

Yahshua or Yeshua?

What is the True Pronunciation
Of the Messiah's Name?



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***Yahweh's Philadelphia
Truth Congregation***

Sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth. - John 17:17

Among the ranks of Messianic believers there has long been a controversy as to the correct pronunciation of the name of our Savior. Predominately, among Jewish Messianics there is the belief that the Messiah's name is to be pronounced as Yeshua; while among other Messianic believers there is the belief that the Savior should be called Yahshua. Obviously they can't both be right.

Our Savior said in John 17:17, *"Sanctify them in the Truth, your Word is Truth."* It therefore stands to reason that the truth of this matter can be learned by examining the Word of Yahweh.

The Meaning of the Savior's Name

By examining the scriptures we learn that the Israelite leader Joshua had the same name as our Savior. In Hebrews 4:8 it says in the KJV, *"For if J-sus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day."* The context of this passage shows that this is not referring to our Savior, but rather to the Israelite general who took Israel into the Promised Land. This evidence supports the fact that the Messiah and the Joshua had the same name.

All Hebrew names have meaning, and the name of our Savior is no exception. If we look in Matthew 1:21 we learn the meaning of the Messiah's name. Again, we will quote this from the KJV. *"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name J-SUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."* The name of the Messiah means "savior" and its meaning is derived from the Hebrew word for salvation.

Looking now to Hebrew lexicons, we can learn the precise meaning of the Savior's name. The Brown, Driver & Briggs Hebrew Lexicon gives the following definition for the Joshua: *"...Jehovah (Yahweh) is salvation" as a proper noun, masculine:*

- 1) a son of Nun of the tribe of Ephraim and successor to Moses as the leader of the children of Israel; led the conquest of Canaan*
- 2) a resident of Beth-shemesh on whose land the Ark of the Covenant came to a stop after the Philistines returned it*
- 3) a son of Jehozadak and high priest after the restoration*
- 4) the governor of Jerusalem under king Josiah who gave his name to a gate of the city of Jerusalem."*

Notice the underlined section of the quote. The Savior's name means Jehovah, or (more correctly) Yahweh, is salvation.

For a second witness on the meaning of this name we will next go to the Hebrew Lexicon of Strong's Concordance. The definition given here states the following: **#3091, יהושע** ... **from #3068 and #3467: Jehovah-saved; Jehoshua (i.e. Joshua), the Jewish leader: -Jehoshua, Jehoshuah, Joshua. Compare #1954, #3442.**"

This definition verifies our previous definition, plus it reveals the root words of this name. The first root given in Strong's Hebrew Lexicon is **#3068, יהוה** [Yahweh] *Yehovah (yeh-ho-vaw')*; from #1961; (the) self-Existent or Eternal; *Jehovah, Jewish national name of G-d: KJV - Jehovah, the L-rd. Compare #3050, #3069.*"

The second root of the Savior's name is Strong's #3467. This is the Hebrew word for salvation, *"#3467, יָשָׁע, yasha` (yaw-shah'); a primitive root; properly, to be open, wide or free, i.e. (by implication) to be safe; causatively, to free or succor: KJV -at all, avenging, defend, deliver (-er), help, preserve, rescue, be safe, bring (having) salvation, save (-iour), get victory."*

From the Scriptures and from these lexicon definitions we learn that the Savior's name should be translated as, Yahweh is salvation or the salvation of Yahweh.

Yahweh or Adonai?

The name of the Heavenly Father is comprised of four Hebrew letters. For that reason it is referred to as the "Tetragrammaton." It should be pointed out, that when James Strong produced his concordance, the mainstream view among scholars was that the name of the Heavenly Father was Jehovah. Strong, and most scholars of that time, were for the most part, still following the error of the original English translators who had mistakenly incorporated the vowel points occurring in the Hebrew text into the transliteration. These vowel points had been added by the Masoretes to maintain their belief that the Sacred Name should not be spoken. The vowel points that were placed there were for the title Adonai (my L-rd). Traditionally, the Jews read Adonai or Ha Shem (the Name) instead of pronouncing the Name of the Heavenly Father. They believe that "Yahweh" (the Ineffable Name) should not be pronounced because it is too holy. When the reader of the Hebrew Massoretic Text would see the Tetragrammaton, they would be reminded by the vowel points to read Adonai and not Yahweh.

This belief is in direct conflict with what our Savior taught on the subject. He openly proclaimed the Name of the Heavenly Father to His disciples. Consider the following quotes from the Savior's prayer in John chapter 17:

John 17:6> *"I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word."* NASU

John 17:11-12> *"I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are. While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled."* NASU

John 17:26> *"And I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."* NASU

Four times in this prayer our Savior emphasized that He had declared the Name of the Father to His disciples. Obviously, the Messiah did not follow the Jewish tradition concerning the Sacred Name. Scholarship has proven that the name of the Heavenly Father is not Jehovah but that it is Yahweh. (For more information on this important subject, request a copy of the article "What is His Name?")

The Correct Pronunciation

When looking at the various pronunciations offered in the Lexicons, bear in mind that they are based upon the vowel points that were added by the Masoretes several hundred years after the Messiah's death. The Hebrew texts were originally written without vowel points. The vowel points were added by the Masoretes to help preserve the Hebrew pronunciations.

In Marks and Rogers "Handbook to Biblical Hebrew", page 7, we have the following quote: "Originally Hebrew had no written vowels; the following consonants, however, were often used to indicate long vowels: א, נ, ו, י. When the Masoretes introduced their vowel signs, they added their signs to these consonants." Notice that all of the letters which comprise Yahweh's name are listed here.

As was pointed out previously, the Masoretes took certain liberties with the Sacred Name because of their belief that it was too holy to pronounce. For those who are fluent in Hebrew, the vowel points are not necessary for reading or understanding the text. It should be noted that the same "liberties" that were taken with Yahweh's name were also applied to the Savior's name in Hebrew. Because of these corrupted traditions, it is necessary to disregard the vowel points when translating these names. Let's take a look at these names as they appear in the Hebrew text.

We will first consider the name Yahweh. In the Hebrew it is written יהוה. Hebrew is written from right to left. The English transliteration is YHWH. These are four vowel letters. It is not necessary to have vowel points to pronounce this name. The first letter—י yoth, is pronounced as a long Y sound, like the Y in heavy (an ee sound). The second letter—ה hay, is pronounced as a short A sound, like the A in father (an ah sound). The third letter—ו waw, is pronounced as a long U sound, like the OO in food (oo sound). The fourth letter—ה hay, is pronounced as a short E sound, like the E in met (an eh sound). When we put these sounds together we get the correct pronunciation of the Heavenly Father's Name, ee-ah-oo-eh, or as written in English, Yahweh.

The following quote from the *Theological Workbook of the Old Testament* is offered as scholarly proof of what has been previously stated: "Yahweh. The Tetragrammaton YHWH, the L-RD, or Yahweh, the personal name of G-d and his most frequent designation in Scripture, occurring 5321 times in the OT (KJV and ASV, the L-rd, or, in those contexts where the actual title "L-rd" also occurs, G-D, except KJV, Jehovah, in seven passages where the name is particularly stressed (Ex 6:3; Ps 83:18; Isa 12:2; 26:4) or combined with other elements, such as Jehovah Jireh (Gen 22:14; Ex 17:15; Judg 6:24; ASV, consistently Jehovah)..."

The tetragrammaton YHWH is not ordinarily written with its appropriate Hebrew vowels. But that the original pronunciation was YahWeH seems probable, both from the corresponding verbal form, the imperfect of its root..."

Putting the Parts Together

According to the previous definitions, the Savior's name is the combination of two words. In the Strong's Lexicon they are #3068—Yahweh and #3467—salvation. When we look at the Savior's name in Hebrew it is written as יהושע. Again, Hebrew is written from right to left. Take notice of the first three letters of this name—יהו. This is the contracted or abbreviated form of Yahweh's name, pronounced as Yah.

Again we will quote from the *Theological Workbook of the Old Testament* in regard to Yah: "YAH. A contracted form of Yahweh. Occurs fifty times (rendered in English as above, except KJV, Jah, in Ps 68:4, where the name is particularly stressed).

Also numerous proper nouns compounded with shortened forms of the divine name "Yahweh," e.g.: Jehonathan, "Yahweh has given"; "Jonathan," a substitute name for the same person (compare Gen 1:1 with 1 Sam 14:6,8; 2 Sam 17:17,20 with Gen 1:1-2); Jehoshaphat, "Yahweh has judged"; alternatively, "Joshaphat," applied only to two subordinates of David (1 Chron 11:43; 15:24)."

Furthermore, we can site the *Gesenius Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon* on Yah יָה . This authoritative work shows the two forms of Yah as being יָה and יְה . It gives several examples in Hebrew showing how these two forms combine with other words to form proper nouns. Both of these forms are transliterated as Yah.

The Savior's name is one of the many proper nouns in the scriptures that is compounded with the shortened form of Yahweh's name, Yah. In this particular case it combines with the שׁוּעַ form of *yahsa* (salvation). From this evidence we can conclude that the Savior's name must be pronounced as Yahshua and not Yeshua.

These facts take on even greater meaning if we consider the prophetic passage which deals with the Philadelphia Congregation of Revelation chapter three. This is obviously an end-time congregation since in verse ten they are offered protection during the tribulation. *"Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth."* (Revelation 3:10, NASU)

These end-time true worshipers were complimented for not having denied the Savior's name. Yahshua then tells them that He will cause those of the synagogue of Satan to bow before them. *"I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and **have not denied My name.** Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie — I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and make them know that I have loved you."* (Revelation 3:8-9, NASU)

Judaism has for centuries sought to cover up the true pronunciation of Yahweh's name. That same false notion has been perpetuated today by those who insist on using the corrupted form Yeshua rather than using the correct and proper form, Yahshua. Yahshua is truth while Yeshua is error. Our Savior said that His disciples are sanctified by the Truth, John 17:17.

As sincere seekers of truth, let us follow the example of the Philadelphia Congregation and not deny the name of our Savior. Let us choose wisely and use the name that means Yahweh is salvation. HalleluYah!

*All Bible quotes are from the New International Version unless noted otherwise.
The Sacred Names have been inserted.*

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