“Jah”) is used as part of the expression *halelu-yah* in the OT 24 times (Helmer Ringgren, “הַלְלֵי HLL,” TDOT 3 [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978], page 408, under “f”).

⁷⁷ Williams, “The Tetragrammaton—Jahweh, Name or Surrogate?” page 264, who states that “the Samaritans call it [the *Aia* of the Jews] *Iabai*” according to Theodoret’s *Haereticarum Fabularum Compendium*.

itself), the form *Aia* also represents the name “Ahijah” in the LXX (Nehemiah 10:26 [2 Ezra 20:27]). Therefore, it is unlikely that *Aia* represents the divine name itself. It is more likely a Greek representation of the Hebrew word *'ehyeh* from Exodus 3:14, which Theodoret could easily have confused with *Iabe* or *Iabai* among Samaritans or among the Jews.

In any event, the textual tradition of Theodoret shows that he attributed the use of *Iabe* to the Samaritans, not to the Jews whom Theodoret says used either *Aia* or *Ia*. It is possible that *Iabe* (or *Iabai*) does not represent a pronunciation of the tetragrammaton at all, but rather the Samaritan pronunciation of *'ehyeh* which is put in contrast to the Jewish pronunciation of the same, which is, in Greek, *Aia*. But even if the Greek form *Iabe* attributed by Theodoret to the Samaritans does refer to their pronunciation of the divine name itself, this pronunciation is still in direct contrast to the reported Jewish usage and “may well represent speculation on the part of the Gentiles (Samaritans and Christians) as to the pronunciation of the name.”⁷⁸ Further, as Lowy points out:

It might be thought that the reports originating from the anti-heretical Patristic literature, on the Samaritans' enunciating the Tetragrammaton as $\iota\alpha\beta\epsilon$ [*Iabe*] or $\iota\alpha\beta\alpha\iota$ [*Iabai*], must conclusively prove that this represents the real testimony of eye-witnesses. However, these reports are [quite possibly] nothing more than faulty transcriptions of incantatory formulae, derived from Samaritan magical texts.⁷⁹

Additionally, “the possibility that the bitter enemies of the Jews used the form Yahweh is no evidence that the Hebrews did likewise.”⁸⁰ Of course, it is possible that the Samaritans may have preserved a more ancient pronunciation of the divine name that the Jews left behind, but the truth is “there is no direct evidence from the late Second Temple period which supports such a

⁷⁸ Luckenbill, “The Pronunciation of the Name of the God of Israel,” page 282.

⁷⁹ S. Lowy, *The Principles of Samaritan Bible Exegesis* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), page 273.

⁸⁰ MacLaurin, “YHWH: The Origin of the Tetragrammaton,” page 459.

pronunciation [as ‘Yahweh’].”⁸¹ But McDonough also states that the “virtual unanimity” among scholars for preferring “Yahweh” must ‘count for something.’⁸² Quite frankly, as we have seen throughout this discussion, there have been plenty of scholars who have rejected “Yahweh” and McDonough himself notes, as quoted above, the lack of any “direct evidence from the late Second Temple period.”

The majority of scholarly opinion is not what is at issue here. What is important are the best available reasons, whether they are provided by a scholar’s published analysis and investigation or not. If the majority of scholarly opinion is based on the best available evidence, then it should be accepted based on the best available evidence not on the majority opinion itself. If the best available evidence is our guide, then Bible translations would not continue using “Lord” or “God” in place of a form of the divine name, since the Bible gives us no good reasons for accepting such an opinion. Yet, the majority of scholarly opinion does *not* use God’s name, and so their opinion alone cannot be accepted without first considering, understanding, and then accepting the reasons given in support of a particular belief. Anything less is not acceptable in a biblical discussion about the use of God’s name.

When it comes to comparing the good reasons offered in support of one pronunciation of the divine name over another, “Yahweh” loses dramatically to forms such as *Iao* and *Ia*, ancient Greek pronunciations of the Hebrew forms “Yaho” and “Yah.” But McDonough proposes several related theories for different pronunciations of the divine name among the Jews and pagans that simply have no credible evidence whatsoever supporting them. Indeed, they fly directly into the face of a mountain of evidence that supports *Iao*, and to a lesser extent *Ia*. Amazingly, even though McDonough considers much of the available

⁸¹ McDonough, *YHWH at Patmos*, page 118. For additional discussion of the Samaritan pronunciation of the divine name, see my *Three Dissertations on the Teachings of Jehovah’s Witnesses* (Murrieta, CA: Elihu Books, 2002), pages 223-224, note 32.

⁸² McDonough, *YHWH at Patmos*, page 117.

evidence regarding the use of the name, the very theory he advances is against the evidence McDonough presents! He writes:

In sum, then, I would suggest that there were two streams of tradition with regards to the pronunciation of the divine name in Judaism. The “official version,” presumably passed along by the temple hierarchy and the rabbis, may well have been “Yahweh” (although this is not provable from the existing evidence), and was likely *not* Iao. At the same time, a more popular version of the name, Iao, flourished among some Jews, perhaps especially in the diaspora. Iao originated, it is true, from a shortened version of the tetragrammaton, but it eventually gained independent status as the designation for the Jewish God. This form was more widely dispersed among the pagans, since its adherents were less attentive to the traditions restricting the usage of the divine name.⁸³

McDonough represents a large segment of present and past scholars who simply cannot shake themselves loose from the pronunciation “Yahweh,” even when they at the same time acknowledge that this pronunciation of the divine name “is not provable from the existing evidence.” It is no wonder, then, that we cannot get many modern Bible translators or translation committees to put God’s name back in the text where it belongs, using a pronunciation based on the best available evidence.

Additionally, it is not necessarily true that *Iao* ‘originated from a shortened version of the tetragrammaton.’ It may have, that is, if we accept *Iao* as a Greek transliteration of the three-letter form of the divine name *YHW* (יהו) and if we believe that the three-letter form is not pronounced the same way as the four-letter form *YHWH* (יהוה). But this is not a necessary conclusion. In fact, when we consider “the existing evidence” and if we draw reasonable conclusions from it for an acceptable pronunciation of the divine name, this conclusion is not well-founded at all.

⁸³ McDonough, *YHWH at Patmos*, page 122.

Conclusions regarding the pronunciation of the divine name based on the best available evidence. I have tried to present and to consider the best available evidence from some of the best sources and from discussions of the available evidence, this so I can reach reasonable conclusions about how the divine name should be pronounced. Specifically, my investigation is part of an effort to determine if the most common English and other modern language pronunciations used by Jehovah’s Witnesses, the Christian Witnesses of Jah, and others (namely, “Jehovah,” “Jaho,” and “Jah”) are legitimate pronunciations of the biblical God’s name. I have also tried to answer questions related to the use of “Yahweh” in order to determine if it is an acceptable transliteration and pronunciation of God’s name which is based on the best (or even good) evidence.

In this discussion I have presented evidence showing that the divine name was represented in three Hebrew/Aramaic forms either standing alone or as part of other words. Those three forms are יה (YH), יהו (YHW), and the tetragrammaton יהוה (YHWH). Pronunciations of these forms prior to the Masoretic convention of vowel pointing are practically impossible to determine without considering their representations in other languages, such as in Greek. The Masoretic evidence itself is inconclusive, since it is not clear whether any of the vowel pointings in the Masoretic textual tradition represent an accurate pronunciation of the divine name. What is certain is that the precise vowel points from *’adonay* are not ever used with the divine name in the Bible. The vowel pointing that is used more often than any other (at least in B19) is *YeH-WaH*. It is not clear what word, if any, the vowel points used for this form of the divine name are from.

The Greek forms of the divine name give us more help than do the Masoretic vowel pointing of the divine name when it comes to determining what pronunciations of the divine name were in use in the ancient world. As presented in figure 1.1 and in the notes following it, while there are several Greek forms of the divine name that occur in various early texts, the form *Iao* (Ιαω) is found in one of the oldest and best representatives of the LXX Bible tradition, 4QLXXLev^b (from around the first century BCE).

Ιαω (*Iao*) is also found throughout representatives of early Greek biblical onomastica, and it is the name of the God whom the historian Diodorus Siculus (around 30 BCE) said is “invoked” by the Jews to whom the law of Moses was given. It is connected with the Roman scholar Varro’s (116-27 BCE) description of the Jewish God according to the “Chaldean mysteries,” and Tertullian (c. 160- c. 220 CE) refers to *Iao* as “found in the Scriptures.” Origen (c. 185-c. 253 CE) uses the name *Iao* in an onomastic context in his *Commentary on John*, and in another one of his works Origen refers to those involved in magical arts who took the name *Iao* (or *Iaoia*) “from the Hebrew scriptures,” which Origen says is the “name used by the Hebrews.”

There is one other reference to the divine name to be discussed here. Josephus refers to the inscription of the divine name on a “golden crown” worn by the high priest “on the seventh days and new moons, and if any festivals belonging to [the Jewish] nation, which [they] celebrate every year, happened.”⁸⁴ Josephus says that on this crown “were embossed the sacred letters, to wit, four vowels [*phônêenta tessara*].” What is most interesting about this reference is that Josephus speaks of “four vowels,” not four consonants or even just four letters.⁸⁵ The Greek word for “vowels” here is from the Greek word *phônê* (φωνή) which is used frequently in reference to vowels (with and without the article), usually in contrast to consonants.⁸⁶ But *phônê* and other forms of the same word can also refer to a

⁸⁴ *War of the Jews* 5.230 (Whiston’s translation); Thackeray LCL 3, page 273.

⁸⁵ For example, Clement of Alexandria (see above, note 66) refers to the written form the divine name as ‘containing four letters’ (τετράδα περιέχει γραμμάτων). This is apparently not specific to vowels or to consonants, but simply to ‘written characters’ (see Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, page 322, under γράμμα).

⁸⁶ For example, in Plato’s *Cratylus* 424c Socrates twice refers to “vowels” (*ta phônêenta ... phônêenta ... tôn phônêentôn*) as opposed to “the consonants or mutes” (*ta ... aphôna kai aphthonga*). In *Sophist* 253a we have another reference to “vowels” (*ta ... phônêenta*) in contrast to “other” letters of the alphabet. *Philebus* 18b discusses “the vowel sounds” (*ta phônêenta*) as distinct from “mutes” (*ta aphthonga*) and “semi-vowels” (*ta mesa*). Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1016b, 20, writes, “But the unit is not the same in all classes, for in one it is the quarter-tone, and in another the vowel or consonant” (*entha men gar diesis entha de to phônêen ê aphônon*). In *Metaphysics* 1041b, 15 reference is again made to *phônêen kai aphônon* (“vowel and consonant”). See also *Metaphysics* 1054a, 1; 1093a, 10; *Poetics* 1456b, 25 (twice); 1458a 1, 10, 15.

“noise” or to a “sound.”⁸⁷ If this is its meaning here in the reference from Josephus, then it could very well simply refer to the four “sounds” of the “sacred letters,” namely, “Yod He Waw He,” which Jerome (400 CE) in his “Commentary on Psalm 8” said “is the proper name of God and can be pronounced as Yahô” (see note 63 above).

This last comment by Jerome shows clearly that there was an early tradition in which the four-letter form of the divine name, “Yod He Waw He” (יהוה), “can be pronounced Yahô.” This fits perfectly with some of the observations that I have offered in this chapter, specifically, that the three-letter form of the divine name represents the same pronunciation as the four-letter, again, *Yaho* (English: “Jaho”). As I also discussed earlier, this means that the final letter of the four-letter form of the divine name found on the Moabite Stone and found elsewhere in- and outside of the Bible (that is, the final *heh* [ה]), likely marks further the long “o” sound that is also represented by the third letter of the divine name, the letter *waw* (ו). This would explain the use of the three-letter form of the divine name instead of the four-letter form in proper names in the Bible and in other early literature. It is also consistent with the use of the three-letter form of the divine name found in the Elephantine papyri and it is consistent with the ancient and most well-known Greek form of the divine name, Ιαω (*Iao*).⁸⁸

Personal names that include the three-letter form of the divine name do not correspond to a form that leads to a pronunciation of “Yahweh.” Rather, the best evidence supports pronunciations such as “Yaho”/“Yeho” or “Yahu”/“Yehu”⁸⁹ for the three-letter

⁸⁷ Plato, *Laws* 701a, uses it for those who became “noisy” (*phônênt' egenonto*). In Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 2.7.13, *phônênta* is used in reference to the “speech” of beasts.

⁸⁸ In addition to the evidence from the sources cited earlier, consider Deissmann’s observation that the Greek form *Iao* “became so familiar that it even underwent declension” (*Bible Studies*, page 324). As an example, he cites the form Ιαων from Pap. Lugd. J 382, iii.1.

⁸⁹ The Greek vowel α (*alpha*) is sometimes used to transliterate the Hebrew *sheva* (short “e” sound) as in זבולן (“Zebulun” [also זבולין and זבולין]) which in Greek is transliterated as Ζαβουλών. Other examples where the *sheva* is transliterated in proper names with the Greek *alpha* include Ἰαδιήλ for יְדִיעֵאל (“Jediael” [1Ch 7:6]) and Ἰαΐηλ for יְהִיֵּל (“Jehiel” [Ezra 10:26]). Therefore, the Greek form *Iao* could very

form of the divine name standing alone (as in the Aramaic papyri from Elephantine) or as part of other personal names in- and outside of the Bible. Whether combined with a final *heh* (the fourth letter of the tetragrammaton [יְהוָה]) or seen as the equivalent of the tetragrammaton in pronunciation without this fourth letter, the evidence associated with the three-letter form of the divine name in Hebrew, Aramaic, and in Greek (*Iao*) does not support the pronunciation “Yahweh.”

It is also possible that the final *heh* in the tetragrammaton could represent an aspirated sound that is additional to the “o” sound associated with the third letter (*waw*), which would result in a pronunciation along the lines of “Yaho-ah.” As noted earlier in this chapter where I presented the various Greek forms of the divine name in figure 1.1, the form Ιαωθ (*Iaoth*) is said by Irenaeus to be “long and aspirated” while the form Ιαωτ (*Iaot*) is “written [and therefore pronounced] shortly.”⁹⁰ It is possible, then, that the form *Iaoth* in Greek uses a Greek θ (*theta*) to mark final aspiration either in association with the final “o” sound of Ιαω (*Iao*), or to mark another common type of Semitic aspiration, concerning which Buchanan writes:

One of the variants in Dead Sea Scroll Hebrew often has a final aspirant, *ah*, which the Masoretic text lacks. For example the Hebrew for “he” and “she” according to the Masoretic text is HW’ and HY’ (*hû’* and *hî’*), but the Dead Sea Scrolls Hebrew has HW’H and HY’H (*hû’âh* and *hî’âh*). Also Masoretic words like LKM and LHM (*lâkem* and *lâhem*) have as their Dead Sea Scroll equivalents, LKM^H and LHM^H (*lâkemâh* and *lâhemâh*). It is possible that the Dead Sea scribes copied the texts as they were correctly pronounced in New Testament times, since Arabic spells its words the way the Masoretes did but pronounces them the way the Dead Sea Scroll scribes spelled them, with the unspelled aspirant at the end pronounced. For example the Arabic word for “he” is spelled

well represent the Hebrew/Aramaic pronunciation “Yeho.” To these examples can also be added the apparent representation of *’ehyeh* [יְהוָה] from Ex 3:14 by the Greek Ἰαίᾱ (*Aia*), as discussed above.

⁹⁰ See note 69 above.

hû’, but pronounced, *hû’âh*. If this vocalization were applied to the Hebrew YHW, it might be pronounced, *Yahûwâh* or *Yahôwâh*.⁹¹

It is also possible that the pronunciation *Yaho* and *Iao*, from the respective Hebrew, Aramaic, and the most common Greek three-letter forms of the divine name (when standing alone or as part of other proper names), could be a shorter form of the longest form of the name represented by *YHWH* in Hebrew and in Aramaic, and by some Greek forms such as *Iaoth* (Ιαωθ). Based on other, longer forms of Semitic words with an aspirated final *heh* (some of which were noted above in the quote from Buchanan),⁹² the pronunciation of the divine name could have been something like *Yahowah*, *Yahuwah*, *Yehowah*, or *Yehuwah*. Perfectly acceptable pronunciations that are also based on the best available evidence are *Yaho*, *Yahu*, *Yeho*, or *Yehu*.

Indeed, the three-letter and four-letter forms may both represent one of these pronunciations, as argued above and as supported explicitly by Jerome.⁹³ Finally, *Yah* was and still is a perfectly acceptable stand-alone pronunciation of the divine name. In addition to being used as part of other names, *Yah* is also used in the expression, “Hallelujah.” In fact, *Yah* (Greek: *Ia*; English: “Jah”) is the least disputed of all of the forms of the divine name that have come down to us, that is, in terms of its form and pronunciation.

⁹¹ Buchanan, “Some Unfinished Business with the Dead Sea Scrolls,” page 415. See also Buchanan, “How God’s Name Was Pronounced,” page 30; Buchanan, *The Consequences of the Covenant* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), Appendix I, page 317.

⁹² See also MacLaurin, “YHWH: The Origin of the Tetragrammaton,” page 458, who makes observations similar to Buchanan regarding the pronunciation of the Hebrew pronoun *hu* (meaning “he”) as *hu’ah* in “26 out of the 95 occurrences” in Qumran documents and in Arabic. Harris, “The Pronunciation of the Tetragram,” page 219, notes that “Ugaritic evidence also shows the pronoun *he* in about 1400 B.C. was *huwa*.”

⁹³ Compare also Williams, “The Tetragrammaton—Jahweh, Name or Surrogate?” page 267, who cites and agrees with F.C. Burkitt’s view that the final syllable with *heh* in the four-letter form of the divine name represents a “kind of honorific,” with the three-letter form (*YHW*) representing the pronunciation “YAH0,” and the four-letter form (*YHWH*) representing a similar pronunciation but one “lengthened and accented” as “YĀHŌH.”

In light of the above discussion, I propose that where there is any confusion or doubt over the pronunciation of the divine name, that those so confused do not use “Lord,” nor use “God” or even “Yahweh.” None of these have any significant, credible evidence supporting their use in the Bible for God’s name. Rather than keep people from using a form of the divine name that is based on what is actually in the Bible itself, and based on the best available reasons, we should use “Yah” or in English “Jah,” and thereby help others come to know the God of the Bible more personally. To help promote this recommendation, from here on and throughout the rest of this book, wherever possible, I will use “Jah” when referring to the biblical God. But what does this mean for “Jehovah,” the most popular English form of the divine name used by Jehovah’s Witnesses?

Should we only use those names whose ancient or original pronunciation is known to us? In his book about the beliefs and practices of Jehovah’s Witnesses, Evangelical scholar and apologist Ron Rhodes argues that his primary point of contention with Jehovah’s Witnesses is not the word “Jehovah” itself since, as Rhodes says, “Some evangelical Christians use the term as well.” Yet, in his discussion of the divine name he is quick to note that “the term Jehovah is not actually a biblical term” and that “there is no justification for the term Jehovah.”⁹⁴

As we discussed early in this chapter (see page 2, note 3, and page 4, note 6), Rhodes’ thinking is simply out of touch with how words in one language are represented in another language. “Jehovah” most certainly is a “biblical term,” no further removed from the Bible than is “Jesus” or “Jeremiah” or any other Anglicized name found in any Bible translation available today. In harmony with this, Francis Denio writes:

Jehovah misrepresents Yahweh no more than Jeremiah misrepresents Yirmeyahu [Jeremiah]. The settled connotations of Isaiah and Jeremiah forbid questioning their right. Usage has given them the connotations proper for designating the

⁹⁴ Ron Rhodes, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with the Jehovah's Witnesses* (Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House, 1993), pages 50-51.

personalities which these words represent. Much the same is true of Jehovah. It is not a barbarism. It has already many of the connotations needed for the proper name of the covenant God of Israel. There is no other word which can faintly compare with it. For centuries it has been gathering these connotations. No other word approaches this name in the fulness [*sic*] of associations required. The use of any other word falls so far short of the proper ideas that it is a serious blemish in a translation.⁹⁵

As Denio rightly observes, “Jehovah misrepresents Yahweh no more than Jeremiah misrepresents Yirmeyahu.” Does this mean that “Jeremiah” is not actually a “biblical term,” as Rhodes would have it? What about “Jesus,” the Anglicized form of the name of God’s Son used throughout Rhodes’ book but without any claim by Rhodes to the effect that, like “Jehovah,” “Jesus” is “not actually a biblical term”? In over twenty years of discussing this issue with Evangelicals, I have yet to find one who objects as strongly to the use of “Jesus” as he or she does to “Jehovah.” Yet, “Jesus” is no more original than “Jehovah,” “Jeremiah,” or any other Anglicized, biblical name. In spite of this, Evangelical scholars and others continue to misrepresent these and other facts concerning the pronunciation of God’s name and its Anglicized form, “Jehovah.”⁹⁶

The best available evidence points to Hebrew or Aramaic pronunciations of the divine name’s three forms as *Yah*, *Yaho*, or

⁹⁵ Francis B. Denio, “On the Use of the Word Jehovah in Translating the Old Testament,” *JBL* 46 (1927), pages 147-148. David Thomas, “A Further Note on *YHWH*,” *BT* 44.4 (October 1993), pages 444-445, similarly observes: “It is sometimes argued that the form *Jehovah* is a made-up composite form which bears little resemblance to *Yahweh*, the presumed Hebrew pronunciation. ... If we accept *Yitschak* = ‘Isaac’ without any problem, this appears to be ‘straining at a gnat.’”

⁹⁶ Another example of an Evangelical scholar who continues to misrepresent the issues surrounding God’s name by saying that it is “oftentimes badly mispronounced as Jehovah” is Dr. James R. White (*The Forgotten Trinity: Recovering the Heart of Christian Belief* [Minneapolis, Minnesota: Bethany, 1998], page 197, note 1 to his Chapter Three). The reason why what he says is a misrepresentation is because White writes the above while at the same time making frequent use of “Jesus” and other Anglicized biblical names yet, like Rhodes, White makes no such similar comment about “Jesus” or other Anglicized forms of biblical names that are pronounced differently from the original Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek Bible languages. One can only wonder just what Dr. White considers a ‘good pronunciation’ of any biblical name in light of his use of and remarks concerning Anglicized names!

Yahowah. All of these transliterations are properly represented in English by the Anglicized forms “Jah,” “Jaho” or “Jeho,” and “Jehovah.” The form “Jehovah” (or “Jahovah”) represents an Anglicization of the tetragrammaton with an accent on the final syllable (“Je-ho-VAH”). In English, such an accent and final aspiration does not carry over very easily into normal or regular speech because in English we usually do not breathe out or accent the final syllable of a proper name.

For example, in “Tina” or in the Anglicized “Jonah” (pronounced, TEE-nah and JO-nah, respectively) the accent is on the first syllable of each word. But originally the biblical name Anglicized as “Jonah” was likely pronounced with the accent on the final syllable, with aspiration or a “breathing out” of the last part of the name as, *Yo-NAH*. Similarly, in English “Jehovah” is usually accented on the middle syllable which changes the sound quality of the first syllable to “Jah” or even to “Juh” (“Ja[h]-HO-vah” or “Ju[h]-HO-vah”), though it is spelled “Jeh.” In the case of “Jah,” there is only one syllable and so without an accent falling on a second or a third syllable the “a” vowel sound remains; it does not change to “eh” or “uh.” In the case of an Anglicized form for *Yaho*, since it is not spoken often enough in English to have gained a commonly accepted, accented syllable, I propose that the accent fall on the final syllable with as much “breathing out” on the last syllable as is comfortable for an English speaker to give, namely, “Ja-HO(h).”

All of the above forms of the divine name are biblical words by means of their stand-alone usage or by their occurrence as part of other biblical proper names. When it comes to the pronunciation of these names, it is understood that names change through time and that as languages change often “only approximate equations can be obtained at best.”⁹⁷ The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society and those Jehovah's Witnesses associated with it understand this:

⁹⁷ Ephraim Avigdor Speiser, “The Pronunciation of Hebrew Based Chiefly on the Transliterations in the Hexapla,” *JQR* 16 (1926), pages 346-347.

Most names change to some extent when transferred from one language to another. Jesus was born a Jew, and his name in Hebrew was perhaps pronounced *Yeshua*, but the inspired writers of the Christian Scriptures did not hesitate to use the Greek form of the name, *Iesous*. In most other languages the pronunciation is slightly different, but we freely use the form that is common in our tongue. The same is true of other Bible names. How, then, can we show proper respect for the One to whom the most important name of all belongs? Would it be by never speaking or writing his name because we do not know exactly how it was originally pronounced? Or, rather, would it be by using the pronunciation and spelling that are common in our language, while speaking well of its Owner and conducting ourselves as his worshipers in a manner that honors him?⁹⁸

The above provides good reasoning as to why the NWT uses “Jehovah” as an English representation for the form of the divine name that appears nearly 7,000 times in the Hebrew Scriptures, namely, the tetragrammaton. If others object to pronouncing the name of God because our modern vocalizations of that name are different from what may have been spoken or heard in ancient Israel, then we should rightly question the use of *all* names from the Hebrew and Greek Jewish and Christian Scriptures as they appear in their Anglicized forms today. As Speiser rightly observes:

[I]t is self-evident that no two corresponding sounds of any two languages are, strictly speaking, identical. This is primarily due to the important fact that both *the basis of articulation* for similar sounds, and the position of the organs of articulation when at rest, vary considerably in every language. ... When the layman says that so and so speaks English with a French or a German “accent,” he indicates quite unconsciously that all-important phonetic truth that similar sounds differ nevertheless in every language. Now if it is difficult to reproduce with accuracy the sounds of another language, much less precision must be expected from written representatives of foreign speech-sounds

⁹⁸ *Reasoning from the Scriptures* (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1989), page 196.

with symbols not adapted to such purposes [for example, when it comes to representing Semitic aspiration with ancient Greek symbols]. For all scripts are attempts to press a wide variety of sounds into the necessarily narrower range of conventional sound-symbols. That representation is, then, more or less imperfect from the very beginning. Besides, living languages are characterized by constant changes in the phonetic and morphological pattern of these symbols. Consequently, systems of writing which are of necessity stationary tend to become less faithful representatives of speech with every new linguistic development.⁹⁹

Thus, if a lack of true (original) pronunciation is all that is needed to justify removal of the divine name or a refusal to use it, then what should we do with “Jesus” and other biblical names that clearly are not spoken according to their original pronunciation? In the New Testament Peter tells us, “There is not another name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must get saved” (Acts 4:12). Since there is no way we can be certain we are pronouncing the name here referenced *exactly* as it was pronounced in Hebrew or in Greek when Peter said what he said, should we then refrain from using or from pronouncing the name of God’s Son in any of our modern languages?¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Speiser, “The Pronunciation of Hebrew Based Chiefly on the Transliterations in the Hexapla,” pages 361-362.

¹⁰⁰ Questions specific to the pronunciation of ancient Greek are discussed in detail by Chrys C. Caragounis, “The Error of Erasmus and Un-Greek Pronunciations of Greek,” *FN* 8 (November, 1995), pages 151-185, who on page 154 states that the Erasmian system of pronunciation commonly taught in seminaries and in schools today is “nothing but a chaotic democracy of un-Greek pronunciations of Greek, each conceived according to what is deemed natural in the speaker’s own tongue.” Similar observations and a much more detailed discussion of the pronunciation of Greek is found in Caragounis’ *The Development of Greek and the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), pages 339-396, where Caragounis relates that the “Erasmian” system first used by Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam in 1528 is actually the result of “a practical joke that was played on Erasmus by the Swiss scholar Henricus (Loritus of Glarus, hence) Glareanus ... Later, however, he found out the trick played on him, so he desisted from using the pronunciation he had concocted ... But the ‘news’ spread like wildfire, and after centuries of struggle with the traditional pronunciation, Erasmus’ error finally succeeded in ousting the Greek pronunciation of Greek and in establishing itself” (*The Development of Greek and the New Testament*, pages 341, 342).

Excuses for not using the name of the biblical God abound, but they are not convincing.¹⁰¹ “Jehovah” is an acceptable English form and pronunciation of the tetragrammaton (*YHWH*) and “Jah” (*YH*) is an appropriate representation of the two-letter form of the divine name used in- and outside of the Bible. The three-letter form of the name (*YHW*) must also be given consideration and in my view, based on the good reasons given above, it should be used more frequently in English than it is used today, in a form similar to if not in fact “Jaho.” The good reasons supporting this form and pronunciation of God’s name include: 1) evidence of its use as a part of biblical and other ancient names, 2) its occurrence as a stand-alone name for God in ancient Semitic sources and in Greek transliterations (such as the form $\text{I}\alpha\omega$ [*Iao*], which form occurs regularly in ancient texts and in one of the best representatives of the Septuagint [4QLevLXX^b]), and 3) its acceptance by Jerome as, in fact, the way to pronounce the tetragrammaton itself.

But excuses not only exist today where the pronunciation of God’s name is concerned. They also exist when it comes to the use of God’s name in the Bible text itself. Not surprisingly, Jehovah’s Witnesses are often also at the center of this discussion. Therefore, I will now consider issues involving the use of the divine name in the Bible, in particular, issues having to do with the use of the divine name by Jehovah’s Witnesses in the NWT.

¹⁰¹ Another unconvincing excuse for not using God’s name is found in Dr. Robert Countess’ book *The Jehovah’s Witnesses’ New Testament*, 2d ed. (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1987), pages 26-27. Countess argues that because different vowel pointings of certain Hebrew words can result in distinct meanings, then we should not take chances with an uncertain vowel pointing of the Hebrew name of God. Countess then cites the Hebrew consonants $\text{ד}\Psi$, which with various pointings can mean “breast” or “demon” and he concludes, “If it be an impropriety to mispronounce someone’s name or to call a ‘breast’ a ‘demon,’ then how much more of an impropriety to vocalize incorrectly the name of the true God?” What Countess fails to notice is that there are no other Hebrew words with the same consonants as the tetragrammaton! Thus, no combination of vowels with the consonants of the divine name will, as far as anyone can tell, result in a blasphemous reference to God. Further, as we observed earlier in this chapter, it is clear from the Bible that God wants his people to use his name and for all nations of the earth to know it.

The Divine Name in the Text of the Bible

The use of the divine name during and after the Babylonian exile. At the beginning of the preceding section I noted that the name of God stands alone in the Hebrew Bible as a distinct word a total of 6,877 times: 6,828 times as a four-letter name (the tetragrammaton [יהוה]), and 49 times as a two-letter name (יה), pronounced, “Jah,” in English.¹⁰² The total number of occurrences of the divine name in the Bible is more than any other name or title in the entire OT.

In view of this, no one can rightly question the appearance of the divine name in the OT text. Why, then, do so few English (and other language) translations use anything other than the titles “Lord” or “God” (at times in all capitals) rather than a form of the divine name that is based on the best available evidence? If the divine name is actually in the text, why use titles that in no way represent the unique and more personal associations that are surely conveyed by the use of a distinct name for God?

While reasons have been given that range from money considerations (for example, Palmer and the NIV), to uncertainty over the name's exact pronunciation (which is true for just about every biblical name!), to attempts to keep the name of God from blasphemous associations (as if not using it at all is something approved by God [compare Isaiah 52:5-6; Jeremiah 23:27]), there simply are no good biblical reasons one can cite as credible support for not using a form of the name of God in translations of the OT.

Indeed, even author Lynn Lundquist, who can fairly be described as having launched and maintained a campaign against Jehovah's Witnesses' use of the tetragrammaton in the New Testament, writes that “God's name is used extensively in the Hebrew Scriptures” and “the textual evidence supporting its presence [in the Hebrew Scriptures] is beyond any doubt.”¹⁰³ Yet, though Lundquist takes issue with the use of “Jehovah” a few

¹⁰² There are also at least two reverse (Es 1:20; 5:13) and three regular acrostic (Es 5:4; 7:7; Ps 96:11) occurrences of the divine name in the OT.

¹⁰³ Lynn Lundquist, *The Tetragrammaton and the Christian Greek Scriptures*, Second Edition (Portland, OR: Word Resources, 1998), pages 8-9.

hundred times in the NT of the NWT on textual grounds, he does not anywhere present the same or even a similar extent of criticism against translators of modern Bibles who do not use the divine name in the OT where, again, Lundquist admits “its presence is beyond any doubt” in thousands of instances.¹⁰⁴

Similarly, though Edwin Palmer admitted that money, tradition, and uncertainty over pronunciation were the bases for the NIV’s non-use of the divine name, Palmer also wrote (see letter on page 8) that the NIV committee “should have used it.” It is this acknowledged realization that the divine name ‘should be used in the OT,’ combined with the lack of zeal shown by Lundquist, Palmer, and others in making this a reality that is so striking. This is particularly strange when you consider the efforts (especially by Lundquist) *against* using the divine name in the NT by those who do not use it where they admit that it ‘should be’ used (in the OT)! There simply is no credible explanation for not using a form of the divine name when translating or when reading the OT. It should strike any fair-minded person that a decision not to use what is clearly expressed in the OT text thousands of times (that is, the name of God) might offend God by denying his name its rightful place in translations of his Word. What, though, about the occurrence of the divine name in the NT?

Earlier (pages 5-7) I discussed how after the Jews were released from Babylonian exile in the sixth century BCE there is evidence that they began to use the divine name irregularly. For example, though the divine name was in fact used in copies of the Hebrew OT texts, as well as in at least some copies of the Greek OT¹⁰⁵, there were also certain Jewish groups and communities

¹⁰⁴ In 2003 Lundquist produced a CD through Word Resources, Inc. (Portland, OR) that contains 13 separate resources, most of which deal extensively with the divine name on some level relative to its use in NWT’s NT. But I am not aware of any effort by Lundquist to promote a campaign aimed at making sure Bible translators use the name of God in the Hebrew OT, which for anyone concerned about the integrity of the translated text should occupy a position equal to if not greater than the use of the name in the NT, especially when you consider the number of occurrences of the divine name in the OT and the certainty that exists relative to its use there. The issue with respect to the NT is not nearly as textually certain, as I will discuss further below.

¹⁰⁵ For example, 4QLevLXX^b contains the pronounced Greek form *Iao*. Concerning this form of the divine name, Shaw (“The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of Ιαω,”

that did in fact take a stand against certain uses of the name. Examples of their influence can be seen in 1QS (the so-called "Community Rule") 6.27-7.2, where we read: "Anyone who speaks aloud the M[ost] Holy Name of God, [whether in ...] or in cursing or as a blurt in time of trial or for any other reason, or while he is reading a book or praying, is to be expelled, never again to return to the Society of the *Yahad* [meaning 'unity']."¹⁰⁶

Additionally, several manuscripts from the Judean desert reveal practices concerning the use of the divine name which suggest certain communities of Jews were beginning to replace the divine name with titles and other surrogates. For example, George Howard cites several examples of biblical and Bible-related texts that make just such substitutions by using "Lord," "God," four dots, three *yods* (""), and other forms of substitution.¹⁰⁷ But references like 1QS 6.27-7.2 (quoted above) also show that the divine name was pronounced by some during the same time others were trying to prohibit its pronunciation, which is apparently why extreme measures were being taken to safeguard it against misuse.

However, references like 1QS 6.27-7.2 from the Dead Sea Community may only tell us what was true concerning this particular group's practice. There is not enough evidence to suggest that their view concerning the pronunciation of the divine name was commonplace in all Jewish communities at that time. In fact, if 1QS had such a great influence on the majority of the Jewish communities existing at that time, then it is significant that by the time of the writing of *Berakhot* 9.5 and *Sotah* 7.6 in the Mishnah (around 200 CE) use of the divine name had become *less* restrictive, permitting pronunciation of the name in public greetings and in the sanctuary.¹⁰⁸ Whatever the case, any attempt

page 190) writes: "Iαω was ... a pronounced form of the divine name. It was *always* a vocalized appellation for the Jewish God" (emphasis original to Shaw).

¹⁰⁶ Michael Wise, Martin Abegg, Jr., and Edward Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* (New York: HarperCollins, 1996), page 135. See their discussion on pages 123-126 for a consideration of this particular group's influence.

¹⁰⁷ Howard, "The Tetragram and the New Testament," pages 66-70.

¹⁰⁸ Compare *Tosefta Yadaim*, where at the end of chapter 2 a group known as the "Morning-Bathers" complains about the Pharisees who "speak the Name in the

to prohibit the use or the pronunciation of the divine name, other than where it involves any misuse of the name, has no biblical support whatsoever. Shaw sums up nicely the picture resulting from the best available evidence concerning the use of the divine name during and after the Babylonian exile:

In sum then, we may conclude several things: first, many Jews must have ceased using any form of the divine name by the early-to-mid second temple period. ... Yet some circles of Jews must have used $\text{I}\alpha\omega$ [*Iao*] somewhat regularly for it to have wound up in 4QLXXLev^b and the onomastica, as well as for the pagan testimony to Jewish use to have come about. The name $\text{I}\alpha\omega$ must have continued in some use at least into the first century BC ... and, if the evidence from the pseudepigrapha and the Mishna is counted, likely beyond ... to the first or even second century AD ... Secondly, it seems that the name began to pick up supernatural connotations in the closing centuries BC and certainly by the early centuries AD ... Likely related to this is a third point, [namely], the specific form $\text{I}\alpha\omega$ starts to appear in mystical contexts: the earliest testimony is to its use among the Gnostics in the second century and beyond ... Fourthly, the Jewish God begins to appear nameless to pagans and early Christians. ... The passage from Philo’s *Legatio ad Gaium* [353] is, in a sense, an excellent microcosm of the much larger historical picture. That is, near the middle of the first century AD we have the conflicting trends present: the practice of not using the name has become entrenched enough for Philo (and probably his party) to become offended at Gaius’ use of it, while on the other hand, the name was available enough for a Roman far removed from Judaism to learn its pronunciation, seemingly without much effort.¹⁰⁹

The above is a fair picture of the general use and non-use of the divine name during the period of and following the Babylonian exile. It shows that while there was no united position concerning

morning, before bathing,” and of the Pharisees’ complaint against the Morning-Bathers “who speak the Name, with a body containing defilement.” The Tosefta is a supplement to the oral laws of the Mishnah, and therefore compiled after 200 CE.

¹⁰⁹ Shaw, “The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of $\text{I}\alpha\omega$,” pages 199-201.

its use, the divine name was fairly well known among both Jews and pagans. It is not entirely clear whether the non-use of the divine name by any Jews prior to the first century CE was due to Hellenization or to the adoption by certain communities of other traditions that invalidated the OT's use of God's name (compare Matthew 15:6). But what is clear is the Bible's teaching concerning the divine name, which teaching was presented in part earlier in this chapter, on pages 10-21.

In the balance of this section I will explore and attempt to resolve questions relating to the use of the divine name in the NT. Of particular interest here is whether there is any evidence showing that Christians from the second century CE onward may have chosen not to use the divine name for reasons similar to those that were apparently behind the non-use of the name in certain Jewish communities during and/or after the Babylonian exile. These reasons include influence from pagan philosophy and/or an adoption of traditions that 'invalidate the OT word of God.'

The divine name in the Septuagint (LXX) and in the Greek OT manuscript tradition. The writers of the letters, accounts, and apocalyptic (Revelation) material in the NT had many holy writings available to them in Hebrew, in Aramaic, and in Greek texts of the OT. Historically, the first Greek version of the OT is believed to have consisted only of the first five books of the Bible, the Pentateuch, and it was likely "completed under Ptolemy II, in the closing days of 281 BCE."¹¹⁰ When NT writers quoted the OT they quoted either one or more of the Greek versions circulating during the first century CE, or they quoted from the Hebrew or Aramaic texts available to them. They could also have translated the Hebrew or Aramaic OT texts into Greek themselves.

All of the available manuscript evidence shows that when an NT writer quoted an OT Hebrew text that contained the divine name, then the NT writer had before him a text with a form of the

¹¹⁰ See Nina Collins, "281 BCE: The Year of the Translation of the Pentateuch into Greek under Ptolemy II," in *Septuagint, Scrolls and Cognate Writings. Papers Presented to the International Symposium on the Septuagint and its Relations to the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Writings* (SBLSCS 33; Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1992), pages 403-477 (the quote is from page 477).

divine name in it. There is no clear manuscript evidence for OT texts available during the first century CE that supports any other conclusion. The alternative, then, is to say that the NT writers adopted a tradition invalidating the Hebrew OT text’s use of the divine name by using a Hebrew or an Aramaic surrogate, or by translating the OT Hebrew text into Greek using a Greek surrogate, such as “Lord” (Greek: *kyrios*) or “God” (Greek: *theos*). Again, in support of this belief is little to no manuscript evidence available from this time.

By contrast, there are fragments of the LXX and related Greek versions dated to the time before or during the first century CE and they all contain some form of the divine name. Consider, for examples, the following four Greek OT fragments: 1) P. Fouad 266^b (Göttingen 848), which has been dated from the third to the first centuries BCE.¹¹¹ This papyrus contains the divine name in an ancient Hebrew/Aramaic script, 𐤀𐤍𐤅. 2) The Scroll of the Minor Prophets (8HevXIIgr [Göttingen 943]), which is dated to between 50 BC and 50 CE,¹¹² contains the divine name written in two ancient (paleo-) Hebrew forms, 𐤀𐤍𐤅 (hand A) and 𐤀𐤍𐤅 (hand B). 3) As noted in our discussion above concerning the Greek forms of the divine name, there is a fragment of Leviticus from Qumran cave 4 (4QLXXLev^b [Göttingen 802]) that is dated to around the first century BCE.¹¹³ It contains the form Ιαω where the

¹¹¹ W.G. Waddell, “The Tetragrammaton in the LXX,” *JTS* 45 (1944), pages 159-161, dates it from the second or first century BCE. See also Howard, “The Oldest Greek Text of Deuteronomy,” *HUCA* 42 (1971), pages 125-131. Paul Kahle, “The Greek Bible and the Gospels,” *Studia Evangelica* (1959), page 614, dates it to about 100 BCE, as does Bruce Metzger, *Manuscripts of the Greek Bible* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), pages 33-34. See an image of this text online here: <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/rs/rak/lxxjewpap/PFou848.jpg>.

¹¹² See Emanuel Tov, *The Greek Minor Prophets Scroll From Nahal Hever (8HevXIIgr)* (DJD 8; Oxford: Oxford University Press, rep. 1995), pages 22-26, for a discussion of the dating of this scroll. Tov himself tentatively opts for a date in the later first century BCE. See Howard, “The Tetragram and the New Testament,” page 64, for other references to the dating of this scroll. See the image of “hand A” online here: <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/rs/rak/lxxjewpap/MPrsA.jpg>, and “hand B” here: <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/rs/rak/lxxjewpap/MPrsB.jpg>.

¹¹³ P.W. Skehan, “The Qumran Manuscripts and Textual Criticism,” *Volume du Congrès, Strasbourg 1956* (VTSup 4; Leiden: Brill, 1957), page 157. See the image of this text online here: <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/rs/rak/lxxjewpap/4QLevB.jpg>.

Hebrew text uses the four-letter tetragrammaton. 4) The final Greek OT fragment that falls within our timeline and that preserves a divine-name-containing text is P. Oxy 3522, which is dated to the early part of the first century CE.¹¹⁴ It contains Job 42:11-12 and it also uses an archaic Hebrew form of the divine name in the midst of a Greek text.¹¹⁵

In view of these four fragments of the Greek OT, it is no surprise to find that scholars such as George Howard have concluded: "We can now say with almost absolute certainty that the divine name, יהוה, was not rendered by κύριος ['Lord'] in the pre-Christian Greek Bible, as so often has been thought. Usually the Tetragram was written out in Aramaic or in paleo-Hebrew letters or was transliterated into Greek letters."¹¹⁶

In spite of the manuscript evidence to the contrary, Albert Pietersma has challenged the theory that the original Greek translation of the OT used the divine name. For example, Pietersma believes that in addition to not being an exemplar of the LXX (since the original LXX is believed to have been only a translation of the Pentateuch), 8HevXIIgr contains "hebraizing corrections" and for this reason Pietersma does not consider it a "bona fide exemplar of the LXX."¹¹⁷ Regarding P. Fouad 266^b, Pietersma

¹¹⁴ See *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, vol. 50 (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1983), pages 1-3. See an image of this text online here: <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/rs/rak/lxxjewpap/POxy3522.jpg>.

¹¹⁵ There are other Greek OT fragments that are dated to before the end of the first century CE. For example, the Greek OT manuscript P. Ryl Gk. 458 (Göttingen 957) published by C.H. Roberts, *Two Biblical Papyri in the John Rylands Library Manchester* (Manchester: Aberdeen University Press, 1936), page 24, is dated to the second century BCE, but it does not preserve enough of the text for us to know if the translator used a form of the divine name or a surrogate such as *kyrios* or *theos*. The same is true for 4QLXXDeut (4Q122 [Göttingen 819]), 7QLXXEx (Göttingen 805), P. Fouad 266^a, (Göttingen 942), P. Fouad 266^c, (Göttingen 847), and 4QLXXNum (4Q121 [Göttingen 803]), all of which either do not preserve a divine-name containing text or enough text for us to know whether the divine name was used. Images of these and of other early biblical and other texts can be viewed online at the following index, <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/rs/rak/lxxjewpap/>. See also the Topical Index on the Elihu Books web site, under "D" and next to "Divine Name."

¹¹⁶ Howard, "The Tetragram and the New Testament," page 65.

¹¹⁷ Albert Pietersma, "Kyrios or Tetragram: A Renewed Quest for the Original Septuagint," in *De Septuaginta. Studies in Honour of John William Wevers on His*

believes that while textually “it is an excellent witness to the Old Greek of Deuteronomy, ... some revising of this text has obviously been done in order to bring it into better accord with the Hebrew,” and thus it may not be a “*typical*” exemplar of the original LXX.¹¹⁸

Sixty-Fifth Birthday, ed. A. Pietersma and C. Cox (Toronto: Benben Publications, 1984), pages 88-89.

¹¹⁸ Pietersma, “Kyrios or Tetragram,” page 89. On pages 90 and 91 Pietersma questions the originality of the tetragram in the LXX of De 31:27, since P. Fouad 266^b has יהוה TONΘEON (“Jehovah God”) while all other Greek OT manuscripts have simply “God.” But it is quite possible the LXX was translated from a Hebrew *Vorlage* that read “Jehovah God” (יהוה אלהים). Mogens Müller, *The First Bible of the Church: A Plea for the Septuagint* (JSOTSup 206; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), page 42, writes: “Compared to the knowledge we have acquired through the Qumran finds that at such an early time no Hebrew text recension could claim to be *the* Bible text, we may conclude that the Septuagint version has its origin in one out of several Hebrew recensions.” If the original Hebrew text from which the LXX was translated read “Jehovah God” then the removal of the tetragram would have left only “God,” as we find in manuscripts other than P. Fouad 266^b. Rösel, “The Reading and Translation of the Divine Name in the Masoretic Tradition and the Greek Pentateuch,” pages 414-422, argues for a conclusion similar to that of Pietersma, but for equally unconvincing reasons that include alleged preferences by the original LXX translators for *kyrios* (“Lord”) without the article as an equivalent for the tetragrammaton, and *theos* (“God”) for the Hebrew word *’elohim* (“God”). In Rösel’s view there are certain contexts in the OT where the Hebrew text has the divine name but where in the Greek LXX tradition we find the substitutes “Lord” and “God” (which assumes these substitutions were made by the original LXX translators). Rösel believes these changes were made by the Greek translators in order to show an alleged distinction between the “Lord” (*kyrios*) who acts in a certain way, and “God” (*theos*) who acts in other ways. Thus, according to Rösel, through this distinction we “glimpse the translator’s theological thinking in his use of the names of God in the Greek Pentateuch” (Rösel, “The Reading and Translation of the Divine Name in the Masoretic Tradition and the Greek Pentateuch,” page 419). But such a usage, even if true for the original LXX translators, has no roots in the biblical (Hebrew OT) text that was translated, and so if what Rösel says is correct it would simply be another example (see discussion of Ex 3:14 near the end of this chapter) of the introduction of unbiblical traditions, in this case Hellenized thinking, into the text. But there is no reason why this kind of substitution could not have happened after the first “official” Greek translation of the OT, perhaps even during the centuries following the first century CE as a result from the tradition of Philo of Alexandria (who lived and who wrote during the first century CE). Indeed, it is in Philo’s writings that we find the interpretation of the “three men” in Gen 18:2 as “The One ... called Being [Greek: ὄν]” and “his two bodyguards on either side, one is God, the other Lord, the former being the symbol of the creative, the latter, of the royal virtue” (*De Deo* 1.4 [see also his explanation of the cherubim of Ex 25:22(21) in 1.5], as translated by Folker Siegert, “The Philonian Fragment *De Deo*: First English Translation,” in *The Studia Philonica Annual: Studies in Hellenistic Judaism*, vol. 10, David T. Runia, ed. [Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1998], page 5.) Philo’s interpretation of the words “Lord” and “God” in this way is cited with approval by

As for 4QLXXLev^b, after quoting Skehan's comments to the effect that this text strongly supports the belief that the use of some form of the divine name "goes back for some books at least to the beginnings of the Septuagint rendering," Pietersma acknowledges, "the genuinely Septuagintal credentials of 4QLXXLev^b are well-nigh impeccable."¹¹⁹

Returning to Pietersma's conclusions regarding the divine name in the original LXX, it is of interest to note that near the beginning of his article Pietersma quotes Howard's statement (quoted also on page 68 above) that the divine name was not rendered by "Lord" in the pre-Christian copies of the LXX. With reference to the implications this view would have on New Testament christology (that is, if the NT authors quoted LXX versions containing the divine name), Pietersma believes "the foundation on which [Howard's view] has been built, namely the ancient LXX, will not sustain it."¹²⁰ This shows clearly that Pietersma is concerned with the christological implications of Howard's study, and appears to be what has affected his judgment when it comes to the use of the divine name in the LXX.

Others have expressed concern about how Pietersma has handled this issue of the divine name in the original LXX. For example, Shaw observes that Pietersma "may, at least in places, be begging the question" by "taking as a given what he is supposed to

Isidore of Pelusium (c. 365-375-c. 435 CE), "He [Philo] declared that there were two powers of Him that is, of which the one, he says, is the creative and beneficent power and is called God (*theos*), the other is the royal and punitive power and is called Lord (*kyrios*)" (as translated by David Runia, "Philo of Alexandria in Five Letters of Isidore of Pelusium," in *The Studia Philonica Annual: Studies in Hellenistic Judaism*, vol. 3, David T. Runia, ed. (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1991), page 301. Since there is no manuscript evidence showing any use of "Lord" or "God" as substitutes for the divine name in the LXX tradition during or prior to the end of the first century CE, there is presently no way for us to know for sure if the original LXX translators introduced a distinction between *kyrios* and *theos* in certain texts, such as those mentioned by Rösel or as interpreted by Philo. But whoever did make such a distinction, whether in the text itself or by their interpretation of it, the Bible does not support a substitution of the divine name with "Lord" or "God" and it does not present the understanding of "God" and "Lord" given to us here by Philo.

¹¹⁹ Pietersma, "Kyrios or Tetragram," page 91.

¹²⁰ Pietersma, "Kyrios or Tetragram," page 87.

be proving.”¹²¹ Shaw also notes Pietersma’s “failure to deal with the instances of Ιαω in 4QLXXLev^b” (which Pietersma is apparently “willing to write off as an oddity”¹²²), as well as a further difficulty with Pietersma’s thinking:

Furthermore, there appears to be a glitch in the proposed chronological scheme of Pietersma. He still must deal with all these MSS [manuscripts] that keep turning up with Hebrew tetragrams [and with Greek forms of the divine name, like Ιαω] in them, so he postulates, building on Skehan’s theory (even though he obviously rejects the initial part of it which has the LXX translators employing Ιαω for the tetragram), that this practice “began in *earnest* during the second century BC when Egypt became once again a place of refuge from troubled Palestine.” If indeed later books of the Hebrew Bible, i.e., those of the Prophets and Writings, were translated after the Torah was, then we seem to have a potential problem for Pietersma’s theory: weren’t at least some of these books first translated into Greek at or during this same period? If this custom began “in *earnest*” at this time, then was it going on earlier? Thus would not this practice of using the Hebrew form of the name within the Greek text, which he has characterized as Hebraization, be employed the first time round in translation in at least some of these post-Pentateuchal books? If so, Pietersma’s ideas have suffered another setback.¹²³

Whether the *original* (first) translation of the OT Pentateuch, Prophets, or Writings into Greek used a form of the divine name rather than surrogate titles (such as *kyrios* or *theos*) is not as significant here as is the question of what was used in the copies of the Greek OT that the NT writers actually used. After all, to support the belief that the NT writers used a form of the divine name in their quotations of the Hebrew or Greek versions of the OT, all that is necessary is to show is that the texts available for quotation by the NT writers contained the divine name. This is true even if “the MSS of the LXX that the NT writers quoted from were

¹²¹ Shaw, “The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of Ιαω,” page 158.

¹²² Shaw, “The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of Ιαω,” page 161.

¹²³ Shaw, “The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of Ιαω,” pages 159-160.

those that had undergone Hebraizing recension.”¹²⁴ That is, in fact the divine-name-containing Greek OT manuscripts actually underwent such “Hebraizing recension” and are not simply representative of the original LXX when it comes to the use of the divine name.

It is not much of a stretch at all to claim (as I do) that the NT writers would more likely have quoted from a “Hebraized” Greek version of the OT if that version was known to be more faithful to the Hebrew OT text than any “official” or even “original” Greek translation. Again, there is no credible evidence to support the belief that the original LXX surrogated the divine name or that the four Greek OT fragments reviewed above show a departure from the original Greek OT translation by their use of the name. But even if we were to grant the assumption that revisions to the LXX included additions of the divine name to the Greek text where in the original LXX the name does not occur (perhaps in an effort to re-create a further harmony between the revised LXX texts and the Hebrew OT, which may have been lost in part by the first Greek translation of the OT), such ‘corrected’ LXX texts in no way support the argument that the NT authors preferred an original, but less accurate Greek OT text rather than corrected, more accurate Greek versions circulating during their time.

Indeed, Pietersma quotes Origen as saying, “In the more accurate exemplars [of the LXX] the (divine) name is written in Hebrew characters.”¹²⁵ Pietersma then states that this evidence proves nothing regarding the original LXX, since Origen knew that “among the Jews there were Greek texts which sported the tetragram in Hebrew characters—and he seized on this as original LXX.”¹²⁶ But Origen did not qualify his comments with “among the Jews.” He also does not appear to be discussing the *original* LXX at all but, rather, “the more *accurate* [τῶν ἀκριβέστεροις]” copies! Certainly those copies of the LXX which contained the divine name are more accurate (= faithful to the Hebrew text) than those containing surrogates for the divine name, as Origen

¹²⁴ Shaw, “The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of Ιωω,” page 167.

¹²⁵ Pietersma, “Kyrios or Tetragram,” page 87 (underlining added).

¹²⁶ Pietersma, “Kyrios or Tetragram,” page 88.

himself notes. Jehovah’s Witnesses believe that the NT writers quoted from “the more accurate” copies of the LXX, regardless of whether such copies were the original LXX translation or a “Hebraized” revision of it.

Dr. Robert Countess, NWT, and Aquila’s and Other Greek OT versions. In his attempts to neutralize the evidence presented by the New World Bible Translation Committee (NWBTC) for the use of the divine name in the LXX, Robert Countess writes: “Among the manuscripts found in the Qumran region beginning in 1947 is the Leviticus Scroll Fragment 4QLXXLev^a. Dated as having been written around 100 B.C., it contains Leviticus 26:2-16 ... *This fragment produces the crux for the NWT contention ... in neither [Leviticus 26:2 or 26:13] did [the divine name] appear. The copyist maintained his usage of the Greek language throughout.*”¹²⁷

True, 4QLXXLev^a does not contain the divine name. But the NWBTC never declared anything to the contrary! 4QLXXLev^a does not even preserve a portion of the text where we would expect to find either a form of the divine name or a surrogate. The NWT gives a reference to 4QLXXLev^b (= parts of Leviticus chapters 2-5), *not* to 4QLXXLev^a, as an example of the LXX which (as discussed earlier) *does* contain the divine name in the form of the Greek word Ιαω. Dr. Countess is discussing the wrong manuscript.

The 1950 edition of the NWT (Foreword, page 12) contains a passing reference to Aquila’s Greek translation (produced around 130 CE) as an example of the persistence of the divine name in the Jews’ Greek Bible even after the first century CE. The 1984 NWT Reference Bible (Appendix 1C, page 1563) also makes reference to Aquila’s version. Regarding this, Countess writes that it would be quite risky to suggest that the presence of the divine name in Aquila “implies—even less proves—the same presence in the autographs of the LXX.” He also writes: “Aquila could not have compiled his version before ca. A.D. 130, many years after the compilation of all—or at least most—of the NT writings. Thus,

¹²⁷ Countess, *The Jehovah’s Witnesses’ New Testament*, page 30 (emphasis added). 4QLXXLev^a can be seen here: <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/rs/rak/lxxjewpap/4QLevA.jpg>.

NWT infers from a later work by extrapolation backwards that NT writers *in fact* had a LXX with Hebraic entries for the tetragrammaton.”¹²⁸

Countess' criticism of the NWT's use of Aquila is unwarranted. NWBTC, in its Foreword to the first edition (1950) of the *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* (the New Testament portion of NWT), was explicit regarding the evidence it was using, which did not include Aquila's Greek version as though it were either primary or conclusive evidence of what the original LXX had in it. Rather, they included a passing reference to Aquila's Greek version as merely a (minor) part of a body of evidence showing how some Jewish translators and copyists treated the Hebrew Bible's use of the divine name from the third century BCE until past the end of the first century CE.¹²⁹

There is other early manuscript evidence for the use of the divine name in Greek OT texts. But most of this evidence is either after the first century CE or it involves abbreviations or surrogates other than “Lord” or “God,” which abbreviations I will consider further later in this chapter. In addition to the Greek form יהוה (referenced in note 129) that was used as a transliteration of the doubled form of the divine name (יהוה [“Yah-Yah” or “Yeh-

¹²⁸ Countess, *The Jehovah's Witnesses' New Testament*, page 29.

¹²⁹ Norman Walker, “The Writing of the Divine Name in the Mishna,” *VT* 1 (1951), pages 309-310, believes that the double *yod* form of the divine name in the Mishnah is really “derived from the popular form of the Name in actual use, to wit, יה pointed in MT יה [‘Yah’ or ‘Jah’].” Walker then argues that the practice of doubling a name in order to give emphasis produced the form יהיה , or ‘Yah-Yah,’ which we find in the Masoretic text of Isa 38:11 in Hezekiah's prayer (Walker, “The Writing of the Divine Name in the Mishna,” page 310). It is this doubled form that is also apparently represented by the Greek יהוה in the OT versions of Aquila, Symmachus, and the LXX of Origen's Hexapla according to the ninth century Ambrosian palimpsest (see Waddell, “The Tetragrammaton in the LXX,” pages 158-159). Walker believes that ‘Yah-Yah,’ which was eventually uttered as ‘Yeh-Yah’ (with the accent on the last syllable), was used from the fourth century BCE onward by Jews in place of the divine name (Walker, “The Writing of the Divine Name in the Mishna,” page 310; see also Walker, “The Writing of the Divine Name in Aquila and the Ben Asher Text,” *VT* 4 [1954], pages 103-104). However, Peter Katz, “ יהיה = JEJA, יהוה = JAJA?” *VT* 4 (1954), pages 428-429, believes that Aquila simply reproduced the divine name as it stood in the Hebrew text “with the single exception that he put a second ה instead of ו ,” which was “his way of excluding profanation.” It is impossible at this time to say for sure what the true intent was behind the use of such forms.

Yah”]), other forms or representations of the divine name are found in the OT Greek versions of Aquila (Ἰαβα and Ἰαβαῖ) and Symmachus (Ἰαβα and Ἰαβαῖ).¹³⁰ Finally, in P.Oxy. 1007 (P.Lond.Lit. 199 [Pap. 2047]), which is a fragment of the book of Genesis dated to the third century CE, we find an archaic *yod* that is doubled with a line through it (𐤃𐤃) in Genesis 2:8, 18, in place of the divine name.¹³¹

The doubled form “Yah-Yah” or “Yeh-Yah” may represent one way of speaking the divine name, since “Yah” is certainly one of the stand-alone forms of the divine name and it is used as a part of other proper names. But unless the double *yod* form of P.Oxy. vii. 1007 (also found in a non-archaic form [”] in the Mishnah¹³²) represents a pronunciation similar to “Yah-Yah” or “Yeh-Yah” (such as יַי [Ye-Ya]), such abbreviations are not in accordance with the biblical tradition of pronouncing God’s name. Indeed, they may in fact reflect an unbiblical “device of theologians in post-biblical times by which the utterance of the name of God was to be avoided.”¹³³ But such forms could also have been pronounced as “Yah-Yah” or “Yeh-Yah,” since even in the Mishnah (where such abbreviations are found) it is said that “a man should salute his fellow with [the use of] the Name [of

¹³⁰ Compare the testimony of Origen (*Commentary on John*, in ANF 10, page 371, first column) respecting these versions and the “proper names” in them (though not with any explicit mention of the divine name):

Thus we see that he who aims at a complete understanding of the Holy Scriptures must not neglect the careful examination of the proper names in it. In the matter of proper names Greek copies are often incorrect, and in the Gospels one might be misled by their authority. ... The same inaccuracy with regard to proper names is also to be observed in many passages of the law and the prophets, as we have been at pains to learn from the Hebrews, comparing our own copies with theirs which have the confirmation of the versions, never subjected to corruption, of Aquila and Theodotion and Symmachus.

¹³¹ See the NWT 1984 Reference Bible, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society (Brooklyn, NY), Appendix 1C, pages 1562-1563. An image of this text can be seen here, <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/rs/rak/lxxjewpap/POxy1007t.JPG>.

¹³² Walker, “The Writing of the Divine Name in the Mishna,” pages 309-310.

¹³³ Obermann, “The Divine Name *YHWH* in the Light of Recent Discoveries,” page 304. Obermann (page 305) also observes that “nowhere is this word [YHWH] found employed as synonymous with those terms [‘God’ or ‘Lord’] in a grammatical sense, and hardly ever in a semantic sense.”

God].”—*Berakhot* 9.5; see also *Sotah* 7.6; compare note 108 above.

Evidence for the divine name in the NT. I turn now to the evidence for the use or non-use of the divine name in the NT. I have tried to show that there are good reasons for believing that during the time the NT was reportedly written (that is, before the end of the first century CE) all known Hebrew and Greek versions of the OT used a form of the divine name. We also can see from my discussion (see note 64) on the use of $\text{I}\omega$ that Greek onomastica (early Greek lexical tools) frequently use the divine name when explaining the meaning of words that contain the name as a theophoric element. Having the divine name as a “theophoric element” means that the name (or a part of it) is used in other proper names. However, it is also a fact that after the first century CE we begin to see copies of both the LXX and Greek onomastica that contain surrogates for the divine name, such as “Lord” (Greek: *kyrios*) and “God” (Greek: *theos*).

As shown earlier in this chapter, all known pre-first-century CE Greek OT texts that preserve a portion of the OT text where the Hebrew has the divine name, use a form of the divine name in the Greek OT text itself. However, later copies of the Greek OT such as the Chester Beatty Papyri (second to the fourth century CE), the Bodmer Papyrus XXIV (from the third century CE), Codex Vaticanus (fourth century CE), Codex Sinaiticus (fourth century CE), and other manuscripts associated with the later Jewish or Christian LXX tradition do not use any form of the divine name. In the Chester Beatty Papyri, for example, where the divine name occurs in the quoted Hebrew OT, the Greek NT has in its place contracted and specially marked forms of Greek surrogates, such as $\bar{\kappa}\zeta$ for the Greek word *kyrios* (“Lord”).¹³⁴

These contracted, specially marked words are known as *nomina sacra* (“sacred names”). These special abbreviations are nowhere found in the LXX prior to the first century CE. But we

¹³⁴ Ernst Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament*, trans. Erroll F. Rhodes (Grand Rapids, MI; Eerdmans, 1992), page 183, shows a picture of Eze 16:57-17:1 from the Chester Beatty Papyri where the sacred abbreviations for “God” and for “Lord” can be clearly seen.

do find them in copies of Greek OT texts and in NT Greek texts *after* the first century CE, as I will discuss later in this section. What is interesting here is that there is still an inconsistent use of the divine name in Greek onomastica after the first century CE. For example, as explained above in note 65, Origen gives the meaning of “Jeremiah” as μετεωρισμός Ιαω (*meteorismos Iao*, “Iao means ‘lifting up’”). But in Origen’s “homily on Jeremiah” the name is defined by means of the Greek word *theos*, not according to the actual theophoric element in Jeremiah’s name which associates it with *Iao*.¹³⁵ Regarding the change in divine names in the onomastica, Shaw concludes:

In general, the name appears to have been more heavily used in the earliest Christian copies of those originally Jewish onomastica that contained this [*Iao*] trigram. Then in such onomastica it was gradually replaced by κύριος [*kyrios*], θεός [*theos*], and, curiously, ἀόρατος [*aoratos*, meaning, “unseen”], or compilers and scribes simply deleted any translation of a given name’s theophoric element. Of course, this should be expected since “the evolution of Christian praxis has always been away from Jewish practices, not towards them,” since Jews who used Ιαω in a non-mystical way had probably ceased doing so by the heyday of the Christian onomastica, and since there is meager evidence that Christians used this name to any substantial extent. It would, though perhaps not quite as readily as the Hebrew Yahweh, have become less and less intelligible to Christians as time passed.¹³⁶

Below I will offer a theory as to why Christians after the first century began to cease using the divine name and instead used sacred name abbreviations, and then eventually complete word substitutions for the divine name. But the primary question here has to do with what the NT writers themselves were likely to have used based on the best available evidence. The truth is, no one knows for sure what they used because all that we have today

¹³⁵ See Shaw, “The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of Ιαω,” page 30, note 40, and page 43, note 110.

¹³⁶ Shaw, “The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of Ιαω,” pages 42-44.

are copies of the original NT texts and those copies are far enough removed from the date of their original composition that they could have been changed (just like some onomastic and Greek OT manuscripts appear to have been changed) with respect to their use of the divine name.

Indeed, it appears that the oldest NT manuscripts to quote a divine-name-containing OT text, but with a surrogate for the divine name in the quotation, are P⁴⁶ (for example, 1 Corinthians 14:21) and P⁶⁶ (for example, John 1:23). These manuscripts have been dated anywhere from the late-first to the late-second or early-third centuries CE. So at the very least P⁴⁶ is approximately fifty years removed from the date of its original composition, and quite possibly even one hundred years or more removed. The same can be said of P⁶⁶.¹³⁷

Thus, there is a considerable gap in time between the dates these documents (1 Corinthians and the Gospel of John) are believed to have been originally composed (middle to late first century CE, respectively) and the dates of these NT papyri. These are in fact the earliest copies of NT manuscripts that preserve a portion of the NT text that contains a quotation from the OT where in the OT the divine name occurs. There are some (such as Jehovah's Witnesses and the Christian Witnesses of Jah), who believe that during this "gap" the divine name was removed from the NT where it quoted the Greek or Hebrew OT text. The

¹³⁷ Young Kyu Kim, "Paleographical Dating of P⁴⁶ to the Later First Century," *Biblica* 69 (1988), pages 248-261, has dated P⁴⁶ to somewhere near the third quarter, or early to the middle of the fourth quarter of the first century CE. P⁴⁶ contains most of Paul's letters and the book of Hebrews. But Kim's dating of P⁴⁶ has been disputed. In *The Text of the Earliest New Testament Greek Manuscripts*, eds. Philip W. Comfort and David P. Barrett (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale, 2001), pages 205-206, a list of manuscripts that date from the late first to the second half of the second century CE is provided which more closely correspond to P⁴⁶ than do those used by Kim in his dating of P⁴⁶. After then comparing P⁴⁶ with other manuscripts in the same Chester Beatty collection, the conclusion is reached that "P⁴⁶ belongs to an era after A.D. 81-96 (the era posited by Kim)—perhaps the middle of the second century" (*The Text of the Earliest New Testament Greek Manuscripts*, page 106). A similar date is offered for P⁶⁶ (*The Text of the Earliest New Testament Greek Manuscripts*, page 379). Both of these manuscripts are dated to around 200 CE by Kurt and Barbara Aland (see *The Text of the New Testament*, trans. Erroll F. Rhodes, 2nd ed., Revised and Enlarged [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Leiden: Brill, 1989], pages 57, 99, 100).

primary basis for this conclusion is the available manuscript evidence which shows that the OT text that would have been quoted by the NT writers contained a form of the divine name rather than surrogates like the sacred name abbreviations (*nomina sacra*).

There are others, however, such as Lundquist and Countess referenced earlier, who believe that the earliest NT copies we have show us just how the original NT document writers treated the divine name. If those who argue this way are correct, then the conclusion we must reach is that the NT writers, instead of quoting from the Hebrew or Greek OT texts before them, introduced a brand new way of representing the divine name (and possibly even other names or titles), but all without making any specific mention of this new practice. Further, in doing so the NT writers would had to have decided *not* to follow the use of the divine name in the Hebrew and Greek OT texts before them. I say this, because all available evidence before the second century CE shows that the OT texts available during that same time did in fact contain some form of the divine name.

Nomina sacra. The *nomina sacra* (Latin for “sacred names”) which have been mentioned already in this discussion are of special importance when we consider the use of the divine name in the NT. They are important not only in terms of what the original NT documents may have contained, but they are also important when it comes to answering questions about what should be used today when translating available Greek NT texts.

For example, if the original NT writers used *nomina sacra* then not one of the modern NT translations that I have seen is following this practice. In other words, if specially marked contractions such as $\kappa\zeta$ for words like “Lord” ($\kappa\upsilon\rho\iota\omicron\varsigma$, *kyrios*) were used in place of God’s name when an OT text was quoted, or if the NT writer simply decided to use these abbreviations apart from any OT quote then, again, no modern NT translation is using the same or a similar kind of specially marked abbreviation like the NT writers allegedly did. But back to the primary question: Did the original NT writers *begin* the practice of using *nomina sacra*? If they did not begin this practice then who did, and why?

If the NT writers did not start this practice of using *nomina sacra*, then what did the NT writers use for the divine name when quoting an OT Hebrew or Greek text that contained the name? Larry Hurtado has provided some of the more recent discussion on the use of the *nomina sacra*.¹³⁸ After noting the unique features and use of the *nomina sacra* as compared to other Greek literary devices (unique even when compared to Jewish scribal practices concerning their treatment of the divine name), Hurtado believes there is a “counterpart” between these Jewish scribal practices and the *nomina sacra* used in Christian texts. But Hurtado believes that the Christian *nomina sacra* “are both different in form from any of the Jewish scribal devices and comparatively more consistent in form.”¹³⁹ Hurtado concludes:

[I]t seems to me that the best reading of the evidence is that the *nomina sacra* represent a Christian innovation. Granted, the practice was, in all likelihood, indebted in some sense to the varied ways that Jewish scribes tried to mark off the divine name ... but the particular scribal techniques differ. For instance, the Christian innovation appears to include the standardized use of the supralinear stroke to mark off the words treated as *nomina sacra*, and the characteristic use of contracted abbreviations of these words seems likewise to be a distinctively Christian scribal convention. Moreover, the evidence indicates that Ἰησοῦς [“Jesus”], Κυριος [“Lord”], Θεος [“God”], and Χριστος [“Christ”] were treated as *nomina sacra* much more consistently, and probably earlier, than any of the other words in question. Finally, there are reasons to suspect that the whole scribal tradition may have begun with a distinctive writing of Ἰησοῦς as IH, and that this first happened among Jewish Christians or Christians sufficiently acquainted with Jewish traditions to devise and appreciate the gematria involved in this way of writing Jesus’ name.

¹³⁸ See Larry W. Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins* (Grand Rapids, MI; Eerdmans, 2006), pages 95-134; “The Origin of the *Nomina Sacra*: A Proposal,” *JBL* 117.4 (1998), pages 655-673.

¹³⁹ Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts*, page 105. See also pages 99-104.

“Gematria” involves “ascribing religious significance to the numerical value of alphabetic characters,”¹⁴⁰ such as we find in certain early Christian writings in relation to abbreviations of the name “Jesus,” or in the New Testament itself in places like Revelation 13:18 and 15:2 in regards to the “number of [the] name” of “the wild beast.”¹⁴¹ Whether the use of *nomina sacra* involves any use of gematria (which seems unlikely overall since no other sacred name abbreviation [except one for “Jesus”] appears to have any numerical significance) is not as significant as the fact that we have in the *nomina sacra* a unique scribal device apparently invented by Christian scribes. Further, the *nomina sacra* may relate directly to Jewish or to Jewish Christian treatment of the divine name *after* the NT was written.

This brings us back to the questions I asked at the beginning of this sub-section. First, were the NT writers the originators of such “sacred name” surrogates? In other words, did Peter, Paul, James, John, or Luke use $\overline{\kappa\zeta}$ rather than the divine name? Since there is no evidence anywhere outside of Christian circles for the use of such an abbreviation, if the first writers of the NT did invent this convention then why is there no mention of such a novelty anywhere in their writings? Also, it is of interest that there does not appear to be anything in the Christian traditions following the first century CE that teaches or even suggests that the *nomina sacra* began first with the writings of the NT.

Since as we have seen it was not uncommon to use one or more forms of the divine name (in paleo-Hebrew, Aramaic, or in Greek) in OT Greek texts during and prior to the first century CE, then the NT writers would have had no reason for some

¹⁴⁰ Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts*, page 114.

¹⁴¹ For a more complete discussion of the significance of names and numbers in early Christianity, see François Bovon, “Names and Numbers in Early Christianity,” *NTS* 47 (2001), pages 267, 288. Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts*, page 114, notes that in the *Epistle of Barnabas* (9.7-8) and in Clement of Alexandria (*Stromata* 6.278-280) reference is made to the number 318, which the LXX of Gen 14:14 represents by the Greek letters TIH. These writings see in this numerical representation the name of Jesus (IH = 18) and the cross (T = 300), represented by the 318 servants of Abraham. See also Bovon, “Names and Numbers in Early Christianity,” pages 281-282, for a discussion of this abbreviation of Jesus’ name relative to Abraham’s 318 servants.

special remark about continuing that practice. If the NT writers used the divine name then they would simply have been doing what was consistent with all Hebrew and Greek OT texts that are known to have been available during that same time. But if the NT writers invented a new way of representing the divine and/or other names (such as by means of the *nomina sacra*), then one might have expected some explanation or discussion of this new practice at some point within the first few decades of the writing of the NT. This is especially so if use of the *nomina sacra* was seen as something newly inspired by influence from the holy spirit, or by the tradition started and then handed down by the apostles (compare 2 Thessalonians 2:15). Yet, there is no mention of this practice (use of *nomina sacra*) as having displaced use of God's name *first* in the writings of the NT.

The fact is no one knows for a certainty if the *nomina sacra* were invented by the NT writers. But there is no evidence that they adopted an existing Jewish practice and there is also no convincing evidence that they were used in the composition of the original NT documents. All that we have available to us today are copies of NT books and letters, the earliest of which are from the second, middle or late second,¹⁴² and third centuries CE. Further, we have testimony from early scholars like Jerome (c. 342-c. 420 CE) and Gennadius of Marseilles (who wrote during the late fifth century CE), namely, that at least one of the NT writings was originally composed in Hebrew and that the writer faithfully followed the Hebrew text rather than the Greek texts available to him:

Matthew, also called Levi, apostle and aforesaid publican,
composed a gospel of Christ at first published in Hebrew for

¹⁴² Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts*, Appendix 1, pages 217-224, has a useful chart of NT manuscripts, the earliest of which (P.Oxy. 4404 [P¹⁰⁴]) he dates to "CE2late" (= late second century CE [see his page 217, number 93.]). But the earliest manuscripts containing *nomina sacra* are from "CE2-3" (second or third centuries CE [see his numbers 94. (P⁶⁴) and 114. (P⁷⁵)]). Compare my discussion on pages 76-79 and in note 137 above regarding P⁴⁶ and P⁶⁶, the two oldest manuscripts that preserve an NT text *quoting* a divine-name-containing OT text but with a surrogate (*nomen sacrum*) for the divine name.

the sake of those of the circumcision who believed, but this was afterwards translated into Greek though by what author is uncertain. The Hebrew itself has been preserved until the present day in the library at Caesarea which Pamphilus so diligently gathered. I have also had the opportunity of having the volume described to me by the Nazarenes of Beroea, a city of Syria, who use it. In this it is to be noted that wherever the Evangelist, whether on his own account or in the person of our Lord the Saviour quotes the testimony of the Old Testament he does not follow the authority of the translators of the Septuagint but the Hebrew.¹⁴³

Even if the first-century CE Greek translations of the OT did not have a form of the divine name (and all available manuscript evidences suggests that they did), the testimony above, namely, that when Matthew quotes “the testimony of the Old Testament he does not follow the authority of the translators of the Septuagint but the Hebrew” suggests that Matthew originally used the name found in the Hebrew text. If this testimony is accurate, then quotations in Matthew’s Gospel as found in Matthew 3:3, 4:4, 7, 10, 22:44, and 23:39 *must* have originally contained the divine name.¹⁴⁴

That is, of course, unless there is an OT Hebrew/Aramaic text that Matthew quoted which itself did not use God’s name. But if both the OT Hebrew and the OT Greek versions available to Matthew contained a form of the divine name, and if Matthew faithfully quoted from them, then according to all available OT texts dated to Matthew’s time he would have used the divine name when quoting the OT. Thus, we cannot use later copies of the NT books and letters with what appear to be brand new scribal conventions (such as the *nomina sacra*) to answer the question about what the original NT writers *actually* used when quoting a Hebrew or a Greek OT text that contained a Hebrew (or

¹⁴³ Jerome and Gennadius, *Lives of Illustrious Men*, NPNF 3, chap. 3, page 362.

¹⁴⁴ For a discussion of the Hebrew versions of Matthew’s Gospel available today, such as the versions of Jean du Tillet and Shem-Tob ben-Isaac ben Shaprut (referenced in the NWT and in the KIT as J¹ and J², respectively) see the Second Edition of my *Jehovah’s Witnesses Defended: An Answer to Scholars and Critics* (Huntington Beach, CA: Elihu Books, 2000), pages 36-43.

paleo-Hebrew), an Aramaic, or a Greek form of the divine name. This question, like the question involving the pronunciation of the divine name, should be answered based on the best available evidence, with beliefs subsequently formed around those reasons.

The best available evidence clearly does not favor use of the *nomina sacra*, and even if it did then no one today is following this tradition by making use of the same written convention. The best available evidence is the available OT texts that could have been used by the NT writers. This includes OT fragments like 4QLXXLev^b, 8HevXIIgr, P.Oxy. 3522, and P.Fouad 266^b, all of which contain forms of the divine name rather than specially marked abbreviations, or even complete word surrogates.

Those who believe that the NT writers did in fact use *nomina sacra* for the divine name that is found nearly 7,000 times in the OT must explain the significance of manuscripts like P.Oxy. vii. 1007 (discussed briefly on page 75), which contains a fragment of the book of Genesis dated to the third century CE. This fragment not only uses a *yod* doubled with a line through it (~~י~~~~י~~) for the divine name (compare note 129 above) in Genesis 2:8 and 18, but it also uses a sacred name abbreviation for the Greek word for “God”! Additionally, in P.Oxy. 2745 (see note 64), known as the “Onomasticon of Hebrew Names,” the divine name Ιαω (*Iao*) occurs eight times in this third century CE papyrus when explaining OT biblical Hebrew names translated into Greek. But, in addition to the use of *Iao* throughout, the Greek word for “God” (as in P.Oxy. vii. 1007) is contracted as a *nomen sacrum* (“sacred name”)!

These two texts show that even if the NT writers did use *nomina sacra* that would not necessarily mean that they did not also use some other representation for or form of the divine name. Because these types of conventions are used in these two texts, scholars have had a hard time deciding whether or not these manuscripts are Jewish or Christian. But there is no reason why they cannot be the product of Christian Jews who retained a

special significance for the divine name, and who also adopted newer conventions for other sacred words (*nomina sacra*).¹⁴⁵

No one knows the exact origin of these scribal conventions or the precise reasons why in some texts such as P.Oxy. vii. 1007 and P.Oxy. 2745 we find *different* representations for the divine name and for the *nomina sacra*. However, the best available evidence in the form of OT sources available for quotation by the NT writers strongly suggests that NT writers used the divine name that was found in such OT texts. It is true that in the oldest available NT documents *nomina sacra* are used, not a form of the divine name (except in Revelation 19 [see below]). But, again, the best available NT evidence in the form of such texts is at best fifty to one hundred years older than the date of the earliest NT documents (P⁴⁶ and P⁶⁶ [see page 78]).

The best available evidence, the evidence that I would use no matter what it suggested or contained, is the best of the older OT texts that could have served as the basis for the NT writers’ OT quotations. All such OT texts available today contain a form of the divine name, and it is best that we today use what that body of evidence tells us the NT writers most likely would have seen, read, and quoted: a form of the divine name.

Before moving on to the next section in which I will discuss the extent to which the divine name is used in the NWTNT, as well as the basis for its use according to the NWT Committee, it is good to ask and to answer the rest of the questions that I posed at the beginning of this sub-section: If the NT writers were not responsible for the use of *nomina sacra*, and if they in fact used a form of the divine name when they quoted from the OT, then who took it out of the NT? Related to this, it is good to also ask and answer why the divine name is not used in most OT Greek texts after the first century CE?

¹⁴⁵ Compare Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts*, page 122, note 82: “In the first and second centuries CE, we can certainly see Christian group identity emerging, but a significant number of people can still be identified as both ‘Christian’ and ‘Jewish,’ and they felt no need or desire to identify themselves *exclusively* as one or the other. So we should not be surprised that some manuscripts exhibit a mixture of features that more typically distinguish Jewish and/or Christian scribal practices.”

Greek philosophy and the removal of the divine name from Christian writings. We have already considered some of the evidence supporting the belief that the OT Greek scriptures and the NT writings prior to and during the first century CE used a Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek form of the divine name. Earlier in this chapter I also reviewed the OT biblical teaching concerning the use of God's name, which review showed clearly that there is no legitimate basis whatsoever for refusing to use a form of the name today. In fact, in the Bible God himself everywhere uses and encourages his people to use and to make known his distinct name. But if the OT and the NT writings in the first century CE used the divine name, then why is the name not used as often or even at all in Greek OT and NT texts during and after the middle or the late second century CE by Christians?

While certain manuscripts such as P.Oxy. vii. 1007 and P.Oxy. 2745 (both considered in the previous section) show signs of the divine name's continuance in biblical literature together with other literary conventions like the *nomina sacra*, these texts appear to be in the minority. The vast majority of NT and even OT Greek texts from the second and third centuries CE onward favor use of the *nomina sacra* or complete word surrogates for the divine name. But if the NT writers did not begin such substitution practices, why did this practice develop among Christians *after* the death of the apostles?

There are good reasons to believe that at some point those who claimed to be Christian altered their copies of the LXX by removing the divine name.¹⁴⁶ This is clear from a comparison of the manuscript evidence of what is undeniably pre-Christian Jewish fragments of the LXX (many of which were reviewed above) with later Christian manuscripts (such as Codex Vaticanus, Codex Alexandrinus, and Codex Sinaiticus). If the Christians responsible for these LXX texts removed the divine name from the Greek OT

¹⁴⁶ Compare Siegel, "The Employment of Paleo-Hebrew Characters for the Divine Names," page 160, note 4, "It was the Christians who replaced the Tetragrammaton by *kyrios*, when the Divine name written in Hebrew letters was not understood any more." See also, Kahle, "The Greek Bible and the Gospels," pages 613-621.

which they considered to be inspired,¹⁴⁷ it is not hard to understand how they could have done the same thing to those documents that early in the first or second century CE may not have been considered inspired by many of these same people.

Even if the NT documents were accepted as inspired writings by *all* second and third century CE Christian LXX users, if the OT Greek Bible was subject to alteration when it came to the divine name then removal of the divine name from the NT should not be rejected out of hand based on any similar view that may have been shared concerning the NT. We should look at the manuscript evidence that shows how the divine name was treated in what was considered to be holy scripture (that is, the Hebrew and the Greek OT). Then we can evaluate the evidence for use of the divine name in similar or in other types of documents (like the NT) that were used and preserved by the same people or by those who lived after them. Lundquist, however, has a different view, “It does not matter that the Apostles read the Tetragrammaton in their copies of the *Septuagint*.” He further reasons:

It does not even matter that the inspired writers [of the NT] quoted Hebrew Scripture verses which used the divine name. All of these things are true and verifiable. *All that matters is the word which the Christian Greek Scripture authors actually wrote under inspiration of God.* All translators must faithfully represent the exact words written by the inspired authors. If the Greek Scripture writers used the Tetragrammaton, then the divine name must be used in each of those instances. If the Greek Scripture writers used *Kyrios*, then the passage must be translated *Lord*.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ See Müller, *The First Bible of the Church: A Plea for the Septuagint*, pages 68-94. Remarkably, Lundquist (*The Tetragrammaton and the Christian Greek Scriptures*, page 161) claims, “It does not matter that the Tetragrammaton in the *Septuagint* was changed during the second and third centuries C.E.” Of course, it does matter. It shows the tendency on the part of the Christians at that time to remove the divine name from biblical documents, even if the documents were believed to be the product of divine inspiration.

¹⁴⁸ Lundquist, *The Tetragrammaton and the Christian Greek Scriptures*, page 161. All emphasis in the above quote is original. Lundquist’s note at the end of the above quote emphasizes his point even further: “This is true even when the Hebrew Scriptures are clearly being quoted. The translator must reproduce for the English reader exactly that which the inspired author wrote.”

If Lundquist's view is correct, namely, that we should only translate what is in the *copies* that we have in our possession, the earliest of which is fifty to a hundred years or more removed from the original writing, then God or the inspired NT writers *did not follow this practice!* If Lundquist is truly intent on proving that God preserved his written word, and that we should do the same, then we should find Lundquist endorsing the Witnesses' view that the original NT documents *did* contain the divine name! Why? Again, because those who argue that the divine name was used in NT quotations of the OT are in a much better position to claim that God preserved his Word and that the NT writers 'faithfully represented the exact words written by the inspired [OT] authors', which is what Lundquist believes.

Those who claim as Lundquist does, namely, that the NT writers did not preserve God's name when quoting divine-name-containing OT texts, are arguing *against* the view that NT writers 'faithfully represented the exact words written by the inspired [OT] authors.' Lundquist, therefore, ends up in an argument not only with Jehovah's Witnesses, but also with himself, with the NT writers, and with even with God about the extent to which he would preserve his Word. That is why we find Lundquist making claims like (as quoted earlier) the "God who inspired Scripture will certainly take the necessary precautions to preserve it." Again, such a view is incompatible with Lundquist's own view that God chose to use *kyrios* in NT quotations of documents (the OT) that God is believed to have inspired. Lundquist's position regarding the use of the divine name in the NT suggests that God *did* fail to preserve what was actually written in his OT Hebrew word.

At the very least, the position adopted by Lundquist and others concerning the use of the divine name in the NT forces them to also conclude that the authors of the NT documents chose not to preserve the actual name of God from the inspired OT text in many instances. If Lundquist and others are going to suggest that God did not preserve his name from the OT to the NT, then why should we believe them when they state that God would "take the necessary precautions to preserve" what he had written in the NT? The pattern of God's acts shows that he will give us his name, and

allow others to decide whether to use it or to conceal it. In the end, the result will be the same:

Psalm 102:15-18, 21-22 (NWT)

And the nations will fear the name of Jehovah,
 And all the kings of the earth your glory.
 For Jehovah will certainly build up Zion;
 He must appear in his glory.
 He will certainly turn to the prayer of those stripped [of
 everything],
 And not despise their prayer.
 This is written for the future generation;
 And the people that is to be created will praise Jah.
 For the name of Jehovah to be declared in Zion
 And his praise in Jerusalem,
 When the peoples are collected all together,
 And the kingdoms to serve Jehovah.

Lundquist’s reasoning is flawed and he does not even appear to realize that ‘faithfully representing the exact words written by the inspired authors’ is what is in dispute. Lundquist thus begs the question when he claims that what we have in later copies of the NT, copies that have come to us complete with what appear to be novel scribal conventions (*nomina sacra*), are what “the Christian Greek Scripture authors actually wrote under inspiration of God” (from my quote of Lundquist on page 87). The manuscript evidence from before, during, and after the first century CE suggests that God allowed people to make decisions respecting what was written in the OT and in the NT, but he preserved enough evidence for us to make decisions about what he wants us to know respecting our use of and our love for his name.

There is good manuscript and other evidence supporting the belief that the divine name was removed from OT Greek texts and from the original NT documents. But there are also explicit statements and teachings from Christian authors of the second, third, and following centuries CE that tells us *why* some of these Christians chose to remove or conceal the unique name of God found in the OT. For example, the Greek apologist Justin Martyr (who died about 165 CE) taught that “Father,” “God,” “Creator,”

and “Lord” “are not names” (Greek: οὐκ ὀνόματά ἐστιν) “but appellations derived from His good deeds and functions.” Though Justin accepts the name “Jesus, as man and Saviour” as having significance,¹⁴⁹ he claims that “there is no name given” to the “Father of all, who is unbegotten” (Greek: Ὀνομα δὲ τῷ πάντων Πατρὶ θετὸν, ἀγεννήτω ὄντι, οὐκ ἔστιν).¹⁵⁰ Why does Justin assert that “there is no name given” to the Father when there is in fact a distinct name for God that occurs throughout the Hebrew and the Greek OT thousands of times? Justin explains, “For by whatever name He be called He has as His elder the person who gives Him the name.”¹⁵¹

Further, in his “Hortatory Address to the Greeks” (which may or may not be the actual work of Justin Martyr) Justin is said to have taught that “God cannot be called by any proper name, for names are given to mark out and distinguish their subject-matters, because these are many and diverse; but neither did any one exist before God who could give Him a name, nor did He Himself think it right to name Himself, seeing that He is one and unique.”¹⁵² It is clear, then, that Justin had unbiblical motivations for not using or even recognizing a distinct name for God, in spite of the fact that the Hebrew Bible makes frequent use of a name that God did in fact give to himself.—Exodus 6:3; Isaiah 42:8.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁹ ANF 1, page 190 (chap. 6 of Justin’s *Second Apology*).

¹⁵⁰ All of these quotations are from chap. 6 of Justin’s *Second Apology*, as translated in ANF 1, page 190. The Greek text for Justin that I am using is that of J.P. Migne, *Patrologiae Graeca* (Paris, 1857-66), vol. 6.

¹⁵¹ ANF 1, page 190 (Greek: Ὡ γὰρ ἂν καὶ ὀνόματι προσαγορεύηται, πρεσβύτερον ἔχει τὸν θέμενον τὸ ὄνομα).

¹⁵² ANF 1, page 281 (with underlining). Regardless of whether these are truly Justin’s words, they further reveal that unbiblical concepts were tied to the use of God’s name after the first century CE. Indeed, in this reference it is said that to give God a name is tantamount to a compromise of his ‘uniqueness.’ But that is precisely what having a distinct name is meant to highlight: God’s uniqueness! This quote also suggests that God did not name himself, for someone would had to have preexisted him in order to “give Him a name.” Again, the motive for not using God’s name here is clearly expressed, and it is unbiblical. Compare also Justin’s reference to God as “a God who is called by no proper name” (*First Apology*, ANF 1, page 165, chap. 10).

¹⁵³ However, Justin may have taught a baptismal rite “learned from the apostles” where “there is pronounced over him who chooses to be born again ... the name of God the Father and Lord of the universe ... calling him by this name alone.” But then Justin goes on to say, “For no one can utter the name of the ineffable God, and if any

Earlier in this chapter (see note 66) I showed how Clement of Alexandria knew the divine name. Of course, knowing the name is one thing and using it is quite another. With evident influence from and an expressed interest in Plato, Clement refers to Moses’ encounter with God in a cloud of darkness (compare Exodus 19:9) and to Paul’s statements in 2 Corinthians 12:4 and in Romans 11:33 as support of his view, in harmony with “the truth-loving Plato,” that God is “beyond expression by words.”¹⁵⁴ Clement even goes so far as to say that “the truly mystic word, respecting the unbegotten and His powers, ought to be concealed.”¹⁵⁵

It is reasonable to believe that this “mystic word” is the same “mystic name of four letters” that Clement referred to earlier in his *Stromata*, quoted above in my note 66. In spite of his expressed knowledge of the “mystic name of four letters,” Clement leaves no room for doubt regarding his full appreciation for any name of God, saying that the Father of the universe “is without form and name” and that any name we might give Him is not ‘proper.’¹⁵⁶ Names are only given to God, according to Clement, so that we do not “err in other respects.”¹⁵⁷ But Clement then gives a reason similar to that of Justin (and to the author of the “Hortatory Address to the Greeks” [if it be someone other than Justin]) for not recognizing a true name for God, “Everything, then, which falls under a name, is originated, whether they will or not.”¹⁵⁸ Clement unabashedly admits, “I do not say His name”¹⁵⁹ and, again, he also explicitly taught that the name “ought to be concealed.”

Greek Christian writers like Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria, as well as Greek Jews like Philo of Alexandria who lived and wrote during or after the first century CE, were clearly

one dares to say that there is a name, he raves with a hopeless madness” (ANF 1, *The First Apology of Justin*, chap. 61, page 183). So it would appear that Justin did believe “the name of God the Father” which “no one can utter” was “pronounced over him who chooses to be born again” for a special “illumination,” but which was then (apparently) never uttered again.

¹⁵⁴ ANF 2, Book 5, chap. 12, page 463.

¹⁵⁵ ANF 2, Book 5, chap. 12, page 463 (underlining added).

¹⁵⁶ ANF 2, Book 5, chap. 12, page 464.

¹⁵⁷ ANF 2, Book 5, chap. 12, page 464.

¹⁵⁸ ANF 2, Book 5, chap. 12, page 464.

¹⁵⁹ ANF 2, Book 6, chap. 18, page 519.

influenced by their Hellenistic environment. This environment included the popular beliefs of Plato and other Greek philosophers, and the writings of those who were influenced by them. For example, Philo of Alexandria (who lived and who wrote during the first century CE) taught that “God indeed needs no name,” though he did recognize “the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob” (spoken of in Exodus 3:15) as a name in which humankind “might be able to take refuge in prayers and supplications and not be deprived of comforting hopes.”¹⁶⁰ But Philo believes “it is a logical consequence that no personal name even can be properly assigned to the truly Existent.” In explaining the words of the angel in Genesis 32:29, Philo claims that the angel refused to tell Jacob his name because names are “symbols which indicate created beings,” which symbols we should not look for “in the case of imperishable natures.”¹⁶¹

Whether Philo's Greek biblical text contained a form of the divine name, as appears to be true for all LXX manuscripts available during Philo's time, is not clear.¹⁶² What is clear is that regardless of what name may have been used in the Greek or in the Hebrew OT available to Philo, Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, and the writers of the other early Christian works referenced above, all of them give the same unbiblical excuses for not using the name of God: ‘what is named came into being’ or simply ‘God is unnamable.’ In this, they all contradict what the Hebrew OT and all known Greek LXX manuscripts prior to the first CE teach us about God's name.

¹⁶⁰ Philo, *On Abraham* 51 (LCL 6, page 31).

¹⁶¹ *On the Change of Names*, 11, 14 (LCL 5, pages 147, 151). In *De Deo* 1.4 Philo also writes, “For he [God] is unnamable” (see Siegert, “The Philonian Fragment *De Deo*,” page 5). See also my note 118, pages 69-70.

¹⁶² However, James Roysse, “Philo, ΚΥΠΙΟΣ, and the Tetragrammaton,” in *The Studia Philonica Annual: Studies in Hellenistic Judaism*, vol. 3, David T. Runia, ed. (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1991), pages 179-183, argues that “the manuscript evidence very strongly indicates that Philo must have read the Biblical texts with the Tetragrammaton written in paleo-Hebrew or Aramaic letters, and not translated by κύριος [Lord].” Roysse points to, among other things, Philo's statements in *On Moses* 2.114-115 and 2.132 which suggest that Philo's knowledge that the tetragrammaton has four letters came from a biblical text, namely, his own Greek version which may have used a form of the divine name with four letters.

Philo, Justin, Clement, and other early Christian writers were heavily influenced by Greek philosophy, even to the point where they attempted to “derive Greek physics and philosophy from the Bible.”¹⁶³ We should therefore be careful when we consider their writings and learn to distinguish that which is biblical and that which is the result of Greek thinking that is at odds with the Bible. Though many early Christian and Jewish writers and philosophers of the first and following centuries CE knew of the divine name, and some, such as Philo, may even have had it in their Bible texts, they held to and expressed in their writings philosophical notions that clearly run contrary to what the Bible teaches. It is also possible that this same Greek philosophical thinking motivated others in the early centuries CE to use substitutes for the divine name in their writings.¹⁶⁴

Further on this point, there is evidence even in the writings of Augustine of Hippo (354 CE to 430 CE) that Christians had by this time, in some measure, adopted an unbiblical understanding of certain Bible texts concerning the name and the nature of God directly from the writings of Philo. Augustine wrote the following paraphrase of Exodus 3:14 and 15:

‘First tell them [i.e. your people] that I am he who is, so that they may learn the distinction between being and non-being, and also be taught that no name at all properly describes me ... But if through their natural weakness they seek a *title*, reveal to them not only this, that I am God, but also that I am the God of the three men whose names express their excellence, God of Abraham and God of Isaac and God of Jacob (*Mos.* 1.75-76).’¹⁶⁵

Philo’s teaching is not only unbiblical in that his paraphrase of the biblical account is not an accurate representation of what

¹⁶³ N.A. Dahl and Alan F. Segal, “Philo and the Rabbis on the Names of God,” *JSJ* 9 (1978), page 5.

¹⁶⁴ See my note 118 above.

¹⁶⁵ As translated in David T. Runia, “Philo of Alexandria and the Beginnings of Christian Thought,” in *The Studia Philonica Annual: Studies in Hellenistic Judaism*, vol. 7, David T. Runia, ed. (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1995), page 146 (underlining added).

Exodus 3:14 and 15 teach, but Philo even *adds* words to God's response to Moses' request for his name (as recorded in Exodus 3:13-15), namely, "There is no name whatever that can properly be assigned to me, who am the only being to whom existence belongs."¹⁶⁶ God did not say this, at least not according to any biblical text we have available today. Again, Philo added these words to the account and he taught that it was wrong to give God a name, a belief that was then adopted by post-biblical Christians. Finally, in addition to what I presented earlier Philo also wrote explicitly that we need to have "some substitute for the divine name, so that they may approach if not the fact at least the name of supreme excellence and be brought into relation with it."¹⁶⁷

Thus, there are good reasons for believing that many early Jewish and Christian writers taught that "there is no name whatever that can properly be assigned" to God, though this was in complete defiance of the words of the very same God whom these writers claim to quote and to reference.¹⁶⁸ Further, there is

¹⁶⁶ *On the Life of Moses*, 1.14.75 (underlining added).

¹⁶⁷ *On the Change of Names*, 13 (underlining added).

¹⁶⁸ Consider also the statement by Josephus (*Jewish Antiquities* 2.275-276) who, after referencing this same account in Exodus involving the revelation of God's name to Moses, writes that he is "forbidden to speak" God's name. But, again, the Bible nowhere 'forbids' Josephus to speak the divine name. Consider, too, the statement by Gregory of Nazianzus (329-389 CE) in his *Orations* (30.17) as translated in F.W. Norris, "The Tetragrammaton in Gregory Nazianzen (Or. 30.17)," *Vigiliae Christianae* 43 (1989), page 339:

The divinity is not designated by its name. And this not only the arguments [above] demonstrate but also the wise and ancient Hebrews used special characters to venerate the divine and did not allow that the name of anything inferior to God should be written with the same letters as that of "God," on the ground that the divine should not have even this in common with our things.

There does not appear to be any reason for Norris to put "God" in quotes as if Gregory is here referring at all to the letters for the word "God," and Norris himself does not appear to conclude that this is the case. Rather, he writes that the use of "special characters" here "involves the use of paleo-Hebrew characters in the Hebrew text." Yet, Gregory himself uses a Greek OT text that omits such "special characters," for shortly after making the above comments he writes, "Lord, which is also called a name of God," citing Amos 9:6 in his version of the LXX, "I am the Lord Thy God, He says, that is My name; and, The Lord is His name" (30.18, as translated in NPNF 7, page 316). The latter half of the note (δ) in NPNF relative to these comments by Gregory is correct, namely, that "in the passages quoted [Amos 9:6], had the original language been used, the Four-Lettered Name would have appeared." Or it may also have

no evidence that any of these positions regarding the use of God’s name had anything to do with any accurate representation of what the Bible teaches. In fact, the stated reasons for not using the name, for ‘concealing’ it, and/or for using “some substitute for the divine name” all constitute strong evidence that, in fact, that is what happened to God’s name in both the LXX and the NT sometime after the first century CE.

Hallelujah! It has often been said that the “Tetragrammaton was not used by the inspired Christian writers”¹⁶⁹ of the New Testament. I believe such claims are irresponsible and that they are not based on a broad enough consideration of the best available evidence. Such conclusions are in fact based almost exclusively on what we find in copies of the NT that are perhaps one hundred years or more removed from the original NT writings. Further, it is not necessary for the “Tetragrammaton” itself, the four-letter form of the Hebrew or Aramaic name for God (יהוה), to have been used in the NT in order for the divine name to have appeared. Greek, Hebrew, or Aramaic forms of the three-letter (יהי or Ιαω) or the two-letter (יה or Ια) divine name could also have been used in the NT depending on what form of the name was in the OT text quoted or used by various NT writers.

When viewed in this light, even if we set aside the evidence considered earlier for the use of the divine name in the OT, and the special scribal convention of the *nomina sacra*, and the Greek philosophical reasons given by several early Christian and Jewish writers for ‘concealing’ the name of God, there are still at least four instances of God’s name in the NT. These four occurrences of the divine name are from the New Testament book of Revelation Chapter 19, in verses 1, 3, 4, 6. As noted earlier, the two-letter form of the divine name in Hebrew is today represented in square script as יה. This form of the name was used during the first and following centuries CE, and at times it was transliterated into Greek as Ια (*Ia*).

appeared if Gregory had used a Greek version like the kind that Origen describes as “more accurate” (see above, page 72).

¹⁶⁹ Lundquist, *The Tetragrammaton and the Christian Greek Scriptures*, page 150.

The two-letter form of God's name can be transliterated from Hebrew into English today as *Yah*, and it has been made into the English (Anglicized) word, "Jah." In its Hebrew stand-alone form "Jah" occurs at least 49 times in the OT. It is also used frequently as a prefix and as a suffix in compound names in- and outside of the Bible. Further, it is used at least 9 times standing alone or as a part of the expression "Hallelujah" in the Dead Sea Scrolls. In Revelation 19:1, 3, 4, and 6 this same expression ("Hallelujah") occurs. In Hebrew this expression is a combination of two words, הללו (*halelu* ["praise"]) and יה (*Yah* ["Jah"]).¹⁷⁰ In modern printed editions of the Greek text of Revelation 19:1, 3, 4, and 6 we often find Ἀλληλουϊά, which is a transliteration of the Hebrew expression given in the preceding sentence. Like the Hebrew expression, the Greek transliteration is a combination or representation of the two Hebrew words in Greek, *allelou* ("praise") and *Ia* ("Jah").

In the most ancient manuscripts of the Greek text of Revelation this expression runs together without any spaces, just like most other Greek words in these texts. So it is not clear whether *Ia* occurred as a part of a single-word expression (as in our modern "Hallelujah") or if it was in fact the second of two words that together meant, "Praise Jah!" In either case, *Ia* in Revelation 19 is an undisputed instance of the divine name either standing alone or as part of an expression that involves 'praising' the God "Jah." It is this very name (*Ia*, "Jah") that writers like Theodoret represented as the Jewish pronunciation of the divine name in contrast to the Samaritan pronunciation (see the quotation at the end of my note 67).

Lundquist does not dispute that in Revelation 19:1, 3, 4, and 6 the divine name occurs as *Ia*. His point of interest, however, is limited to "whether or not the inspired Christian writers used the

¹⁷⁰ Compare the occurrence of these words in the Hebrew of Ps 117, where we find in the first part of the verse *halelu* ("praise") followed by the Hebrew particle יהי (*'et*), used in this case to identify the object of praise, that is, the divine name which follows it (the tetragrammaton). This string of words means exactly the same thing as the use of *haleluyah* (*halelu* + *yah*) at the end of Ps 117.

four Hebrew letters of the Tetragrammaton in their writing.”¹⁷¹ But, really, whether the divine name occurs in the form of the tetragrammaton (the four-letter Hebrew/Aramaic form) or some other form (such as the Greek two- or three-letter transliterations *Ia* or *Iao*, respectively), the form of the name used is not the primary issue where Jehovah’s Witnesses are concerned. The real question is simply whether *any* form of the divine name was used in the NT. Related to this is the question of how that name should be represented and used today in translations of the OT and NT.

Indeed, as noted earlier in this chapter, the tetragrammaton may really be only another way of writing the divine name as it was pronounced through other forms, such as the three-letter form *Yaho* (Hebrew) or *Iao* (Greek), or even by the two-letter form *Yah* (Hebrew) or *Ia* (Greek). Thus, again, it is not simply the Hebrew/Aramaic tetragrammaton that is of interest to Jehovah’s Witnesses and to the Christian Witnesses of Jah, but *the use of the divine name in any form*. While Lundquist’s point of interest may be more narrowly related to the presence of the actual four-letter form of the divine name in the NT (for which there is credible manuscript evidence from OT source material quoted by NT writers), and though Lundquist accepts Revelation 19:1, 3, 4, and 6 as NT texts wherein “the divine name does, in fact, occur in the Christian Scriptures,”¹⁷² he nonetheless observes and asks:

It is also interesting to note that the divine name was *not* removed from these four verses. To anyone familiar with the language background during the second and third centuries C.E., these four occurrences of the word *hallelujah* were obviously a reference to Jehovah. Why then, if there had been a heresy aimed at removing his name, were these verses overlooked?¹⁷³

¹⁷¹ Lynn Lundquist, *The Divine Name in the New World Translation* (Portland, OR: Word Resources, 2001), page 58.

¹⁷² Lundquist, *The Divine Name in the New World Translation*, page 57. See also, Lundquist, *The Divine Name in the New World Translation*, page 61, where Lundquist writes that “the divine name is undeniably used four times at Rev 19:1-6.”

¹⁷³ Lundquist, *The Divine Name in the New World Translation*, page 61.

I have already shown that writers of the first century CE and thereafter, such as Philo of Alexandria, Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, and the author of the "Hortatory Address to the Greeks," explicitly taught things about God's name and about naming God that are not biblical. In fact, such teachings stem from Platonic and neo-Platonic thought. It is also clear that the earliest Christian NT manuscript tradition reveals a scribal practice known as *nomina sacra* ("sacred names"), which involves the use of specially marked abbreviations that substitute for the divine name in NT quotations of the OT. I also noted earlier (see pages 80-81) that this use of *nomina sacra* is like certain Jewish scribal conventions where the divine name is similarly (but not exactly) marked or surrogated when it occurs in the OT or in related literature.

Therefore, it is undeniable that sometime prior to, during, and after the first century CE the divine name was being treated in ways that are not according to any articulated biblical teaching concerning its use and its pronunciation. The question is, did the NT writers continue or did they establish on their own some tradition concerning the use of the divine name (such as the *nomina sacra*), or did those who copied the NT begin the use of such conventions? If those who passed on the original NT writings were the first users of the *nomina sacra*, then what did the NT writers use? In this light, I again present Lundquist's question, "Why then, if there had been a heresy aimed at removing his name, were these verses [Revelation 19:1, 3, 4, and 6] overlooked?"

The answer is actually rather simple when considered in the context of the previously explained scribal treatments, manuscript variations, and Greek (unbiblical) philosophical views concerning the use of the divine name. Then there is the different ways that the words of the expression, "Praise Jah!" were considered during the time when Revelation was written or passed along. On this latter point, it is clear that there were at least three different schools of thought about the divine name that could have affected how a Jewish or a Jewish Christian scribe viewed the name *YH* (Hebrew) or *Ia* (Greek) when associated or used with the Hebrew word (or transliterated Greek) word for "praise." Consider:

According to the tradition in one School, Hallelujah consists of two separate words and the second word or the monosyllable *jah* is the Divine name. Hence in writing it the Scribe must treat it as such, sanctify it when copying it and in case of an error must not erase it which he is allowed to do with an ordinary mistake. In harmony with this School, therefore, הללו יה *Hallu* is the imperative plural, יה *jah* the Divine name is the object, and the phrase must be translated *praise ye Jehovah*. And there can hardly be any doubt that this exhibits the primitive reading which is uniformly followed in the Authorised [*sic*] Version and in the Revised Version. According to the second School, however, Hallelujah is one inseparable word and the termination *jah* simply denotes *power, might, ...* Whilst according to the third School, Hallelujah though undivided still contains the sacred name and is, therefore, divine.¹⁷⁴

Ginsburg draws on the traditions regarding the understanding of “Hallelujah” in rabbinic thought through the Jerusalem (c. 350 CE) and Babylonian (late fourth century to early sixth century CE) Talmuds. These Talmuds contain Jewish rabbinic laws and customs found in the Mishnah (c. 200 CE), with discussions of it and debates over various rabbinic opinions. These traditions show that among religious Jews in the centuries following the writing of Revelation there were different views on the significance of the word “Hallelujah.” Revelation was not even accepted as a part of the New Testament canon until several centuries after it was written. Indeed, in the first Greek commentary on Revelation by Oecumenius (c. mid- to late-sixth or early seventh century CE), it is clear that by the time Revelation was accepted Christianity lost the biblical appreciation for the meaning of the divine name. After quoting Revelation 19:1-5, Oecumenius writes: “They were crying, [John] says, *Alleluia*. Allelulia is a Hebrew word; it means ‘Praise, laud God.’”¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴ Christian D. Ginsburg, *Introduction to the Massoretico-Critical Edition of the Hebrew Bible* (New York, NY: Ktav Publishing House, 1966), pages 378-379.

¹⁷⁵ John N. Suggit, *Oecumenius: Commentary on the Apocalypse*, vol. 112 of *The Fathers of the Church* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2006), page 157.

In the preceding paragraph I wrote that by at least the time of Oecumenius, Christianity had “lost the biblical appreciation for the meaning of the divine name.” I say this here because Oecumenius substitutes “God” for “Jah” when giving the meaning of “Alleluia”! Though Jah is God (compare Revelation 19:5), the original meaning of “Hallelujah” is not “Praise God” but “Praise Jah” or “Praise Jehovah.” This is “incontestably established by the parallelism”¹⁷⁶ of OT texts such as Psalm 135:3: “Praise Jah [*halelu+yah* (יה)], for Jehovah [יהוה, *YHWH*] is good. Make melody to his name, for it is pleasant.” By the time the book of Revelation was fully accepted as part of the NT, or given serious exposition as a Christian document (such as by Oecumenius), the significance of the divine name in “Hallelujah” was lost and its meaning distorted by people like Oecumenius to mean “Praise, laud God.”

Based on all of the preceding evidence, it is no real surprise to find that Christian scribes and commentators in the centuries following the actual writing of the book of Revelation left *alleluia* in the text of Revelation 19:1-6. They simply interpreted it to mean something other than what it actually meant, effectively eliminating the divine name from the meaning of the text even though the divine name is still there. But those who “Praise Jah” in Revelation 19:1, 3, 4, and 6 are not Jewish rabbis. They are not post-biblical Christian scribes or commentators. They are “a great crowd in heaven” (verses 1 and 3). They are “the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures” (verse 4). They are yet another “great crowd” whose voice is heard by John (verse 6). They are the Christian Witnesses of Jah, Jehovah’s Witnesses who reject the traditions of men where they invalidate teachings that for good reasons are attributable to both Jah God and to Jesus of Nazareth.

¹⁷⁶ Ginsburg, *Introduction to the Massoretico-Critical Edition of the Hebrew Bible*, page 379.

The Divine Name in the NT of the *New World Translation*

Variant readings. In 1 Corinthians 2:16 there is a good example of an NT text where manuscript variants might suggest that the divine name was used in the NT as part of a quoted, OT divine-name-containing text. Here Paul quotes from a Greek version of Isaiah 40:13, where instead of “spirit of Jehovah [= Hebrew text]” Paul is recorded as using “mind of $\kappa\zeta$,” where $\kappa\zeta$ is a *nomen sacrum* of $\kappa\upsilon\rho\iota\omicron\varsigma$ (*kyrios*), “Lord.” There is no variant for the word “Lord” here in Paul’s quotation of the Greek text of Isaiah 40:13. But the word for “Christ” in the latter part of the verse has a curious variant. Though “Christ” has strong support from early and late manuscripts, including P⁴⁶ ⳨ A C D² Ψ 048 0150 (and a host of cursives), the reading “Lord” (in place of “Christ” in the part of the verse that does *not* quote Isaiah 40:13) is supported by B D^{*} F G (which group of manuscripts includes the fourth century CE Codex Vaticanus [B]).

The reading “Christ” is better supported textually, but “Lord” is by far the more difficult reading if Paul did not in fact use the divine name in his quotation of Isaiah 40:13. In other words, if Paul did *not* use the divine name when he here quoted Isaiah 40:13, and if “Christ” (as opposed to “Lord”) is the original reading for the last part of the verse, then those who accept this reading are in effect claiming that Paul wrote, “For ‘who has come to know the mind of the Lord, that we may instruct him?’ But we do have the mind of the Christ,” and that later scribes changed this to read, “For ‘who has come to know the mind of the Lord [$\kappa\zeta$], that we may instruct him?’ But we do have the mind of the Lord [$\kappa\zeta$]”!

The evidence to me suggests that it is highly unlikely that a scribe would fail to see this as a great oddity and even as a contradiction. It is much easier to explain the occurrence of the first “Lord” by arguing based on good reasons that the divine name was originally used in the NT in this quoted OT text in reference to God the Father. If “Lord” in the latter part of the verse (used for Jesus) is the original reading, then, at some point

in the transmission of this document the divine name in the OT quotation appears to have been removed, just as it was taken out of the Greek OT during the second and later centuries CE when it was replaced with "Lord" in its full form or as an abbreviation (*nomen sacrum*, $\kappa\epsilon\zeta$). Once this adjustment occurred, "Lord" in the latter part of the verse (for Jesus) was changed to "Christ" (as we see in P⁴⁶) so that the text now makes better sense, "For 'who has come to know the mind of the Lord, that we may instruct him?' But we do have the mind of the Christ."

There are other variants that might tell us something about whether or not the divine name was ever used in the original NT documents, such as the variants for the reading in Acts 20:28 (see my Second Edition of this book, pages 135-143). But I do not base my acceptance of any use of the divine name in the NT primarily on such manuscript variants. The good reasons that I accept and that I offer to others for believing that the original NT documents contained some form of the divine name in quotations of the Hebrew or the Greek OT are: 1) the pre-first century CE manuscript evidence for these quoted OT sources; 2) the treatment of the divine name in Greek OT texts during and/or after the same time the NT was written; and 3) the fact that the earliest NT copies we possess use special abbreviations for the divine name that appear to be scribal inventions that came about after the NT was written.

Further, 4) we have historical testimony from early writers such as Jerome and Gennadius that NT writers like Matthew faithfully quoted from the Hebrew text of the OT which, like the Greek OT (based on the available evidence) used by the NT writers, contained the divine name. For all of these reasons, I believe that the NT writers quoted from existing OT texts that contained the divine name and that they faithfully reproduced what we have good reasons to believe was in the text before them, that is, a form of the divine name. Finally, 5) I accept the four uses of "Hallelujah" in Revelation 19 as instances of the divine name's use in the present collection of NT documents. Property understood in its historical context, the Greek name $\text{I}\alpha$ is a transliteration of God's name in Hebrew, "Yah," which is Anglicized today as "Jah." This form of the divine name is used

49 times as a stand-alone name for God in the OT; it is used as part of Hebrew proper names in- and outside of the Bible and throughout the biblical periods; and it is used by Origen, Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, Theodoret, Epiphanius, and others.

The basis for the use of the divine name in the NWT’s NT. However, those responsible for the translation and production of the NWT did not look only to the evidence given in the preceding paragraphs of the last sub-section for their use of the divine name in the NWT’s NT. The publishers of the NWT (the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society) offer other evidence when explaining the NWT’s use of the divine name in many of its NT passages. Therefore, since this book is a defense of Jehovah’s Witnesses, we must consider what many Jehovah’s Witnesses (in this case those associated with the Watchtower Society) have put forth as good reasons for the NWT’s use of the name in the NT.

Lundquist’s book contains much material that is useful when studying issues relating to the divine name in the Scriptures and he manifests a good knowledge of literature published by Jehovah’s Witnesses on this same subject. But some of his underlying assumptions, several of which have been considered in this Chapter and in my book, *Three Dissertations on the Teachings of Jehovah’s Witnesses* (pages 224-227, note 3), are not very credible. Lundquist also misinforms his readers about the textual basis for many uses of the name in the NWT’s NT.

For example, Lundquist seems to think that the NWT chose various Hebrew translations of the NT (which are referred to in many of the NWTNT’s footnotes) *over* the Christian Greek Scriptures in *every* instance.¹⁷⁷ The “Textual Symbols” in the front

¹⁷⁷ Referring to the NWT’s use of “J” documents, Lundquist writes, “*To accept late Hebrew translations as a higher authority than the best preserved Greek manuscripts from which they were translated violates our understanding of the canon of the Christian Greek Scriptures*” (Lundquist, *The Tetragrammaton in the Christian Greek Scriptures*, page 91 [the emphasis in this quote is original to Lundquist]). This same point is restated on page 92 of Lundquist’s book. On pages 49-50 of his book he also asks, “Why are Hebrew translations published in 1385 C.E. and later considered to be more reliable textual sources for the Christian Scriptures than the Christian Scriptures themselves ... ?” Lundquist also complains about the lack of agreement between the NWT’s use of the divine name and the circumlocution in the Shem-Tob Hebrew Matthew text (*The Tetragrammaton in the Christian Greek Scriptures*, page

matter of the NWT (in the 1950 original and in the 1984 Reference editions) and in the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* (hereafter, "KIT") editions (1969 and 1985) gives the dates for these "J" documents. It should also be quite obvious to any NWT and KIT reader, based on the information given, that none of these documents are older than the Greek witnesses cited in this same list. In fact, while the aforementioned editions of the NWT and the KIT do refer to these "J" documents as "support for [NWTNT's] renderings [of the divine name],"¹⁷⁸ these versions were not the stated basis upon which the NWT Committee sought to "correct" known copies of the NT writings when it came to the use of the divine name. The New World Bible Translation Committee was quite clear when it came to the basis for its use of the divine name in its NT:

67-69), as if NWT was somehow being unfaithful to a stated dependence upon the "J" documents, specifically J², which is the Hebrew version of Matthew's Gospel that is preserved in a fourteenth-century Jewish polemical work entitled *Eben Bohan* ("The Touchstone"), authored by Shem-Tob ben-Isaac ben Shaprut (hence the name "Shem-Tob"). But, again, Lundquist assumes that "the suitability of the Tetragrammaton for the 237 *Jehovah* passages [in the NWTNT] is derived *only* [emphasis Lundquist's] from later Hebrew translations" (*The Tetragrammaton in the Christian Greek Scriptures*, page 54), when in fact a good number of the 237 passages are based on quotations or paraphrases of OT texts that contain the divine name (see figure 1.2 below). Lundquist presents this same inaccurate view regarding NWT's use of the "J" documents elsewhere in his book (see, for example, his Chapter 6, particularly pages 80-82, and his figure 4 on his page 81) and in a brochure entitled, *A Field Service Encounter* (Portland, OR: Word Resources, 1998), which Lundquist has distributed along with his book. On page 46 of this brochure, for example, Lundquist says that "the evidence for the Tetragrammaton comes from translations made after 1385." But even in this brochure (page 56, note 17) Lundquist shows awareness of NWT's dependence on OT quotations for the use of the divine name in the NWTNT! This awareness should have qualified Lundquist's comment elsewhere regarding NWT's use of the "J" documents which, again, Lundquist inaccurately claims are the "only" basis for the 237 uses of the divine name in NWT's NT text.

¹⁷⁸ The *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1950), Foreword, page 21. See also the 1984 Reference edition of NWT, Appendix 1D, page 1565; *The Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures* (1969), Foreword, page 19, and the 1985 edition, Foreword, page 12, all published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society. Even in a "Questions from Readers" in *The Watchtower*, August 15, 1997, page 30 (where the issue of whether or not Shem-Tob's Matthew uses the tetragrammaton is discussed), while there is a reference to NWT's use of Shem-Tob since 1950 for "support" of NWTNT's use of the divine name, priority is still given to the fact that "Matthew quoted from the Hebrew Scriptures where the Tetragrammaton is found."

How is a modern translator to know or determine when to render the Greek words Κύριος [*Kyrios*, “Lord”] or Θεός [*Theos*, “God”] into the divine name in his version? By determining where the inspired Christian writers have quoted from the Hebrew Scriptures. Then he must refer back to the original to locate whether the divine name appears there. This way he can determine the identity to give to *kyrios* and *theos*’ and he can then clothe them with personality.

Realizing that this is the time and place for it, we have followed this course in rendering our version of the Christian Greek Scriptures. To avoid overstepping the bounds of a translator into the field of exegesis, we have tried to be most cautious about rendering the divine name, always carefully considering the Hebrew Scriptures. We have looked for some agreement with the Hebrew versions [“J” documents] we consulted to confirm our own rendering.¹⁷⁹

These exact same comments are found in the 1969 edition of the KIT and in the Foreword to the 1985 edition of the KIT. The 1984 Reference edition of the NWT (in Appendix 1D) uses just slightly different wording in making these same points. The underlined words in the above quote appear in all four sources. It is clear, then, that the NWT Committee’s “support” from the “J” documents involved ‘looking for some agreement with the Hebrew versions’ “to confirm [their] own rendering,” a rendering that was based on “*determining where the inspired Christian writers have quoted from the [divine-name containing] Hebrew Scriptures.*” Lundquist is thus misinformed, and he misinforms his readers about the NWT’s reliance on the “J” documents.

How many times should the divine name be used in the NT? However, the NWT does not use the divine name in the NT only when there is a quote or a paraphrase of an OT text that contains the divine name. Therefore, with reference to those instances in the NWTNT where the divine name is used apart from the NWT Committee’s stated principle of “determining where the inspired Christian writers have quoted from the Hebrew

¹⁷⁹ *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures*, 1950 edition, Foreword, page 20 (underlining added).

Scriptures,” the position taken by Lundquist and others on the issue of ‘translating what is in the text’ has some merit.

Before elaborating further on this point, consider the tabulation in figure 1.2 below. Here “Q-P” indicates a direct quotation or paraphrase of an OT text containing God’s name. The category “YHWH’s Actions” indicates a quotation of an OT text relating to an action on Jah’s part that is preceded or followed by a reference to “God” or “Lord” in the NT, which has been rendered “Jehovah” in the NWT. In this category the OT quotation does not actually contain the divine name, but it relates to the actions or words of Jah as spoken of in the OT. The category “Context=YHWH” means that the NWT has used “Jehovah” *apart from any quotation or paraphrase of an OT text by an NT writer*, but where the context of the NT passage strongly supports the view that the use of “Lord” or “God” is a reference to Jah of the OT. The fifth column is labeled “?” to indicate those texts where the NWT uses “Jehovah” in an NT text apart from an OT quote or paraphrase, and where there is some legitimate question about the identity of the subject.

Figure 1.2

Basis for “Jehovah” in NWT’s New Testament

Bible Book	Q-P	YHWH’s Actions	Context= YHWH	?
Matthew	11	2	4	1
Mark	7	0	1	1
Luke	10	0	26	0
John	5	0	0	0
Acts	9	4	5	34
Romans	11	0	0	8
1Cor	8	1	0	6
2Cor	1	2	1	6
Galatians	1	0	0	0
Ephesians	0	0	2	4
Philippians	0	0	0	0
Colossians	0	0	1	5
1Th	0	0	0	4
2Th	0	0	0	3
1 Timothy	0	0	0	0

2 Timothy	0	0	0	4
Titus	0	0	0	0
Philemon	0	0	0	0
Hebrews	11	0	1	0
James	1	3	4	5
1 Peter	3	0	0	0
2 Peter	0	0	4	2
1 John	0	0	0	0
2 John	0	0	0	0
3 John	0	0	0	0
Jude	1	2	0	0
Revelation	0	0	12	0
Totals	79 ¹⁸⁰	14 ¹⁸¹	61 ¹⁸²	83 ¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ Matt 3:3; 4:4, 7, 10; 5:33; 21:9, 42; 22:37, 44; 23:39; 27:10; Mr 1:3; 11:9; 12:11, 29 (twice), 30, 36; Lu 2:23; 3:4; 4:8, 12, 18, 19; 10:27; 13:35; 19:38; 20:42; Joh 1:23; 6:45; 12:13, 38 (twice); Ac 2:20, 21, 25, 34; 3:22; 4:26; 7:49 (LXX; after μοι [“for me”] some manuscripts [26, 239, the Lucianic recension and others] read λέγει κύριος [“Lord (Jehovah) says”], as we find in the quote in Ac 7:49); 15:17 (twice; quote from the LXX; for this text’s inclusion of “the Lord” [τὸν κύριον] into the text of Amos 9:12, see A, 49, 198, 407, 456, 534 and others); Rom 4:3, 8; 9:28, 29; 10:13, 16; 11:3, 34; 12:19; 14:11; 15:11; 1Co 1:31; 2:16; 3:20; 10:21 (twice), 22, 26; 14:21; 2Co 10:17; Gal 3:6; Heb 2:13; 7:21; 8:8, 9, 10, 11; 10:16, 30; 12:5, 6; 13:6; Jas 2:23; 1Pe 1:25; 3:12 (twice); Jude 9.

¹⁸¹ Matt 1:22; 2:15; Ac 7:31, 33; 8:22, 24; 1Co 10:9; 2Co 6:17, 18; Jas 5:10, 11 (twice); Jude 5, 14 (compare 1 Enoch 1:9; see also “Put Up A Hard Fight For the Faith,” *The Watchtower*, June 1, 1998, page 16).

¹⁸² Matt 1:20, 24; 2:13, 19; Mr 13:20; Lu 1:6, 9, 11, 15, 16, 17, 25, 28, 32, 38, 45, 46, 58, 66, 68, 76; 2:9 (twice), 15, 22, 23, 24, 26, 39; 5:17; 20:37; Ac 2:39 (compare 2:22, 32, 36); 3:19; 4:29 (compare 4:30); 10:33 (see verse 36); 14:3 (compare 2:19); 2Co 10:18; Eph 2:21 (compare 2:20); 5:19 (compare 5:20); Col 3:16; Heb 8:2; Jas 1:7 (compare 1:1, 5); 2:23; 3:9; 5:4 (OT description for Jehovah); 2Pe 2:11; 3:8, 9, 10; Rev 1:8; 4:8, 11; 11:17; 15:3, 4; 16:7; 18:8; 19:6; 21:22; 22:5, 6.

¹⁸³ Matt 28:2; Mr 5:19 (compare Ex 18:8); Ac 1:24; 2:47; 5:9, 19; 7:60 (see 7:59); 8:25, 26, 39; 9:31; 11:21; 12:7, 11, 17, 23, 24; 13:2, 10, 11, 12, 44, 47 (but compare Isa 42:6), 48, 49; 14:23; 15:35, 36, 40; 16:14, 15, 32; 18:21, 25; 19:20; 21:14; Rom 12:11; 14:4, 6 (three times), 8 (three times); 1Co 4:4, 19; 7:17; 11:32; 16:7, 10; 2Co 3:16, 17 (twice), 18 (twice); 8:21; Eph 5:17 (compare 5:10 [P⁴⁶ reads, “the Christ”]); 6:4, 7 (compare ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ [“as to the Lord”] with ὡς τῷ χριστῷ [“as to Christ”] in verse 5), 8; Col 1:10; 3:13 (compare Ac 5:31), 22, 23, 24 (for verses 22, 23 and 24, compare the latter part of verse 24); 1Th 1:8; 4:6 (compare 2Th 1:7-9), 15; 5:2; 2Th 2:2, 13; 3:1; 2Ti 1:18; 2:19 (twice); 4:14; Jas 1:12 (compare Rev 2:10); 4:10, 15; 5:14, 15; 2Pe 2:9; 3:12 (note the use of *parousia*).

The significance of the above totals relates to the number of times the NWT used the divine name in the NT without the support of an OT quotation or paraphrase. My analysis reveals that there are 79 instances where an NT writer is quoting or paraphrasing an OT text that contains the divine name.¹⁸⁴ These 79 uses of the divine name in the NWT's NT are based on good reasons since the evidence supports the conclusion that the NT writers quoted from an OT Greek or Hebrew text that contained a form of the divine name. In the 14 instances where there is some reference made to Jah's actions or words in the OT, and where there is also use of the *nomen sacrum* or the complete Greek word for "Lord" in the NT, I believe that it should be left up to the translator whether or not to use the divine name to identify the person so described or to simply use the word or the abbreviation that is in the translated text that does not quote from an OT source. The reason for this is because it is historically accurate to say that Jah is the one who spoke the words or who performed the actions that are attributed to him in these NT passages. But because these texts do not involve actual quotations of OT source material, then it is not as likely that the divine name was in fact used even though Jah of the OT is the subject of the discussion.

In this light, apart from the four instances of *Ia* in Revelation 19, the most credible uses of the divine name in the NWTNT are the 79 instances where the NT quotes an OT divine-name-containing text. Those places where the OT is not quoted cannot be considered as credible as the quoted texts, since for the 14 non-quotation-based instances we simply do not have as good of reasons as we do for the 79 quotation-based texts on which to rely when deciding whether to use the divine name. Additionally, there are another 61 instances where the NWTNT uses the divine name

¹⁸⁴ My totals (and my classification, to some degree) differ from Lundquist's study (*The Tetragrammaton in the Christian Greek Scriptures*, page 50). For example, Lundquist found 92 instances that he believed were direct quotations from the OT where the divine name is used in the source text. This may be because sometimes it is difficult to determine when there is a quotation. Therefore, I have allowed for paraphrases of OT texts in the Q-P category (see note 180). But my numbers are still lower than Lundquist's. My analysis was based on a careful consideration of each verse listed on pages 1565-1566 of the NWT Reference edition (1984), in its Appendix 1D.

apart from any OT reference whatsoever, but only because in the NWT Committee’s view the context of the NT text favors interpreting the NT terms “Lord” or “God” in reference to Jehovah. In these instances one could legitimately argue that the best choice would have been to use the terms that are actually in the available NT documents and then simply point out in a footnote or by means of a cross-reference that in the translators’ view this is a reference to the Lord Jehovah, not to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The final 83 instances of the divine name in the NT of the NWT are even more open to interpretation. Again, since the referent in these 83 instances is so uncertain then it is the reader, not the translator, who should decide if the reference is to Jesus Christ or to his God and Father, Jah (Micah 5:4; John 8:54). This is true even when the reference is to the “word of the Lord” or to the “will of the Lord” since Jesus’ will and word are the same as that of his Father (compare John 7:16-17; 5:19, 30; 12:49-50). In fact, in Romans 10:17 we have an example of a scribal conflict over the reading “word of Christ” (P⁴⁶ ⲛ* B C D* Vulgate) and the “word of God” (ⲛ^c A Syriac *Peshitta*). Then there are the references to “the Lord’s [NWT: Jehovah’s] angel” (see, for example, Acts 8:26). But given Jesus’ exalted status in the NT, as chief of the angels, as the one to whom all authority on earth *and in heaven* has been given, and as the one who speaks and who is spoken of as having angels under his command, we cannot be certain that NT references to “the Lord’s angel” are not in fact references to Jesus’ angel.—Matthew 28:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Revelation 12:7; 22:16.

Also, there is one instance where the NWT Committee acknowledges not having any agreement with the “J” documents for its use of the divine name, that is, in 1 Corinthians 7:17. Here again it is not clear whether it is Jah, the Father, who is in view. The NWT Reference Bible (1984) refers to 2 Corinthians 10:13 and to Romans 12:3 as support for using “Jehovah” in this text, and it very well could be a reference to Jah for in 2 Corinthians 10:13 Paul refers to a certain “territory” that “God” has “apportioned” to him and to others, and in Romans 12:3 he refers to “God” who ‘distributes a measure of faith.’ But in the text of 1 Corinthians 7:17 Paul speaks of “the Lord” who gives each one a “portion” so he or she can “walk as God has called him [or her].” Further, in

view of the distinction between “God” and the “Lord” whom God raised up from the dead in 1 Corinthians 6:14, together with the teaching that the Lord (Jesus), God, and the holy spirit are said to have authority over various “gifts,” “ministries,” and “operations” in 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, the identity of “the Lord” in 1 Corinthians 7:17 is not clear.

The fact that my conclusions on this matter point to fewer uses of the divine name in the NT than we presently find in the NWT does not mean that the NWT Committee did not have their reasons for using the divine name 237 times; they did have some reasons. The point here is simply this: the basis for using the divine name in the NT should be open to as few questions as possible, since we do not have the original NT manuscripts at our disposal. But, setting aside the uses of *Ia* (*YaH* [“Jah”]) in Revelation 19, compared to the 79 quotations of OT divine-name-containing texts the other 158 uses of the divine name in the NTWNT are not based on the best available reasons. In fact, again, in many instances the identity of the “Lord” in some of the “Jehovah” texts in the NWTNT may very well be the Lord Jesus Christ. While on some exegetical level it may be appropriate to identify Jesus as Jah (see Chapters 2 and 4), the NWT Committee did not believe this identification was appropriate and so they made a decision about the identity of the “Lord” in these 158 NT texts that is disputable for good reasons.

By not making clear the different reasons for each instance of the divine name in its NT, the NWT Committee exposed the use of the divine name in the NT to warranted criticism, namely, that the basis for the NWT's use of the divine name in the 158 instances listed in the last three columns of figure 1.2 (the OT ‘actions of Jehovah’ texts, the ‘contextual Jehovah references,’ and the “J”-document-guided texts) does not outweigh the testimony of the available NT witnesses. However, since the NWT translators have gone to great lengths to help their readers understand the basis for their use of the divine name in these 158 instances, providing a substantial amount of relevant data in footnotes, in forewords, and in appendices, then the Committee cannot rightly be spoken of as having attempted to deceive anyone. They simply did not make good choices for their use of “Jehovah” in a good number of instances in the NWTNT.

Though the NWT Committee may have gone too far in using the divine name in the NT (since a number of such passages could very well apply to someone other than to Jah of the OT), the NWT Committee certainly has done more than any other Bible translation when it comes to explaining the importance of using the divine name. It also uses the divine name in at least 79 but possibly in as many as 93 or even 154 NT texts where there are in fact very good reasons to use it.

The Meaning of God’s Name

What do names tell us? Really, though, even if we were to find a manuscript of the New Testament containing the divine name (that is, other than the form *Ia* used in Revelation 19), would most Bible translators today use it? After all, no one disputes the appearance of the divine name in the OT nearly 7,000 times. Yet, consider how few modern translations give the divine name its rightful place there. As we have already discussed, the fact that we may no longer know the original pronunciation of the divine name used by Moses and others is not a good reason to avoid using the name altogether. Nowhere does the Bible say that ancient Hebrew names, including God’s name, must be pronounced in one specific way. In short, *there is no legitimate, scriptural reason to avoid using some form of the divine name found in the Hebrew Scriptures.*

When it comes to making known the name of God that appears thousands of times in the OT, Dr. Robert Countess criticizes Jehovah’s Witnesses’ use of John 17:6, 26, believing that these two scriptures are understood by the Witnesses to mean that Jesus restored the true pronunciation of the divine name.¹⁸⁵ But such is not the case. While Jehovah’s Witnesses do believe that Jesus’ words here involve the *use* of the divine name, they also believe that by using a form of this name Jesus was “revealing the Person it represents ... enabling persons to know or experience

¹⁸⁵ Countess, *The Jehovah’s Witnesses’ New Testament*, pages 31-32.

what God's name stands for (Mt 11:27; Joh 1:14, 18; 17:6-12)."¹⁸⁶

The word "name" is used in the Bible to refer to the character of a person (for example, Deuteronomy 22:14, 19; Ruth 4:11; Nehemiah 9:10 ['reputation']; Job 18:17; Ecclesiastes 7:1). But it is also quite regularly used in reference to the actual name of someone, such as when reference is made to 'calling on the name of Jehovah' (compare Genesis 4:26; 12:8; 13:4; 16:13; 21:33; and many others). Regarding the former use of the word "name," consider 1 Samuel 25:25 where Abigail pleads with David: "Please do not let my lord set his heart upon this good-for-nothing man Nabal [meaning, 'senselessness'], for, *as his name is, so is he. Nabal is his name, and senselessness is with him*" (emphasis added). This account shows a clear difference but also a close association between the actual name of a person and the person's character.

It is likely that a difference existed between the northern and southern dialects of the ancient Jewish nation,¹⁸⁷ such that

¹⁸⁶ *Insight on the Scriptures*, vol. 2 (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1988), page 72. In this publication, on page 467, we are also told: "When Jesus Christ was on earth, he 'made his Father's name manifest' to his disciples. (Joh 17:6, 26) Although having earlier known that name and being familiar with God's activities as recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures, these disciples came to know Jehovah in a far better and grander way through the One who is 'in the bosom position with the Father' (Joh 1:18)."

¹⁸⁷ Millard, "YW and YHW," page 312, argues as follows:

In order to deal with the problem of variation between *yw* and *yhw* as initial elements of Hebrew names in the Old Testament, an equally detailed study of the final elements *yh*, *yhw*, *yw* is needed, embracing both the Biblical and epigraphic records. ... The opposition *-yh* : *-yhw* may be no more than scribal inconsistency. ... The seals bearing names ending in *yw* and *yhw* are so similar in form and style of lettering to those bearing names commencing with the same elements that it would be impossible to adopt a higher date for one group than for the other.

In view of this variation it is possible that the divine name was pronounced differently in the northern kingdom than it was in the southern kingdom. If such a difference did exist then this would further suggest that there was no singularly precise way to pronounce the divine name even in ancient times, but that location and dialect produced acceptable variations in its pronunciation. Thus, no one today could rightly be faulted for using a less-than-precise pronunciation as language, dialect, location, and time have similarly affected our pronunciation. As long as we base our pronunciation on the best available evidence, whatever pronunciation we use in our native language should be acceptable.

“Nabal” could have had a dignified meaning in one dialect and a negative association in another. The dignified meaning was no doubt intended by his parents, for they likely would not have named their son “senselessness”! When his personality became manifest, however, his wife used the other, more derogatory meaning of his name in reference to him.¹⁸⁸ This is but one example in the Hebrew Scriptures where the meaning of a person’s name is directly linked with his or her character. But the name itself is crucial to the understanding of the person’s character, and it still exists separately as an actual name.

If God’s own revelation of the meaning of his name is also directly related to his character, then would it not be a careless and horrible mistake to conclude that Jesus could have made his Father’s name (his character) known without using the very name that is bound together with his Father’s character? Jesus’ use of the word “name” in verses like John 17:6 can no more be limited to character (that is, apart from a knowledge of a person’s actual name) than a reference to Jesus’ own “name” (his character) could be made without a knowledge of his God-given name, which name itself reveals what kind of person he is or would become, namely, one who ‘saves his people from their sins.’—Matthew 1:21.

Countess believes that since there is no record in the NT of Jesus’ accusers citing his use of the divine name as blasphemy then that means Jesus did not use the divine name.¹⁸⁹ If true, then this argument from silence would only apply to those occasions where Jesus taught in the presence of those seeking to condemn him. But as William Arnold points out: “The mere utterance of the name, apart from perjury, cursing, or blasphemy, was indeed at no time a criminal offense; but it soon came to be considered a

¹⁸⁸ In a similar vein, we may note that the word “Satan” may not have been the name given to this spirit being by Jah before Satan deceived Eve (Gen 3:1-5). Either this came to be his name after his actions made it a fit description of his character and disposition as a “resister,” or it was his name all along and it simply took on a new meaning after he ‘resisted’ Jah’s will and purpose.

¹⁸⁹ Countess, *The Jehovah’s Witnesses’ New Testament*, page 31.

ritual sin, punishable by God though not by man.”¹⁹⁰ Arnold's observations are consistent with the information presented on pages 4-7 of this chapter, namely, that there is no clearly stated biblical law or established ancient practice by the Jews in general prior to 200 CE, against the use of the divine name in worship or in social situations with others. There are only biblical laws and, hence, potentially only a general Jewish practice against certain *misuses* of the name. Any other prohibition concerning the use of the divine name does not have any explicit biblical support.

Jehovah's Witnesses and the Christian Witnesses of Jah believe that Jesus not only used his Father's name when quoting the OT text where the divine name occurs (for example, in Luke 4:17-18), but we also believe that he made known God's character by his use of the name when teaching about Jah. For example, Jesus made it plain that the Father was doing his works through the Son (John 14:10) thereby causing his own purposes to be fulfilled in connection with his anointed one (Luke 4:18-21). As David confronted the God-dishonoring Goliath “with the name of Jehovah of armies,” so Jesus “came in the name of [his] Father,”

¹⁹⁰ William R. Arnold, “The Divine Name in Exodus iii. 14,” *JBL* 24 (1905), page 135. In this same article, in his notes 33 and 34, Arnold observes:

According to *b. Aboda Zara* 17 *b*, under Roman rule in the second century A.D. Rabbi Hanina ben Teradion was burned at the stake, his wife executed, and his daughter condemned to a life of shame, for no other cause than that the Rabbi had pronounced the ineffable name in public hearing. But the ground alleged for the outrage is rejected even by those who accept as historical all the other details of the Talmudic story. ... In Mishna, *Berachoth*, ix. 5, there is no talk of the utterance of the word יהוה [Jehovah]. The question there is merely whether one shall or shall not use the divine name in ordinary salutation.

In *Sanhedrin* 7.5 we are told, “*He who blasphemes is liable only when he will have fully pronounced the divine Name*” (Jacob Neusner, *The Mishnah: A New Translation* [New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1988], page 597 [emphasis added]). Of course, this by no means establishes that an inaccurate understanding of Lev 24:11 (see above, page 5, note 7) would have been used by Jesus' enemies in the first century CE. Additionally, *Sotah* 7.6 informs us, “In the sanctuary one says the Name as it is written but in the provinces, with a euphemism.” This seems to imply the preservation of an accepted pronunciation of the divine name, and it specifically indicates its use by the priests. Of course, this cannot be considered definitive in terms of establishing the use of the divine name in the first century CE. But it does show that even the compilers of the Mishnah (200 CE) acknowledged that the priests pronounced the divine name “as it is written.”

bringing the good news of God’s kingdom and hope for all mankind.—Luke 4:43; John 5:43.

To suggest that Jesus came “in the name of [his] Father” without ever using the Father’s name, a name that is found in the OT nearly 7,000 times and that occurred in the biblical text that Jesus read to others, is not a suggestion that is based on the best available evidence. The character of a person is connected with that person’s name, and so where one is made known (either the character or the actual name of the person) the other is also revealed.

What meaning is associated with the divine name in the Bible? It is often believed that the tetragrammaton, *YHWH*, is related to the Hebrew verb “to be,” which is הָיָה (*hayah*). Such a view is usually presented with the belief that while the tetragrammaton contains the Hebrew letter *waw* (ו), originally so did the Hebrew verb *hayah* (which would be *hawah* [הוה]). Later, however, the *waw* was “replaced by a ך [yod] in the verb היה [*hayah*] with which the [divine] name is connected—a change that took place long before the time of Moses.”¹⁹¹ But it may also be the case that the tetragrammaton is not related etymologically to the verb *hay/wah*, at all. God’s name can still be filled with meaning without having to derive its meaning from a particular Hebrew verb.

Nevertheless, some scholars and others still believe that the name of God, the tetragrammaton, is derived from the Hebrew verb *hayah* which is used, for example, in Exodus 3:14. Here, together with verse 13, Moses speaks to God with the words: “Suppose I am now come to the sons of Israel and I do say to them, ‘The God of your forefathers has sent me to you,’ and they do say to me, ‘What is his name?’ What shall I say to them?” Jehovah then responds to Moses with the Hebrew expression, *’ehyeh ’asher ’ehyeh* (NWT: “I shall prove to be what I shall prove to be”). The Greek translation often referred to as the Septuagint or LXX

¹⁹¹ Raymond Abba, “The Divine Name Yahweh,” *JBL* 80.4 (December, 1961), page 322.

renders this expression with the words, *ego eimi ho on* (ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὄν ["I am the Being (the *ho on*)" or "I am the One who is"]).

It is understandable, therefore, why some early and late writers on the subject of God's name have connected its meaning with the verbal ideas expressed in Exodus 3:14. In this light, consider again what was presented earlier (page 43, note 66) in connection with the meaning and the pronunciation of the divine name from the writings of Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-c. 220 CE): "Further, the mystic name of four letters which was affixed to those alone to whom the adytum was accessible, is called Jave [Ἰαοὺ, *Iaou*], which is interpreted, 'Who is and shall be' [ὁ ὄν καὶ ὁ ἐσόμενος, *ho on kai ho esomenos*]." ¹⁹²

Whether or not the divine name means "who is and who shall be" because it is derived from the same verb used in the Hebrew of Exodus 3:14 or because Jah's response to Moses closely relates his name to the expression *'ehyeh 'asher 'ehyeh* (a variation of which is given by Clement that seems to be related to both the Hebrew and the Greek texts of Exodus 3:14), is impossible to know for a certainty. The divine name could mean "who is and who shall be" simply because that is one of the meanings that God himself gave to his name when he spoke to Moses in Exodus 3. As Harris observes:

Why base anything on the expression, "I will be what I will be," whether it is *hiphil* or *qal* or imperfect or participle (as some have suggested), if the Name may not have any etymological connection with the verb anyhow? We ought to be delivered at last from the endless debate as to whether the name means "be," "create," "will be," "will become," "will be present," etc. It may mean none of these things. ... As to the meaning, the Name is explained in the entire Old Testament. He is creator, redeemer, sovereign, holy, a God of love, merciful, gracious, long-suffering, and much more. The Name is explained by the attributes of God revealed in his Word. ¹⁹³

¹⁹² *The Stromata*, ANF 2, Book 5, chap. 6, page 452.

¹⁹³ Harris, "The Pronunciation of the Tetragram," pages 222-223. See Buchanan, "Some Unfinished Business with the Dead Sea Scrolls," pages 417-418, and especially the discussion on pages 12-20 of Barry J. Beitzel, "Exodus 3:14 and the Divine Name:

Those attributes certainly include what is said to Moses in Exodus 3:14, but there it is not certain that this is because of any derivation of the tetragrammaton or any form of the divine name from the verb *hayah*, which is the verb from which *’ehyeh* (in this context, likely something along the lines of “I will be”) derives. It is enough to know that the things that are said about Jah in the OT are what we should associate with the use of his name, even if we do not know what it is that the name means etymologically. But since what is said in Exodus 3:14 is so powerfully connected with the meaning of God’s name and with the revelation of his person to the people of Israel, let us look closer at the meaning of *’ehyeh ’asher ’ehyeh* before concluding this chapter.

The translation and the meaning of Exodus 3:14. We have already introduced this text, the question by Moses, and the response by Jah, which response we then compared in both Hebrew (*’ehyeh ’asher ’ehyeh*) and in the Greek LXX (*ego eimi ho on*). With this in mind, the following questions naturally arise: What is the meaning of the Hebrew expression? Is the LXX reading an accurate representation of the meaning of the Hebrew expression? What does the Greek translation mean?

Instead of looking outside of the text and going beyond its historical and grammatical contexts, our “primary understanding of Exodus 3:14 should come, rather, from a contextual understanding of the passage as well as from an analysis of the meaning and usage of the Hebrew term הָיָה [*hayah*, ‘to be (exist)’ or ‘to come to be’¹⁹⁴] and its imperfect form הִיְיָהוּ [‘*ehyeh*].”¹⁹⁵ The immediate

A Case of Biblical Paronomasia,” *Trinity Journal* 1 NS (1980), where Beitzel refers to the “veritable kaleidoscope of etymological speculation” ranging from a Sumerian, Egyptian, Akkadian, Indo-European, Hurrian, and other language etymologies (page 12). Beitzel also notes that attempts to associate the tetragrammaton with the verb *hayah* involve “a hypothetical antique verb” *hawah*, which does not occur in any “West Semitic languages which antedate the Mosaic era” (pages 15, 16). “Paronomasia” involves a play on words of one sort or another.

¹⁹⁴ Abba, “The Divine Name Yahweh,” page 328, note 62, cites the view of A.B. Davidson, namely, that *hayah* “corresponds not to εἶναι [*einai*, ‘to be’ or ‘to exist’] but to γίνεσθαι [*ginesthai*, ‘to become’ or ‘to come to be’],” meaning that “the expression ‘I will be’ is an historical formula referring, not to the nature of God, but to what he will show himself to be to his covenant people.” M.F. Burnyeat, “Platonism in the Bible: Numenius of Apamea on *Exodus* and Eternity,” in *The Revelation of the*

and the broader contexts of Exodus 3:14 help us appreciate how we can understand the use of *'ehyeh* in this text. Gianotti writes:

God's manifestation to Israel is yet future at the time of the burning bush incident. This יהוה [*'ehyeh*] is God's promise that He will redeem the children of Israel. The people were in great need. They needed not so much to know the facts about God's character or that He was simply a covenant God present in their time of need, but to be reassured that this God would meet them in their time of need, proving true His character and promises. This in fact constitutes what God promised Moses in Exodus 3:12, namely, that God would be present and working on Moses' behalf in the difficult task ahead. Surely nothing less would have encouraged Moses to go. ... Whatever the situation or need (in particular, the redemption from Egypt, but also future needs) God will "become" the solution to that need.¹⁹⁶

Many Trinitarians have connected the translation of the first *'ehyeh* in Exodus 3:14 by *ego eimi* in the LXX with the use of *ego eimi* in the NT by Jesus (for example, in John 8:58). Their arguments on this and related points will be considered in Chapter 3. Here it is enough simply to note that the context of Exodus 3:14 "hardly warrants the suggestion that ἐγώ εἰμι [*ego eimi*] functions alone as the divine name, since here it is not alone (compare Exod. 6.7; 7.5; 20.1[2])."¹⁹⁷ Again, the LXX reads, ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὢν (*ego*

Name YHWH to Moses: Perspectives from Judaism, the Pagan Graeco-Roman World, and Early Christianity, George H. van Kooten, ed. (Leiden: Brill, 2006), page 147, note 27, refers to an interesting "variant translation given by Hippolytus [c. 170-235 CE] in his account of a self-styled Gnostic sect, the Naasenes: γίνομαι ὃ θέλω καὶ εἰμι ὃ εἰμί [*ginomai ho thelo kai eimi ho eimi*, 'I will become who/what I choose/will and I am who/what I am'] ... The first clause comes close to 'I will be what I will be', which knowledgeable colleagues tell me is the meaning of the original."

¹⁹⁵ Charles Gianotti, "The Meaning of the Divine Name YHWH," *BSac* 39 (January-March 1985), page 42.

¹⁹⁶ Gianotti, "The Meaning of the Divine Name YHWH," page 46.

¹⁹⁷ Margaret Davies, *Rhetoric and Reference in the Fourth Gospel* (JSNTSup 69; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), page 85. See also J. Wash Watts, *A Survey of Syntax in the Hebrew Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), page 67, who observes:

The argument that has continued for two millennia over the translation of that verse in the Septuagint [Ex 3:14] and over the part it has played in the English translation 'I

eimi ho on, “I am the Being” or “I am the One who is”), identifying God as the *ho on*, not as the *ego eimi*.

There are good reasons, however, for rejecting the LXX’s rendering as an accurate representation of the Semitic thought conveyed by *’ehyeh ’asher ’ehyeh* in Exodus 3:14, which thought is in the NWT expressed as, “I shall prove to be what I shall prove to be.” The translation found in many other English versions assumes a present meaning for *’ehyeh ’asher ’ehyeh* that is not well founded. As Charles Gianotti points out, a present reading such as “I am that I am” is “unjustified in light of the imperfect form, אֶהְיֶה [’ehyeh], used in Exodus 3:14.” Gianotti also notes Bernhardt’s observation that the imperfect form of this verb never has present meaning but that, for this, the perfect form is used. Gianotti concludes: “Significantly, most interpreters translate אֶהְיֶה in Exodus 3:12 as future (i.e., ‘I will be [אֶהְיֶה] with you’). Yet, two verses later, why should not the same translation suffice?”¹⁹⁸

Another way of looking at the meaning of the Hebrew text, one that also considers the reading of the LXX and the infrequent but possible present meaning of *’ehyeh* is as follows:

The form of the verb that is nowadays called in Hebrew ‘imperfect’ or ‘future’ could signify any tense, past, present, and future, and this is how it was already understood in the first centuries CE in *Shemot* or *Exodus Rabba* 3.6 by Rabbi Isaac who said: ‘God said to Moses: Tell them that I am now what I always was and always will be’; for this reason the word אֶהְיֶה [*’ehyeh*] is written three times.¹⁹⁹

am what I am’ or ‘I am that I am’ has surely confirmed the charge that ‘I am’ is not a proper translation for a Hebrew imperfect. ... In view of the strong emphasis in the early verses of the chapter upon Yahweh’s keeping of his promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the second imperfect could be a repetition of this great truth. ... a statement of Yahweh’s faithfulness so brief as to be amazing and so meaningful as to be inspiring.

¹⁹⁸ Gianotti, “The Meaning of the Divine Name YHWH,” page 42. I should point out, however, as does Gianotti (page 50, note 32), that Bernhardt “admits to a possibility of a present tense rendering in Ruth 2:13, but agrees that otherwise the meaning is always future.” I would add to Ruth 2:13 the possibility of a present meaning for *’ehyeh* in Job 12:4 and Job 17:6.

¹⁹⁹ Wout Jac. van Bekkum, “What’s in the Divine Name? Exodus 3 in Biblical and Rabbinic Tradition,” in *The Revelation of the Name YHWH to Moses: Perspectives*

Whether this was the understanding of the Hebrew word *'ehyeh* or the meaning of the expression *'ehyeh 'asher 'ehyeh* in the first century CE or earlier by Jews and by early Christians there is an interesting potential parallel to a similar understanding of the Judeo-Christian God in Revelation 1:4. Here the NWT reads (together with verse 5):

May YOU have undeserved kindness and peace from “The One who is [ὁ ὢν, *ho on*] and who was [ὁ ἦν, *ho en*] and who is coming [ὁ ἐρχόμενος, *ho erkhomenos*],” and from the seven spirits that are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, “the Faithful Witness,” “The firstborn from the dead,” and “The Ruler of the kings of the earth.”

In addition to the verbal concepts of ‘being,’ ‘having been,’ and ‘coming,’ which are similar in at least two respects to the verbal concepts that Clement of Alexandria associated with the divine name (again, ‘who is and who shall be’ [ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἐσόμενος, *ho on kai ho esomenos*]), what is also interesting about Revelation 1:4 is the fact that, as it reads in our present collection of Greek manuscripts, it requires that we take the nominatives translated “the one who is,” “the one who was,” and “the one who is coming” as objects of a preposition (ἀπὸ, *apo* [“from”]). On the other hand, the prepositional objects “Jesus Christ” and “the seven spirits” are in the expected genitive case. As Shaw points out, “I think we would be hard pressed to find many nominatives used as objects of prepositions, since this is esp[ecially] harsh grammatically.”²⁰⁰

What is more, each of the genitives “Jesus Christ” and “the seven spirits” *have modifiers!* In other words, the genitive case “Jesus Christ” is the object of the preposition “from,” as is the genitive case object “the seven spirits.” “Genitive” in this case means simply the common grammatical form that objects of this preposition take in Greek. But both of them are modified further

from *Judaism, the Pagan Graeco-Roman World, and Early Christianity*, George H. van Kooten, ed. (Leiden: Brill, 2006), page 7.

²⁰⁰ Shaw, “The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of Ἰαω,” page 173, note 87.

by “the Faithful Witness,” “the firstborn from the dead,” and “the Ruler of the kings of the earth” (for “Jesus Christ”). “The seven spirits” are modified by the relative clause “that are before his throne.” In this light, Shaw appropriately asks, “Isn’t it likely then that the first instance originally had something comparable?”²⁰¹

“Something comparable” in this case would have to be either a genitive case object of the preposition “from” (such as the word “God” [Greek: θεοῦ or τοῦ θεοῦ]) or “a tetragram in ‘Aramaic’ or paleo-Hebrew script or an instance of Iαω”!²⁰² If “God” originally stood as the genitive object of “from,” then it is not clear why it was removed. But based on the treatment of the divine name in Christian copies of the LXX and (possibly) the NT, it is easy to see how the divine name could also have stood as the object of “from” in Revelation 1:4, and then later the name was removed leaving the nominatives “the one who is,” “the one who was,” and “the one who is coming” as the objects of the preposition. This is very strange indeed, because based on the grammatical structure of the text these nominatives should more appropriately be modifiers of another object (such as the divine name, or even “God” or “Lord”), similar to what we see in this very text with “Jesus Christ” and with “the seven spirits.”

Thus, we not only find in Revelation 1:4 a further association of meaning for the name of God that is similar to what we read in Exodus 3:14 and in early writers such as Clement of Alexandria, but we have grammatical evidence for yet another occurrence of the divine name in the NT, this time apart from any quotation of an OT divine-name-containing text. Why, though, do we find *ho on* (“the one who is”) used both as an apparent translation of *’ehyeh* in Exodus 3:14 and associated with God or with the name of God in Revelation 1:4, 8, when *’ehyeh* by most accounts and according to regular usage means “I will be”?

It should be remembered that the LXX was not the only Greek translation completed by Jews and available for use during the first and following centuries CE. For example, in the

²⁰¹ Shaw, “The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of Iαω,” page 172.

²⁰² Shaw, “The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of Iαω,” page 173.

translation of Aquila (followed by Theodotion) we do not find *ho on* as a translation of *'ehyeh* in Exodus 3:14, but rather ἔσομαι ὅς ἐσομαι (*esomai hos esomai*, “I will be what/who I will be”)! As I noted earlier, this is the same verb used by Clement of Alexandria (in addition to *ho on*) when explaining the meaning of the divine name. So it is right that we ask which translation is correct, or which is a more accurate representation of the Hebrew text.

The translations of Aquila and Theodotion certainly seem to follow more closely the structure of the Hebrew text, in that there is a clearer correspondence between the two *'ehyehs* and the relatives *'asher* and *hos*, whereas there is no relative in the LXX reading. It may have been that the LXX translators were simply “faced with making sense out of a sentence which would be a tautology [to a Greek mind] if rendered literally.”²⁰³ It should be remembered, as we discussed earlier in this chapter, that during the time the LXX was translated in the early third century BCE the Jews in many respects had become thoroughly Hellenized. Gianotti explains:

It is relatively easy to imagine the backslidden Jews, a few hundred years after the Exile, having lost touch with the character and nature of their God YHWH. In such a condition

²⁰³ John W. Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Exodus* (SBLSCS 30; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), page 33. Arnold, “The Divine Name in Exodus iii. 14,” pages 126-127, writes: “The Greek rendering of אֶהְיֶה [*'ehyeh*] ὁ ὢν [*ho on*], introduces a concept as foreign to the Hebrew mind as it is to the Hebrew verb. ... Thus the Hebrew for *I am that I am* is not אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה [*'ehyeh 'asher 'ehyeh*], nor does it differ from that clause only in the matter of the tense of the verb. A nominal instead of a verbal sentence is required. The Hebrew for *I am that I am* is אֲנִי אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי [*'ani 'asher 'ani*], just as *I am he* is אֲנִי הוּא [*'ani hu*]. The Imperfect אֶהְיֶה [*'ehyeh*] can only [or, more accurately, almost always seems to] mean *I am in the act of becoming*, or *I will become*, or *I will be* ... In no way can it be rendered *I am*. ... אֶהְיֶה [*'ehyeh*] in this sentence can only mean *I will be* or *become (something)* ... Not merely the most natural, then, but the necessary construction of אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה [*'ehyeh 'asher 'ehyeh*], is *I will be what I will be*. So much for the literal meaning of the Hebrew clause.” Before Arnold, S.R. Driver, *A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew*, 3d. ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1892), page 43, sec. 38, note 1, showed his preference for the translation, “I will be that I will be.”

they would have been influenced by a popular view of the nature of deity as propagated in their environment.²⁰⁴

Rather than look solely to the LXX translation of Exodus 3:14 for meaning of the divine name, we should consider its historical context, give attention to the likely meaning of the Hebrew text, evaluate other Greek translations and understandings of it (such as those given by Aquila, Theodotion, and Clement of Alexandria), and then look to the rest of the Bible to give us a more complete understanding of the name, as we appear to have in Revelation 1:4, 8. If we do this, then our understanding of Jah’s name will be one that is not only more accurate, but it will be one that brings us closer to the one whose name has been kept from so many for far too long, and for no good reasons at all.

If the divine name was removed from Revelation 1:4, for which a grammatical argument can be made, then it may be that what is there said about God as the *ho on* was also influenced by the same philosophy that appears to have infected the LXX translators of Exodus 3:14. Such thinking is likely also what led to a later Trinitarian view of the biblical “one God,” a view that, as I will show in Chapter 2, is not based on any good reasons, just as the refusal to use or to pronounce the name of the biblical God are also practiced today without any good reasons at all.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has been written to defend the use of “Jehovah” by Jehovah’s Witnesses and others, and to show that there are no legitimate reasons whatsoever for anyone who expresses faith in

²⁰⁴ Gianotti, “The Meaning of the Divine Name YHWH,” page 43. Alexander MacWhorter, “Jehovah Considered as a Memorial Name,” *BSac* 14 (1857), page 111, with direct reference to Exodus 3:14 asks, “May not the Septuagint have given us, instead of the historical YAHVEH, God of the Scriptures, the philosophical Θεός, or ‘God,’ of Plato, and the school of Alexandria?” Also, L.M. Pákozdy, “I shall be that which I shall be,” *BT* 7.4 (October 1956), page 147, observes, “The translation ‘I am that I am’ is weakened by its very origin which appears in the LXX and betrays obviously the influence of Hellenistic philosophy of religion with its central idea of the deity as the absolutely independent Being.”

the biblical God, to at the same, time fail or refuse to pronounce or use his name. The best available evidence shows that “Jehovah” is not the result of a scribal application of vowel points from the Hebrew word for “Lord” to the tetragrammaton, the four-letter form of the divine name (יהוה [YHWH]). The best evidence for the pronunciation of the divine name shows us that “Yahweh” is an inaccurate transliteration based on very weak evidence relating to a reported Samaritan pronunciation preserved through Greek sources that explicitly contrasts it with the reported Jewish pronunciation (in Greek, *Ia*), which comes from the two-letter form of the divine name in Hebrew, *Yah* (יה [YH]). In English this form is Anglicized as “Jah.”

“Jah” is both a stand-alone name for the biblical God and it is used as part of other proper names in- and outside of the Bible. “Jah” also appears in the Greek text of Revelation 19 four times as part of the expression, “Praise Jah!” The Christian Witnesses of Jah accept “Jah” as the least disputed form and pronunciation of all forms of the divine name. But the pronunciations “Jehovah” and “Jaho,” and even certain variations of these forms, are also appropriate for they are also based on good reasons. Though there are always certain limitations when it comes to representing one or more letters or sounds from one language into another, exact correspondence between names in Hebrew, Greek, or in other languages is not something the Bible itself requires of those who would praise God’s name. The best available evidence is enough, and when it is considered then “Yahweh” does not measure up in any meaningful way to the forms *Ye/aho/uwah*, *Ye/aho/u*, or *Yah*. These forms are appropriately represented in English, respectively, as “Jehovah” (or “Jehovah,” “Jahovah” or “Jahuvah”), “Jaho” (or “Jehu,” “Jeho” or “Jahu”), and “Jah.”

While “Jah” clearly represents a unique name of the biblical God, the four-letter form of the divine name represented frequently today as “Jehovah,” in English, may also simply be another way of representing the three-letter form of the divine name that occurs as part of biblical names and which stands alone in ancient Aramaic, Jewish papyri. The three-letter form of the divine name (יה [YHW]) is also represented in ancient historical and biblical texts by the Greek transliteration *Iao*, which is itself used in several early

historical, onomastic, and other sources as the name of the Jewish God. Further, Jerome (see page 41, note 63) wrote that the four-letter form of the divine name is properly pronounced as “Iaho,” which corresponds to the Greek transliteration *Iao* and to the three-letter Hebrew/Aramaic form of the divine name. But since today “Jaho” is not as well represented as “Jehovah” or “Jah,” it is time to give it a more enduring place among the possible pronunciations of the biblical God’s name, based as it is on good, if not the best, available evidence.

Use of the divine name in the text of the Bible is incontestable when it comes to the OT, and there are good reasons for believing that the NT writers used the divine name when they quoted OT divine-name-containing texts, and possibly even when they did not (Revelation 1:4). God’s name is definitely used four times in Revelation 19:1, 3, 4, and 6. Its apparent replacement by Christian scribes with sacred name abbreviations known as *nomina sacra* (for example, $\overline{\kappa\zeta}$, for the Greek word for “Lord”) is consistent with the use of similar, apparently Jewish abbreviations (like the double *yod* in P.Oxy. vii. 1007 with a line through it [$\overline{\text{Y}}\overline{\text{Y}}$]). Yet, both surrogates avoid use of the name in a manner consistent with Greek philosophical beliefs found in Philo, Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, and others, all of whom present unbiblical views about God and his name.—Psalm 44:20.

Though there are no good reasons supporting non-use of a form of the divine name in translations of the OT, many today still argue that (Revelation 19 aside) the earliest available NT manuscripts are in fact the best available evidence, and they support the use of “Lord” or “God” (whether abbreviated sacredly or not) in the NT today. But this belief often ignores significant historical facts regarding the use and subsequent removal of the divine name from Greek OT texts sometime after the first century CE. The evidence shows that this took place during the very same time when the earliest available NT documents were being copied and transmitted. This makes the earlier Greek OT manuscript evidence available today, *better* for use in determining what the original NT writers actually used. There are good reasons for believing that those individuals or groups who surrogated the divine name in later OT Greek texts did the same thing (at least for

OT quotations) to the NT, all of which was apparently done for the same Greek philosophical reasons. But these are not good reasons for believing that the NT writers themselves began or continued a practice of surrogating the divine name when quoting OT divine-name-containing texts. Further, few if any translators today use anything like the sacred name abbreviations used in the earliest available NT manuscripts.

The NWT uses “Jehovah” not only in the OT but also in the NT in 237 instances. Some of these NT uses of the divine name do not have very good reasons supporting them, and in many of them it is not clear whether “Jehovah” of the OT is in fact the intended referent (for example, 1 Corinthians 7:17). Thus, the NWT Committee has gone too far in its use of the divine name in the NT. However, the NWT Committee has done far more than any other Bible translation when it comes to explaining the importance of using the divine name. It also uses the divine name in at least 79 and possibly even in as many as 93 or even 154 NT texts where there are good reasons to use it.

The meaning of God's name has also been clouded, in part because the name itself has been “concealed” in many respects from mankind by those who should have known better. While there are many meanings and attributes associated with the biblical God and with his name, the idea of ‘becoming’ something toward those who are his people, particularly in their time of need, is taught in the account involving Moses and Jah in Exodus 3:14. This idea also appears to be expressed in the verbs that communicate God's having ‘been,’ his ‘being,’ and his ‘coming’ to his people in Revelation 1:4, 8. It is just such texts that give hope to those who worship Jah today apart from the traditions of men, traditions that invalidate Jah's Word, traditions that hide his name, and traditions that obscure the meaning of his name.—Mark 7:13.

But it is not only the use, pronunciation, and meaning of the name that has been controversial for no good reasons, for more than a couple thousand years. Indeed, the identity, even the very nature of Jah God has been misrepresented by many scholars and critics of Jehovah's Witnesses for far too long. So as one of Jehovah's Witnesses, as a Christian Witness of Jah, I now turn to a defense of the biblical God Jah's nature and his identity.