

In Defense of Jehovah

An Analysis of the Article "FACTS and *MYTHS* About the Sacred Name"

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A magazine entitled *YNCA Light* recently published a five-page article taking me to task for defending the name Jehovah. (The acronym YNCA stands for Yahweh's New Covenant Assembly.) The title of that lead article, published in this year's May-June issue, is "Facts and Myths About the Sacred Name." The article attacks the name Jehovah and maintains that Yahweh is the correct transliteration of the divine name יהוה. The author of this article teaches that Yahweh is a sacred name and is the only name that should be used for the heavenly Father.

Despite the claims of sacred namers, Yahweh is not the correct pronunciation of יהוה. The correct pronunciation is clearly marked more than 6500 times in the Hebrew text. That pronunciation, as transliterated in the King James Version, is Jehovah.

The fact that Jehovah is the correct transliteration of יהוה is revealed by its vowel points. The vowel points that are found in the Masoretic texts are the original vowel points. They were not "borrowed" from Adonai, as the

leaders of Judaism have claimed. This fact is demonstrated in Part II of my study paper *Debunking the Myths of Sacred Namers*. There is no Scriptural or historical evidence to support the transliteration of יהוה as Yahweh. **The teaching that Yahweh is the true pronunciation of יהוה is a complete hoax.**

The author of the *YNCA* article states that he had my study paper in hand when he wrote the article. But instead of addressing the authenticity of the vowel points and other key points, Donald Mansager completely circumvented the issue. What evidence did he present in defense of Yahweh and against Jehovah? The only evidence he offered is contained in two references that are quoted in an inset to the article. Notice:

" 'Judging from Greek transcriptions of the sacred name (ιαβε, iaovai) YHWH ought to be pronounced Yahweh. The pronunciation *Jehovah was unknown in ancient Jewish circles, and is based upon a later misunderstanding of the scribal practice of using the vowels of the word Adonai with the consonants of YHWH.'--**New Catholic Encyclopedia**, 'YAHWEH.'

" 'Jehovah --- 'The English and common European representation, since the 16th century, of the Hebrew divine name יהוה. This word (the "sacred tetragrammaton") having come to be considered by the Jews too sacred for utterance, was pointed in the O.T. by the Masoretes with the vowels (=a, o a) of adonai, as a direction to the reader to substitute ADONAI for the "ineffable name"; ... Students of Hebrew at the Revival of Letters took these vowels as those of the word יהוה (IHUH, JHVH) itself, which was accordingly transliterated in Latin spelling as leHoVa(H), i.e. Iehoua'h. It is now held that the original name was laHUe(H), i.e. Jahve(h, or with the English values of the letters, Yahwe(h...)--**Oxford English Dictionary** " ("Facts and Myths About the Sacred Name," *YNCA Light*, May-June 98, p. 6).

As I documented in Part II of my study paper, God's name did not become too holy to utter--this is a myth of Judaism. Consequently, the pronunciation of יהוה as Jehovah was never lost. Neither did the Masoretes point this name with the vowel markings of the name Adonai--this is another lie of Judaism. Since the pronunciation of God's name was never lost, and the vowel points of יהוה are authentic, Yahweh cannot possibly be the true pronunciation. Anyone wishing to verify these facts may obtain a free copy of the above study paper by writing to the address at the end of this paper.

As the authentic pronunciation of יהוה is Jehovah, where did the name Yahweh come from? A major clue to this question is revealed in the inset to Mansager's article. The Greek transcriptions of the divine name that appear in the first line of this inset are the work of **Greek gnostics** of Alexandria, Egypt, who lived in the second century A.D. Among these gnostics was Clement, one of the early fathers of the Catholic Church.¹

The fact that Clement of Alexandria was a gnostic is no secret. This fact is commonly discussed in works expounding on the early philosophers of Alexandria. Scholars acknowledge that the gnostics obtained the pronunciation *yahweh* from the Samaritans of Palestine and transliterated this pronunciation into Greek.

How ironic! Mansager denounces the name Jesus, which is a transliteration of the Greek *Iesous*, used throughout the Greek New Testament. After rejecting a Greek name for the God of the New Testament, he then sets forth the Greek name **ιαβε** to support Yahweh as the name of the God of the Old Testament! The Greek **ιαβε** is **the only evidence** he presents in support of the pronunciation Yahweh. As his authority, he quotes the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*:

"Judging from Greek transcriptions of the sacred name (ιαβε, iaovai) YHWH ought to be pronounced Yahweh. The pronunciation *Jehovah was unknown in ancient Jewish circles, and is based upon a later misunderstanding of the scribal practice of using the vowels of the word Adonai with the consonants of YHWH."--**New Catholic Encyclopedia**, 'YAHWEH' " ("Facts and Myths About the Sacred Name," *YNCA Light*, May-June, 98, p. 6).

What possible connection does the Greek name **ιαβε** have with the Hebrew name יהוה? Absolutely none, as we will now demonstrate! Evidence of this fact may be found in the *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* under the article יהוה. The assertion that the Greek term **ιαβε**

¹ In his writings, Clement used the Greek word **ιαβε**, which is a transliteration of the Samaritan name *Jabe*. German scholars and theologians used the transliteration *Javhe*. It is from the German transliteration that the Yiddish name Yahweh developed.

preserved Yahweh as the true pronunciation of יהוה is completely

unjustified. As the following material also demonstrates, the connection of $\alpha\beta\epsilon$ with יהוה is very poor scholarship. **There is absolutely no philological link between $\alpha\beta\epsilon$ and יהוה.**

The noted scholar Heinisch points to the weakness of the evidence that $\alpha\beta\epsilon$, i.e., Yahweh, is the pronunciation of יהוה. He writes, "The pronunciation of the divine name as 'Yahweh' **RESTS UPON SAMARITAN TRADITION** as given by Theodoret (fifth century A.D.), also upon evidence given by Clement of Alexandria" (*Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 39, *emphasis added*).

The "evidence" that Mansager offers to support the name **Yahweh** is based on a Greek name that **is known to be of Samaritan origin--not Hebrew!** Why do sacred namers idolize a Samaritan name and hate the Hebrew name Jehovah?

Dr. Ernest L. Martin warned against the use of the Samaritan name Yahweh as early as 1972 when he wrote: "In the theological journal *Oudtestamentische Studien*, vol. 5, pp. 1-29, published by Brill Press, Leiden, Holland, is an excellent article by Professor Eerdmans entitled 'The Name Jahu.' One could hardly do any better than quote from his extensive study on the pronunciation of the tetragrammaton.

'Theodoret said that the Samaritans used the name Jabai ($\text{I}\alpha\beta\alpha$). In the treatise *Quaestiones in Exodus* he wrote this name Jabe ($\text{I}\alpha\beta\epsilon$). **These passages have induced scholars to insert the vowels of the Samaritan Jabe into the original Hebrew consonants, pronouncing Yahweh.** But this is A **MERE GUESS**. It is inconsistent with other passages in Theodoret and lacks historical probability (page 2).'

"Professor Eerdmans continued his article by showing why it is not safe to follow the Samaritan pronunciation:

'Ezra ... introduced a new alphabet, the "square script," to be

used for the sacred literature. The refused Samaritans [their brand of religion was repudiated by Ezra] responded by making another alphabet for their own text of the *Thora*. They built their own temple on Gerizim and had their own priesthood. They thwarted the Jews whenever they could. The Sanhedrin of Jerusalem signaled the time of the great feasts by means of fires in the hills. Since the Samaritans lighted fires at inappropriate times in order to disarrange the Jewish calendar the Sanhedrin had to use messengers. On account of their attitude we may safely assume that the Samaritans had their own [different] pronunciation of the holy name. For this reason **the Samaritan pronunciation should *not* have been regarded [by modern scholars] as evidence for the Jewish pronunciation....'**

"As a result of the above information, Professor Eerdmans continues,

'We learn from these passages that **Theodoret knew the Samaritan pronunciation was *different from the Hebrew***.

'The evidence from other ancient authors is not in favour of the *new-made term Yahweh*, however generally it may be used in textbooks and sermons (pp. 4, 5)."

"Professor Eerdmans' research shows that the modern pronunciation which the scholars borrowed from the Samaritans is probably not correct" ("Did Christ Use Yahweh?" *The Good News*, November-December, 1972, p. 31, *emphasis added*).

The Pagan Origin of Yahweh

It is a well known fact that the Samaritans were transplanted to the land of Israel from the area of ancient Babylonia. What is not well known is their connection with the ancient Amorites and their mutual god Yahweh. The Samaritans were descendants of the ancient Amorites and remained in the region of Babylonia after the collapse of Dynasty I of Babylon. Mari was the name of their kingdom before Dynasty I of Babylon. The god of the ancient Amorites was *yawi*, also variously spelled *yawe*, *yahwi* or *yahweh*. This Amoritic name was one of the many names of Nimrod.

Nimrod was worshiped under different names by various cultures in the Ancient Near East. The Amorites worshiped Nimrod as Yawi and Semiramis as Mari (later known as the Virgin Mary). Nimrod was known as Yareah and Semiramis as Anat or Anath among the ancient Phoenicians. To the ancient Chaldeans, Semiramis was known as Marratu. The ancient Elamite Persians knew her as Mariham, and Horus (her son, whom she claimed was Nimrod reborn) as Jahi. Among the descendants of Aram, the ancient Syrians, Horus was known as Yamm, the serpent-consort of Meri (Semiramis). The ancient Hebrews appropriated God's divine name Adonai and turned it into a sacred name for the worship of Horus. Adonai was said by the ancients to be the most holy of all the sacred names of Horus. Semiramis was known by ancient Israel as Myrrha. The people of Israel worshiped Adonai among the myrtle or myrrha groves, saying that he was the great Achad or Echad--the Only One.

That the name Yahweh is of Amoritic origin is little disputed by scholars. Nor is the fact that the Amoritic name Yahweh has no connection with יהוה, much disputed. Although dictionaries and commentaries still promote Yahweh as the pronunciation of יהוה, it must be remembered that this assertion is based on research that was conducted between fifty and one-hundred years ago. That research was later shown to be faulty and incomplete. Authors of recently published dictionaries and commentaries that continue to promote Yahweh are ignorant of the facts.

That Yahweh cannot possibly be the pronunciation of יהוה is amply demonstrated by the following excerpts from the *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* and the *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. The *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, which is the most prestigious work of its kind in the field of Hebrew studies, rejects all attempts to link Yahweh with יהוה. Notice:

"Early in the modern period, scholars began to try to recover the pronunciation. The form *yahweh* is now accepted almost universally. **The structure and etymology of the name have been much discussed. While NO CONSENSUS EXISTS, the name is generally THOUGHT TO BE a verbal form derived from the root *hwy*, later *hyh* [i.e., the Hebrew verb *hayah*], 'be at hand, exist (phenomenally), come to pass.'** Whether the verb was originally a qal or a hiphil formation is not entirely clear. The

weight of the evidence is on the side of the latter" (*TDOT*, p. 500, *emphasis added*).

Sacred namers boldly assert that the evidence supporting the name Yahweh is "indisputable," as if the whole scholarly world has unequivocally accepted this name as the true pronunciation of יהוה. But Professor Freedman of the University of Michigan, who authored the above article, knows that **scholars have NOT reached a consensus** concerning this supposed pronunciation of יהוה.

As Freedman shows, the pronunciation *yawi* or *yahwi* was used by the ancient Amorites in their idolatrous worship. Notice as well the connection between the worship of Yahweh and that of Dagan, god of the Philistines. In reference to the names of the Amorite deities, he writes, "**The first four are made up of a divine name and a form of the verb *hwy*, and can be normalized as *yahwi-hadd*, *yahwi-il(a)* (twice), and *yahwi-dagan*....**The last name, normalized as *yahwe*, is important because it bears witness to the optional shift of *i* to *e* in Amorite....The second group contains the verbal element *ya-ah-wi*, e.g., *ya-ah-wi-na-si*, *ya-ah-wi-AN*. **These names have been associated with the Tetragrammaton [יהוה] but should probably be derived from the [Amoritic] root *hwy*, 'live,' i.e., *yahwi-nasi* and *yahwi-il(a)*"** (*Ibid.*, pp. 511-512, *emphasis added*).****

Freedman summarizes his discussion of these Amorite names with a remarkable statement. He writes, "**Thus the Amorite [language] contains a verb form remarkably similar to the reconstruction of the Tetragrammaton [יהוה], but THERE IS NO REASON TO 'IDENTIFY' THE TWO**" (*Ibid.*, *emphasis added*).

In other words, there is **NO philological evidence** to support the theoretical link between the verb root *hwy* of the Amoritic language and the Hebrew יהוה. Freedman concludes that if יהוה was derived from any verb stem, whether Hebrew or Amorite, there is no record of such an etymology. Notice:

"In all these archaic poems [Gen. 49, Pss. 78, 68], 'Yahweh' [the presumed pronunciation of יהוה] clearly appears both grammatically and

syntactically as a personal name [a noun]. **Its [supposed] original verbal form and force have left NO TRACE**" (*Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, p. 515, *emphasis added*).

Walter Elwell, writing a few years after the publication of the *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, points out further problems with the proposed derivation of יהוה from a verb stem. He writes, "**The derivation of the tetragrammaton [יהוה] from a verbal root is also beset with certain difficulties.** The root *hwy* on which the tetragrammaton would be based in this view [the theory that יהוה was derived from *hyh*, which in turn was derived from *hwy*] is **UNATTESTED in West Semitic languages before the time of Moses, and the form of the name is NOT CONSONANT WITH THE RULES that govern the formation of *lāmed he[e]*' verbs as we know them**" (Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, s.v. "Names of God," p. 465, *emphasis added*).

Elwell presents one proposed solution to this problem when he writes: "Another suggestion is that it is **a causative participle** with a *y* preformative that should be translated 'Sustainer, Maintainer, Establisher' " (Ibid.).

Freedman, however, shows that the causative of *hwy* is no solution at all when he quotes "the grammatical point observed by Barr that '**the causative of this verb does not occur in Hebrew elsewhere**' (*HDB*, 335,)" (*The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, s.v. "Yahweh," p. 1011, *emphasis added*).

Freedman goes on to show that all theories linking יהוה with a verb stem are based on "theological notions" concerning the meaning of the divine name. He states, "**Arguments favoring particular meanings** have been for the most part grammatical. The name has long been **THOUGHT TO BE a form of the verb *hāwāy*, an older form of the Hebrew verb *hāyāh*, 'to be.'** The reconstructed form *yahwe[e]h* is parsed as either a third-person Qal imperfect of this verb or as the corresponding form of the causative stem. **This analysis is encouraged by THEOLOGICAL NOTIONS of God** [i.e., His name] as one who is, or who exists, or who causes existence. Thus the explanation of Yahweh in Exod 3:14, 'I am who I am,' is a folk etymology based on this verb (*ROTT*, pp. 181-82)" (Ibid., *emphasis added*).

Freedman shows that there is no etymological history to support this view

of יהוה when he states in the same article, "**The meaning of the name is UNKNOWN.**" If scholars do not know the meaning of יהוה--and they admittedly do not--they have no grounds for arguing that this name is derived from the verb roots *hwy* and *hyh*, which eliminates their only possible link between יהוה and Yahweh.

Although much more has been written concerning the "reconstruction" of יהוה as Yahweh, I will conclude with this revealing quote: "**Although Yahweh SEEMS TO BE a PROBABLE pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton...WE CAN ONLY SURMISE that Yahweh is the correct pronunciation**" (Parke-Taylor, *Yahweh: The Divine Name in the Bible*, p. 80, *emphasis added*).

Despite decades of careful research by the world's leading scholars, **not one piece of evidence has been found** to support Yahweh as the correct pronunciation of יהוה. And indeed, no evidence will ever be found to support this theory because there is no philologic connection between יהוה and the Amoritic *yahweh*!

The Hebrew J

Mansager's arguments against the Hebrew name Jehovah are based on two false assertions: (1) that there was no **symbol** for "j" in Biblical Hebrew and (2) that there was no "j" **sound** in Biblical Hebrew. Evidence that these two assertions are false is presented in Part I of the study paper *Debunking the Myths of Sacred Namers*. This paper addresses both the question of the "j" symbol in Biblical Hebrew and the question of the "j" sound in Biblical Hebrew.

Mansager admits that he possessed this study paper when he wrote his article--yet he chose to ignore it. In effect, he deliberately misled his readers, leading them to believe that I presented no evidence to support either the symbol or the sound of "j" in Biblical Hebrew. He thus denied his readers information by which they might make well-informed decisions concerning the authenticity of the name Jehovah. After presenting his one-sided views, Mansager asserts that I have not been honest with *my* audience!

Instead of addressing the question of English phonics in the context of Hebrew phonics, Mansager chose to focus his readers' attention on peripheral elements of English phonics. Let us take a look at the evidence in Part I of *Debunking the Myths of Sacred Namers*, which Mansager ignored:

"Tyndale published his translation of the Pentateuch in the year 1530 A.D. At that time in history, the English alphabet was still developing. Many letters did not represent the same sounds that they do today. You may find it difficult to understand some of the words in the following passage, which is quoted from Tyndale's translation. As you read, you will see that the letter 'v' appears in a number of words that are now spelled with 'u'. Likewise, the letter 'u' appears in the place of 'v'. Another noticeable difference is the use of 'f' in many words that are now spelled with 's'. These differences in spelling illustrate the major changes that have taken place in the English alphabet since Tyndale's day.

"When Tyndale published his translation, a number of letters in the alphabet had only recently been invented and were not yet in common use. Although the symbol 'j' had been invented about 1200 A.D.--three hundred years before Tyndale's time--Tyndale does not use it here in his translation. The capital 'J' was not invented until after Tyndale's translation was made.

"The following example of Tyndale's translation is taken from Exodus 5:18-6:3 (the first and last verses are not completely quoted). This passage in the book of Exodus contains three examples of the use of 'i' before a vowel to represent the consonant sound of 'j'. Notice the use of lowercase 'i' before the vowel "u" in Verse 21 below, and the two uses of uppercase 'I' before the vowels 'a' and 'e' in Verse 3 of the following chapter. In each of these words, 'i' or 'I' represents the sound of 'j'.

" '18 sacrifice vnto the Lorde. Goo therfore and worke, for [Fo. IX.] there fhall no ftrawe be geuen you, and yet fee that ye delyuer the hole tale of brycke.

19 when the officers of the childern of Ifrael fawe them filfe in fhrode cafe (in that he fayde ye fhall minyth nothings of youre dalye makige of

20 brycke) than they mett Mofes and Aaro ftondinge in

21 there waye as they came out fro Pharao, and fayde vnto them: The Lorde loke vnto you and **iudge**, for ye haue made the fauoure of vs ffincke in the fighte of Pharao and of his fervautes, and haue put a fwerde in to their

handes to flee vs.

22 Mofes returned vnto the Lorde and fayde: Lorde wherfore dealeft thou cruelly with this people: and

23 wherfore haft thou fent me? For fence I came to Pharao to fpeke in thy name, he hath fared foull with this folke, ad yet thou haft not delyuered thy people

VI, 1 at all. Then the Lorde fayde vnto Mofes. Now fhalt thou fee what I will doo vnto Pharao, for with a myghtie hande fhall he let them goo, and with a mightye hande fhall he dryue them out of hys lande.

The .VI. Chapter

- 2 **A**ND God fpake vnto Mofes fayng vnto him: I am the Lorde,
3 and I appeared vnto Abraham Ifaac and **Iacob** an allmightie God: but in my name **Iehouah** was I not ...'

"This translation by Tyndale shows the double usage of 'i' to represent both the 'i' and the 'j' sound. Those who read Tyndale's translation when it was published understood that 'i' before a consonant (as in 'Ifrael' and 'Ifaac') represented the 'i' sound, and 'i' before a vowel (as in 'iudge,' 'Iacob' and 'Iehouah') represented the 'j' sound.

"In the same manner that 'i' was used as both a vowel and a consonant, so also were the letters 'u' and 'v'. Tyndale's use of 'u' as a vowel in 'you' and 'cruelly' and his use of 'v' as a consonant in 'fervauntes' (servants) follows the modern usage of the two letters. But Tyndale also uses 'v' to represent the vowel sound 'u', as in 'vnto' (unto) and 'vs' (us), and he uses 'u' to represent the consonant sound 'v', as in 'geuen' (given), 'haue' (have), 'fauoure' (favor) and 'Iehouah' (Jehovah). This double usage of the two letters shows that they were used interchangeably in Tyndale's day. In the decades that followed, a distinct difference developed in the use of the two letters--'u' was restricted to its present vowel sound, and 'v' to its present consonant sound. Likewise, 'i' was restricted to its present vowel sound, and 'j' became the standard symbol for the consonant sound.

"Sacred namers use the invention of the letter 'j' to argue that 'Jehovah' is an illegitimate spelling of the Hebrew name יהוה (*yhvh*). They view

'yahweh' as the only correct way to spell and pronounce the divine name. They are completely ignoring the fact that the English letter 'w'--used in the name yahweh--was invented *two hundred years later* than the first symbol for 'j'. In addition, the letters 'a' and 'h' were not invented until the 1500's. Thus the same argument that they use against the name Jehovah could be used even more strongly against 'yahweh.' The spelling 'Yahweh' was impossible before 1500! This same argument could be used against 'yahshua' as well. Since lowercase 's' was not invented until the 1500's, and lowercase 'u' did not come into regular use as a vowel until the 1500's, the spelling 'yahshua' was also impossible before that time.

"The truth of the matter is that the invention of the letters of the English alphabet neither proves nor disproves the pronunciation of the Hebrew name יהוה (*jhvh*). Although some of the letters in the English alphabet were invented in later centuries, the sounds that they represent existed from the earliest times. Only the symbols used to represent the sounds changed" (pp. 1-3).

The fact that there were symbols to represent our "j" sound is evident in Tyndale's use of both lowercase "i" and uppercase "I" in the words "iudge," "Iacob" and "Iehouah" (that is, Jehovah). Had Tyndale heard our "y" sound in the Hebrew words he would have translated them as "yudge," "Yacob" and "Yehouah," just as he used the letter "y" in the words "yet," "ye" and "youre." Notice these examples in Tyndale's translation as printed in bold type below:

"18 sacrifice vnto the Lorde. Goo therfore and worke, for [Fo. IX.] there fhall no ftrawe be geuen you, and **yet** fee that **ye** delyuer the hole tale of brycke.

19 when the officers of the childern of Ifrael fawe them filfe in fhrode cafe (in that he fayde ye fhall minyth nothings of **youre** dalye makige of

20 brycke) than they mett Mofes and Aaro ftondinge in

21 there waye as they came out fro Pharao, and fayde vnto them: The Lorde loke vnto **you** and **iudge**, for **ye** haue made the fauoure of vs ffincke in the fighte of Pharao and of his fervautes, and haue put a fwerde in to their handes to flee vs.

22 Mofes returned vnto the Lorde and fayde: Lorde wherfore dealeft thou cruelly with this people: and

23 wherfore haft thou fent me? For fence I came to Pharao to fpeke in thy

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Of course our English symbols "j" and "J" did not exist at the time of Tyndale, nor have these English symbols ever been used in Biblical Hebrew. No letter in the English alphabet is found in Biblical Hebrew. The English symbols for the "j" sound are not the key issue. The issue is whether Biblical Hebrew has a "j" sound. If so, which Hebrew character represents that sound?

As Tyndale's translation shows, Biblical Hebrew did have the "j" sound, as did the English of Tyndale's day. Furthermore, there was a symbol for that sound in both Biblical Hebrew and English! As a Hebrew scholar who had been taught by leading Hebraists of his day, Tyndale recognized the "j" sound when he read the Hebrew text, and he translated it accordingly. The "j" sound--represented in Biblical Hebrew as the letter *jot* י--was translated by Tyndale into the English letters "i" and "I."

In his article, Mansager confessed the following: "Whether capitals or lower case, **the sounds would of course remain the same** either way" ("Facts and Myths About the Sacred Name," *YNCA Light*, May-June, 98, p. 7). The author went on to admit that the **sound precedes the symbol**. While denying the existence of the "j" sound before the symbol "j" was invented, Mansager focuses on the fact that the sound for "w" existed before the symbol "w" was invented! This approach can hardly be viewed as objective and unbiased.

Did Abraham and His Descendants Know יהוה?

Mansager asserts that before the time of Moses, the children of Israel did not know the name יהוה. The implication is that יהוה was a special revelation to Moses and that the name was not used before that time. Under the subheading "A People Knowing His Name," he writes:

"Only after being freed from Egyptian slavery was Israel revealed Yahweh's Name. Moses emphasized that it was Yahweh Who had brought deliverance to His people. Prior to this time He was primarily known as El Shaddai, the Almighty.

"Israel had recognized Him as the Creator, the Sustainer of the universe, but now Moses revealed that He was taking a personal part in their lives. Now He is in a closer relationship with His children Israel, and makes a covenant with them with exceedingly great and precious promises, pledging that He would be whatever Israel needed in the future" ("Facts and Myths About the Sacred Name," *YNCA Light*, May-June, 98, p. 4).

Mansager has assumed that God was not known by the name יהוה before Moses' day. This false notion is based on a woeful misunderstanding of Exodus 6:1-3. The English translation of these verses gives the impression that the patriarchs did not know the name יהוה, but an examination of the Hebrew text will show that this is not the meaning of God's words to Moses:

"Then the LORD [Hebrew יהוה *J'hōh-vāh'* 3068] said unto Moses, 'Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land.' And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, 'I *am* the LORD [Hebrew יהוה *J'hōh-vāh'* 3068]: and I appeared [Hebrew אָרָא *rāh-āh'* 7200] unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by *the name of* GOD ALMIGHTY [Hebrew אֱלֹהֵי שַׁדַּי *Eehl* 410 *Shad-dah'y* 7706], but by my name JEHOVAH [Hebrew יהוה *J'hōh-vāh'* 3068] was I not known [from the Hebrew יָדַע *yāh-dag* 3045] to them' " (Ex. 6:1-3).

El Shaddai is used here as an epithet of יהוה (i.e., a phrase that expresses a characteristic of יהוה). Both אָרָא *rāh-āh'* (appeared) and יָדַע *yāh-dag* (known) are *Niphal* verb stems, but there is a difference in their use: אָרָא *rāh-āh'* is a *Niphal* imperfective and יָדַע *yāh-dag* is a *Niphal* perfective. The action of אָרָא *rāh-āh'* is governed by the Hebrew preposition בַּ *ba*. In

Exodus 6:3, *ba* is used as a preposition of identity, which means that it marks "...**the capacity** in which an actor [in this case, God] behaves" (Waltke, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, p. 198, *emphasis added*). The phrase "by the name of God Almighty" should be translated "as God Almighty"; i.e., as El Shaddai. Thus we see that יהוה appeared to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob **in the capacity of, or as,** אֱלֹהֵי שַׁדַּי El Shaddai.

The Hebrew verb יָרַע *yāh-dag* (known) in Verse 3 is used in a *causative-reflexive scheme*. As Waltke explains, "In these verbs the subject [God, in this case] causes the action to happen to Himself" (*Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, p. 390). The statement "but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them" is properly translated "but **by my title JEHOVAH** I did not make myself known to them" (Ibid., p. 391). The Hebrew text does not state that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob did not know God by the name יהוה but that God did not reveal the full capacity of יהוה. The patriarchs knew יהוה as the God Who had covenanted with them, but the full capacity of יהוה was not known until He acted to fulfill the covenant He had established with Abraham (Gen. 15:13-14, 18-21).

Thus, the full meaning of Exodus 6:3 is as follows: "And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, 'I *am* the LORD [Hebrew יהוה *J'hōh-vāh*]; And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, **in the capacity of God Almighty** [Hebrew אֱלֹהֵי שַׁדַּי *Eehl Shad-dah'y*], but **in the capacity of JEHOVAH** [Hebrew יהוה *J'hōh-vāh*] was I not known to them.' "

Scriptural Evidence that the Patriarchs Knew the Name יהוה

The book of Genesis records that Abram prayed to יהוה, or Jehovah. It was יהוה Who had called him out of Ur of the Chaldees: "Now the LORD

[Hebrew יהוה *J'hōh-vāh'* ³⁰⁶⁸] had said unto Abram, 'Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee' " (Gen. 12:1). Abram heeded God's call and journeyed to the land of Canaan (Verse 6). There יהוה appeared to Abram, saying, "'Unto thy seed will I give this land': and there builded he [Abram] an altar unto the LORD [Hebrew יהוה *J'hōh-vāh'* ³⁰⁶⁸], Who appeared unto him....and **called upon the name of the LORD** [Hebrew יהוה *J'hōh-vāh'* ³⁰⁶⁸]" (Verses 7-8). Abram could not have called upon the name of יהוה had he not known God by this name.

It is also recorded in Scripture that Abram called upon God by the name יהוה at the time that God covenanted with him: "After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, 'Fear not, Abram: I *am* thy shield, *and* thy exceeding great reward.' And **Abram said, 'LORD God** [Hebrew אדוני *adōh-nāhy'* יהוה *Jehōh-vih'* ³⁰⁶⁹], what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?" (Gen. 15:1-2.)

In Genesis 25, we read that Isaac also called upon יהוה by name: "And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan-aram, the sister to Laban the Syrian. And **Isaac intreated the LORD** [Hebrew יהוה *J'hōh-vāh'* ³⁰⁶⁸] for his wife, because *she was* barren: and the LORD [Hebrew יהוה *J'hōh-vāh'* ³⁰⁶⁸] was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived" (Gen. 25:20-21).

Isaac later moved to Gerar to live in the land of the Philistines, which was then ruled by King Abimelech. As יהוה had appeared to Abraham, so He appeared to his son Isaac in Gerar: "And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar. And **the LORD** [Hebrew יהוה *J'hōh-vāh'* ³⁰⁶⁸] **appeared unto him**, and said, 'Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because that Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.'

And Isaac dwelt in Gerar" (Gen. 26:1-6).

Personal contact between the patriarchs and יהוה, continued with Jacob, son of Isaac. Genesis 31 records that יהוה spoke directly to Jacob: "And **the LORD** [Hebrew יהוה *J'hōh-vāh'* ³⁰⁶⁸] **said unto Jacob**, 'Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee' " (Verse 3).

When Jacob prepared to meet his brother Esau, he prayed to יהוה, or Jehovah, Whom his father had worshiped: "And Jacob said, 'O God [Hebrew אלהים *elōh-heem'* ⁴³⁰] of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, **the LORD** [Hebrew יהוה *J'hōh-vāh'* ³⁰⁶⁸] **Which saidst unto me,**

" ' "Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred; and I will deal well with thee": I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which Thou hast showed unto Thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands. Deliver me, I pray Thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for *I fear him*, lest he will come and smite me, *and* the mother with the children. And *Thou* saidst, "I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude" ' " (Gen. 32:9-12). Shortly after this prayer, Jacob wrestled with the very God to Whom he had prayed (Gen. 32:22-30).

Later in the book of Genesis, we read that יהוה was with Jacob's son Joseph: "And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither. And **the LORD** [Hebrew יהוה *J'hōh-vāh'* ³⁰⁶⁸] was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian" (Gen. 39:1-2).

When Jacob called his sons together to tell them what would befall them in the future, he prophesied the following of Joseph: "Joseph is a fruitful bough, *even* a fruitful bough by a well; *whose* branches run over the wall: the archers have sorely grieved him, and shot *at him*, and hated him: but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong **by the hands of the mighty God** [Hebrew אביִר *ab-beer'* ⁴⁷] **of Jacob**; (from

thence *is* the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel:) *even* by **the GOD** [Hebrew אֱלֹהִים *Eehl* 410] of thy father, Who shall help thee; and by **the ALMIGHTY** [Hebrew שָׁדַדִּי *Shad-dah'y* 7706], Who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb: the blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren" (Gen. 49:22-26).

At his death, Joseph prophesied that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob would be with his and his brothers' descendants and would bring them out of Egypt into the land He had promised to their fathers: "And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, *he*, and his father's house: and Joseph lived a hundred and ten years. And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third *generation*: the children also of Machir the son of Manasseh, were brought up upon Joseph's knees. And Joseph said unto his brethren, '*I* die: and God [Hebrew אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל *elōh-heem'* 430] will surely visit *you*, and bring *you* out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.' And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, 'God [Hebrew אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל *elōh-heem'* 430] will surely visit *you*, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.' So Joseph died, *being* an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed *him*, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt" (Gen. 50:22-26).

This same God appeared to Moses at the burning bush and proclaimed Himself the God (אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל *elōh-heem'* 430) and the LORD (יְהוָה), of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Ex. 3:6-7). God told Moses at that time, "Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, '**The LORD** [Hebrew יְהוָה *J'hōh-vāh'* 3068] **God** [Hebrew אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל *elōh-heem'* 430] **of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, hath appeared unto me...**' " (Verse 16). It is evident that the children of Israel knew that יְהוָה was the God of their fathers, because they recognized His name and believed this message:

"And the people **believed**: and when they heard that **the LORD** [Hebrew יְהוָה *J'hōh-vāh'* 3068] had visited the children of Israel, and that He had looked upon their affliction, then **they bowed their heads and worshiped**" (Ex. 4:31).

Since both Ephraim's and Manasseh's sons were raised on Joseph's knees, we can be certain that they were told of יהוה, the God of their forefathers, and that they in turn told their children and grandchildren of Him.

I Am That I Am

The meaning of the words "I AM THAT I AM," which are found in Exodus 3:14, have been much debated. God's statement to Moses in the following verse has been equally debated: "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, **The LORD God** [Hebrew יהוה אלהים *J'hōh-vāh'* ³⁰⁶⁸ *elōh-heem'* ⁴³⁰] of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: **this is My name for ever, and this is My memorial unto all generations**" (Ex. 3:15).

Based on the teachings of a few ancient rabbis, the Jews interpret this verse as a prophecy that God's name would be hidden forever. For generations, they have been taught that the name יהוה is sacred. The pronunciation that they ascribe to this name is Yahweh. They refuse even to speak this name, lest they be taking it in vain.

Sacred namers interpret Exodus 3:15 as stating the exact opposite. They view this verse as a mandate to use God's name. But while they reject the Jewish interpretation of this verse, they revere the same name that the Jews revere. To sacred namers, the most sacred name of all is Yahweh.

The common ground between Jews and sacred namers is not surprising when we understand that their differing views have the same origin. They are two sides of the ancient philosophy of Kabbalistic gnosticism, which blends Scripture with pagan, esoteric teachings. Let us examine these different gnostic views of God's words in Exodus 3:14-15.

Mansager presents the following view of this passage:

"There are those who obviously recognize that the title 'God' has replaced Yahweh's Name, but instead of calling Him by the Name Yahweh, which He has Himself revealed to us, they choose also to call Him 'the Eternal.' Apparently they think that this substitute is better than 'God,' and good enough for the Creator Yahweh, who said, **'Yahweh is my name forever, My Memorial unto all generations'** (Ex. 3:15).

"This man strives to ignore the simple fact that Yahweh has said, 'My people shall know My Name' (Isa. 52:6). Once those He has called learn that His true Name is Yahweh, they comprehend with awe the special revelation given them of His Name. They begin to seek deeper truth.

"They now have a closer relationship with the Heavenly Father, for **His Name is the verb of existence, carrying the meaning, 'I will be....'** Exactly what He will be depends upon the needs or requirements of the individual at that time. He will be whatever we need as we obey Him. He will be our Provider, Healer, Strength, Comforter, Guide, our Wisdom... whatever needs we have at that time, that is what He will be to us" ("Facts and Myths About the Sacred Name," *YNCA Light*, May-June, 98, pp. 3-4, *emphasis added*).

In the above paragraphs, Mansager states that the name יהוה means Creator. This assertion is based on dictionary and commentary explanations of "I AM THAT I AM," which present the scholarly view that these words mean "to be" or to "exist." This interpretation links the Hebrew noun יהוה with the verb of existence, from which the Hebrew word for "Creator" is derived. However, this theory has been discredited because, after decades of intense research, no etymological connection has been uncovered.

Although scholars found the name יהוה at a handful of archaeological sites, they could not establish a connection between this Hebrew noun and the verb from which the name "Creator" is derived. The Egyptians had no verb that could be etymologically linked to יהוה. The Phoenicians had no verb that could be etymologically linked to יהוה. The Hittites had no verb that could be etymologically linked to יהוה. Neither the Akkadians or Assyrians had a verb that could be etymologically linked to יהוה. Nor did the Kenites, kin of Moses, have a verb that could be etymologically linked to יהוה.

In the preliminary stages of their research, scholars thought they had discovered a bona fide etymological link in the Amoritic verb *yawe*. They discovered that the Amorites worshiped a personal God they called *yawi* or *yawe*, meaning "creator." Believing that יהוה also meant "Creator," they theorized that the Hebrew יהוה was derived from the same verb as the Amoritic name *yawe*. However, they have found not one shred of etymological evidence to support this theory. After years of fruitless

research, scholars now admit that **there is no etymological link** between the Amoritic *yawe* and the Hebrew name יהוה.

What then do the words "I AM THAT I AM" mean? These words were spoken to Moses by the Jehovah Who later became the Jesus Christ of the New Testament. Referring to His future mortality, crucifixion and resurrection back to immortality, He said to Moses "I AM THAT I AM." This statement must be interpreted in the light of Jesus' own words, as recorded in the Gospel of Luke. Notice Jesus' words:

"Then came to *Him* certain of the Sadducees, **which deny that there is any resurrection;** and they asked Him, 'saying,' Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and *he* die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother [Deut. 25:5]. There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children. And the second took her to wife, and *he* died childless. And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also: and they left no children, and died. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife.' And Jesus answering said unto them, 'The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush [Ex. 3], **when he calleth the LORD** [Greek Κύριος *Kurios*²⁹⁶²] **the God** [Greek Θεός *Theos*²³¹⁶] **of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.** For He is **not a God of the dead, but of the living:** for all live unto Him' " (Luke 20:27-38).

Jesus used Moses' words at the burning bush to show the Sadducees that the patriarchs believed in the resurrection, which the Sadducees denied. God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob because He has the power to bring them back from the dead. In doing so, Jesus was also preaching His own death and resurrection. Without Christ's resurrection from the dead, there would be no resurrection of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Notice that the verses Jesus spoke to the Sadducees contain the word

"LORD." In the Old Testament, this word is the Hebrew noun יהוה, but Luke uses the Greek noun Κυριος, or *Kurios*, which means "Lord." Luke's record of Jesus' words directly links יהוה with the covenant name "LORD"--not with the name "Creator," which is derived from the verb of existence.

The New Testament does not support the assertion that יהוה means "Creator." Thus there is no basis for the claim that יהוה originated as a verb of existence. Mansager is wrong when he states, "...His Name [יהוה] is the verb of existence, carrying the meaning, 'I will be...'" (Facts and Myths About the Sacred Name," *YNCA Light*, May-June, 98, p. 4, *emphasis added*).

Did Jesus Call His Heavenly Father Yahweh?

At the beginning of His ministry in 26 A.D., Jesus entered His local synagogue on the High Sabbath of Pentecost and began to preach. Notice the account in Luke 4:16-22:

"And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written, 'The Spirit of **the LORD** is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of **the LORD**.'

"And He closed the book, and He gave *it* again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him. And He began to say unto them, 'This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.' And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth..." (Luke 4:16-22).

It was the tradition of synagogue readers from the days of Ezra to read aloud from the Hebrew text and then expound the meaning of what had been read. Reading aloud required pronouncing each word with distinction and

presenting the words in logical groupings of thought. This Jesus did, and then translated what He had read into Aramaic or Greek, as was necessary, for each member of the synagogue.

When Jesus read this passage from the book of Isaiah, how did He interpret the Hebrew word יהוה to His listeners? It is evident that Jesus translated יהוה into the Greek or Aramaic word for "Lord," as Luke used the word *Kurios*, meaning "Lord," when he recorded Jesus' words.

Was Jesus applying a new meaning to the Hebrew name יהוה, or was He applying the meaning that the name had conveyed down through the centuries? Let us return to the days of Ezra and Nehemiah to learn how the name יהוה was interpreted by readers of the Hebrew text in ancient times. In the book of Nehemiah, we find the following account:

"So the priests, and the Levites, and the porters, and the singers, and *some* of the People, and the Nethinims, and all Israel, dwelt in their cities;

"And all the People gathered themselves together as one man into the street that *was* before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which **the LORD** [Hebrew יהוה] had commanded to Israel.

"And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month. And he read therein before the street that *was* before the water gate from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the People *were attentive* unto the book of the law.

"And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malchiah, and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zechariah, *and* Meshullam.

"And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the People; (for he was above all the People;) and when he opened it, all the People stood up:

"And Ezra blessed **the LORD** [Hebrew יהוה J'hōh-vāh' 3068], **the great God** [Hebrew אלֵהֵם elōh-heem' 430]. And all the People answered, 'Amen, Amen,' with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped **the LORD** [יהוה pronounced J'hōh-vāh' 3068] with *their* faces to the ground.

"Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, caused the People to understand the law: and the People *stood* in their place.

"So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand [by interpreting] the reading.

"And Nehemiah, which *is* the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the People, said unto all the People, 'This day *is* holy unto **the LORD** [Hebrew יהוה J'hōh-vāh' 3068] your God; mourn not, nor weep.' For all the People wept, when they heard the words of the law.

"Then he said unto them, 'Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for *this* day *is* holy unto our **LORD** [Hebrew אֲדֹנָי Ah-dohn' 113]: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of **the LORD** [Hebrew יהוה J'hōh-vāh' 3068] *is* your strength' " (Neh. 7:73-8:10).

Notice that יהוה is used in conjunction with אֲדֹנָי (Adon) in the above verse. Adon, as all scholars acknowledge, means "Lord." The fact that the Hebrew text uses יהוה in parallel construction with Adon shows the similarity in the meaning of the two names. Although both יהוה (Jehovah) and אֲדֹנָי (Adon) mean "Lord," they complement each other by expressing two different aspects of God's lordship.

How Jesus Pronounced יהוה:

When Jesus read Isaiah 61:1-2, He twice read aloud the name of His heavenly Father יהוה. Jesus knew how to pronounce His Father's name and read it with the sounds that had been passed down orally from generation to generation by the Levites. These same sounds were later preserved by the Masoretes when they inserted vowel points in the Hebrew text. Notice again Luke's account of Jesus' words:

"And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written, 'The Spirit of **the LORD** [Greek Κύριος *Kurios* ²⁹⁶², translated from the Hebrew יהוה] is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of **the LORD** [Greek Κύριος *Kurios* ²⁹⁶², translated from the Hebrew יהוה].'

"And He closed the book, and He gave *it* again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him. And He began to say unto them, 'This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.' And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth..." (Luke 4:16-22).

Notice that in both occurrences of the Hebrew name יהוה, Luke was inspired to record the Greek word Κύριος, pronounced *Kurios* ²⁹⁶². Jesus used this same Greek word in reference to Himself when He said, "And why call ye Me, Lord, Lord [Greek *Kurios Kurios*], and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46.) If יהוה meant "Creator," Luke would not have translated this Hebrew name into *Kurios*. Luke would have used the Greek word Κτιστης *Ktistes* ²⁹³⁹, which means "Creator." The apostle Peter used *Ktistes* ²⁹³⁹ when he wrote his first epistle, and this Greek word is translated accordingly: "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to Him* in well doing, as unto **a faithful Creator** [Greek Κτιστης *Ktistes* ²⁹³⁹]" (I Pet. 4:19).

Sacred namers reject the meaning of יהוה that is revealed in the Greek New Testament. They claim that the New Testament was not originally written in Greek but in Hebrew, and that it was later translated into Greek. They assert that the Greek text was translated centuries after the original text of the New Testament, and therefore the Greek text is not reliable. These claims are exposed as totally unfounded, when we examine the textual and historical evidence. (For detailed evidence that the New Testament was originally written in Greek, write for a free copy of the study paper, *Debunking the Myths of Sacred Namers, Part III*. The address is given at the end of this paper.)

Jesus Called His Heavenly Father Jehovah

Without exception, the writers of the New Testament translated the Hebrew name יהוה into the Greek Κυριος (Kurios), which means "Lord." That is the true meaning of the name יהוה. When Jesus read this name aloud in the synagogue, it is evident that He did not pronounce יהוה as Yahweh. The Amoritic word Yahweh does not mean "Lord." All scholars acknowledge that Yahweh means "Creator!"

Judaism teaches that the divine name יהוה ceased to be pronounced in Old Testament times, and that the name Adonai was read in its place. Did Jesus pronounce יהוה as Adonai when He read the passage from Isaiah? Or did He pronounce יהוה as Jehovah? To help answer this question, let us examine the words that Jesus spoke during the Feast of Tabernacles in 26 A.D., only a few months after He had read Isaiah's prophecy to the Jews in His local synagogue.

At the time of the fall festival season, Jesus climbed a mountain on the west bank of the Sea of Galilee. There Jesus declared the words of the New Covenant, and His disciples began to record His teachings. The following words of Jesus are preserved in the Gospel of Matthew:

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, **one jot** or **one tittle** shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be

fulfilled" (Mat. 5:17-18).

The word "jot" is translated from the Greek ἰοτα [pronounced *iota* ²⁵⁰³]. *Iota* is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew letter *jot*, or *yodh*. The significance of Jesus' statement concerning this letter in the Hebrew alphabet is explained by Ernst Wurthwein, who writes, "All the manuscripts and fragments of the Hebrew Old Testament which have come down to us from Jewish sources, from the earliest examples, e.g., the Qumran texts (cf. pp. 30ff.) and the Nash Papyrus, are with few exceptions written in the script still in use today known as the *square script* (כְּתָב מְרֻבָּע) or the Assyrian script (כְּתָב אֲשׁוּרִי) from its place of origin. This script was in general use in the time of Jesus: the allusion to **the letter yodh** [the 'jot'] as the **smallest in the alphabet** (Matt. 5:18) would be true only of the square script [*yodh* or *jot* in the ancient script is 𐤅 ; *jot* in the square script is י].

"This script was derived by a gradual process of development from the Aramaic script, which was used extensively (pl. 5). The earliest recorded examples are the 'Araq el-Emir inscription in East Jordan from the fourth or early third century B.C., and the earliest Qumran fragments from about 200 B.C. (4QSamb and 4QJera). The Jews were aware, however, that this script was not their earliest. **One Jewish tradition attributes its introduction to Ezra**, about 430 B.C. [the actual date is nearly one hundred years earlier]" (*The Text of the Old Testament*, pp. 3-4, *emphasis added*).

Jesus' statement concerning "one tittle" also has great significance. The word "tittle" in Matthew 5:18 is translated from the Greek κεραια (pronounced *keraiā* ²⁷⁶²). The meaning of this word is explained by Arndt and Gingrich in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (p. 428). As they attest, the literal meaning of this term is "horn, projection or hook," referring to that part of a letter which printers call a serif. Webster defines the word "serif" as "a fine line projecting from a main stroke of a letter in common styles of type." Such lines are purely stylistic and add no meaning to a word. However, historical records show that the word κεραια, or "tittle," is not limited to this basic meaning. Κεραια is used in ancient Greek inscriptions and papyri to denote **word accents and breathings**. (See the minor edition of *Inscriptiones Graecae*.) Κεραια is also used in this manner by Apollonius Dyscolus in his *Grammatici Graeci II*; by Plutarch in his *Numa*, 13 9, Mor. 1100A; by Dio Chystrom; by Philo, In Flacc. 131.

"Accents" and "breathings" were marks that were added to words to convey the correct pronunciation of consonants and vowels. Consonants are letters that are spoken with very little resonance. Compared to a consonant, a vowel is spoken with a great deal of resonance. Thus the sound of a vowel is said to be relatively open, and the sound of a consonant is said to be relatively closed. "Breathings" were generally used to indicate the correct vowel sounds.

When we understand what the words "jot" and "tittle" represent, the statement that Jesus made in Matthew 5:18 becomes far more meaningful. Jesus was clearly and emphatically declaring that the words of the Old Testament, **as recorded and marked in square script in the Hebrew text**, would be **preserved intact** throughout the ages. The fact that Jesus included the "tittle" in His prophecy shows that even the **pronunciation of the words** would be preserved.

The words of Jesus Christ, as recorded by Matthew, give us absolute assurance that from the earliest times, God has safeguarded His Word. What Jesus declared in 26 A.D. shows that **no consonant**--not even the smallest, the "jot"--has been lost, and **no vowel sound**, or "tittle," has been lost. Not one word has been lost, and not one pronunciation has been lost!

In the light of these facts, let us consider the question of whether Jesus used the name Adonai when He read יהוה aloud in the synogogue. If Jesus had read יהוה as Adonai, four consonants--including **one "jot"**--and **three "tittles,"** or vowel sounds, would have been lost!

It is evident that Jesus did not read יהוה as Adonai. He did not follow the rabbinic doctrine of the "perpetual reading," which requires the pronunciation of Adonai to be substituted for יהוה. Neither did He substitute the pronunciation Yahweh for the original pronunciation of יהוה, which had been orally preserved by the Levitical priesthood. Jesus read יהוה exactly as it had been pronounced from the earliest times. As Jesus declared, that pronunciation **has never been lost!** The original pronunciation is still preserved in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. That pronunciation,

transliterated into English, is **Jehovah**.

A Memorial Forever

In Exodus 3:15, God declares that His name is a memorial forever: "And God said moreover unto Moses, 'Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, "The LORD God [Hebrew יהוה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל *J'hōh-vāh'* ³⁰⁶⁸ *elōh-heem'* ⁴³⁰] of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you": **this is My name for ever, and this is My memorial unto all generations.**"

Mansager interprets this verse as a statement that יהוה is God's **personal name** and that this name, and only this name, should be used. Sacred namers teach that יהוה should never be translated, but only transliterated. They reject the transliteration of יהוה as Jehovah and they maintain that Yahweh is the only correct transliteration.

Mansager writes the following of Exodus 3:15:

"There are those who obviously recognize that the title 'God' has replaced Yahweh's Name, but instead of calling Him by the Name Yahweh, which He has Himself revealed to us, they choose also to call Him 'the Eternal.' Apparently they think that this substitute is better than 'God,' and good enough for the Creator Yahweh, who said, '**Yahweh is my name forever, My Memorial unto all generations**' (Ex. 3:15)" ("Facts and Myths About the Sacred Name," *YNCA Light*, May-June, 98, pp. 3-4, *emphasis added*).

Mansager is confused when he asserts that the word "God" is a substitute for יהוה. The English word "God" is not a translation of the Hebrew word יהוה but is a translation of the Hebrew word אֱלֹהֵי *elōh-heem'* ⁴³⁰. *Elohim* is used numerous times in the Old Testament to name the true God, as is יהוה. The proper translation of יהוה is "LORD," printed in upper case letters to distinguish it from Adonai, another Hebrew name of God, which is translated "Lord." When יהוה and *Elohim* are used together, as they are in Exodus 3:15, they are translated "the LORD God." We find this usage in the book of Genesis and throughout the Old Testament. The fact that these two divine names are found together shows that יהוה is NOT a personal name of God but a title.

While יהוה is generally translated into the English word "LORD," which conveys the meaning of this Hebrew title, it has also been **transliterated into the English word "Jehovah,"** which conveys **the pronunciation of the Hebrew letters.** The word "Jehovah" appears some seven times in the King James Version of the Old Testament, four times as a single title and three times in combination with other Hebrew words which describe various attributes of God.

As the Hebrew text clearly shows, Jehovah is the correct pronunciation of יהוה. The name **Jehovah** is the authentic English transliteration of יהוה, the title that the God of the Old Testament declared is His memorial.

Mansager is not correct when he asserts that Yahweh is the name by which God would be remembered through the ages. Nor are sacred namers correct when they teach that the name Yahweh has been suppressed by transliterating יהוה as Jehovah. The truth of the matter is that Jehovah has been suppressed by sacred namers!

A Memorial--Not a Sacred Name

Two questions remain in regard to the use of God's name: (1) Since Jehovah is revealed in the Hebrew text as God's memorial, should Jehovah be the only name by which we refer to God? (2) Is it a sin to translate יהוה or any other names of God into English? That is, should יהוה always be transliterated as Jehovah? Or is it acceptable to translate יהוה as LORD?

The answer to the first question is a resounding no! Jehovah is not the only name by which we should refer to God, nor is Jehovah a sacred name. God's name is not a talisman--it is not a magic name. We do not receive personal blessings and salvation by pronouncing certain sounds. If this were possible, what need would there have been for Jesus' sacrifice?

Since Jehovah is the authentic transliteration of God's name, it is proper to use the name Jehovah in reference to both Gods of the Old Testament.

However, to insist that Jehovah is the only name that should be used in reference to God is absolutely unjustified. The Scriptures refer to God by numerous names and titles, each of which designates a specific attribute or capacity. The patriarchs and the prophets alike used these names in their prayers and supplications to God, as well as in songs of praise. The use of these different divine names in the Old Testament contradicts all arguments that God has a sacred name.

Now, concerning the second question: It is not a sin or a suppression of God's name to translate יהוה into the English word "LORD" or the Greek *Kurios*, which means "Lord." Both translations accurately convey the meaning of this Hebrew title. No scripture in either the Old Testament or New forbids the translation of the text into other languages. In fact, a number of Scriptural passages use words and phrases that were borrowed from other languages.

יהוה--The Covenant Title of God

Sacred namers argue that God's name must never be translated because it is a personal name. Personal names, they argue, should only be transliterated. The error in this argument is obvious when we understand the Scriptural usage of יהוה.

That יהוה is used as a title and not as a personal name in Exodus 3:14-15 can be demonstrated by examining the context. First of all, God states that His name is a memorial. He is not making a memorial **in** His name as we do in establishing memorial foundations. Rather, His name **is** a memorial. That is, יהוה is a descriptive term which is used as an appellation or epithet. God signified this fact by stating, "I am that I am....this is My name forever, and this *is* My memorial unto all generations."

Everett Fox's translation of Exodus 3:15 verifies that יהוה is used as a **title** and not as a personal name in this verse. Although Fox translates the consonants of יהוה according to the Yiddish pronunciation (Yhwh) rather than the original pronunciation (Jhvh), which was preserved by the Sephardic Levites, he does not add vowels to the name. Regardless of the spelling that Fox uses, this world renowned scholar recognizes that יהוה is a **title--not a personal name!** Notice his translation in the Schocken Bible:

"And God said further to Moshe: Thus shall you say to the Children of Israel: YHWH [יהוה *J'hōh-vāh'* 3068], the God (Hebrew אֱלֹהִים *elōh-heem'* 430) of your fathers, the God of Avraham, the God of Yitzhak, and the God of Yaakov, sends me to you. This is my name for the ages, **THAT IS MY TITLE** (from) generation to generation" (Ex. 3:15).

The fact that יהוה is often used with the definite article "the" also confirms that יהוה is **not a personal name**. Personal names are not preceded by a definite article, as are titles. We do not write "the Alan" or "the Donald," but we do write "the LORD." In the King James Version, יהוה is most often used with the definite article.

The Prophetic Song of Moses

The book of Deuteronomy contains many prophecies of the punishment that would befall the children of Israel when they broke their covenant with God. In one of these prophetic messages, we find a clear statement that although the children of Israel would forsake יהוה, His name would not be forgotten. It would be proclaimed among them as a lasting testimony of His righteous judgment. Notice this prophecy in the song of Moses:

"Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: **because I will publish [Hebrew קָרָא *kāh-rāh'* 7121] the name of the LORD [Hebrew יהוה *J'hōh-vāh'* 3068]:** ascribe ye greatness unto our God [Hebrew אֱלֹהִים *elōh-heem'* 430]. He *is* the Rock [Hebrew עֹז *Tzoor* 6697], His work *is* perfect: for all His ways *are* judgment: a God [Hebrew אֱלֹהִים *elōh-heem'* 430] of truth and without iniquity, just and right *is He*" (Deut. 32:1-4).

The word "publish" in Verse 3 is translated from the Hebrew word קָרָא *kāh-rāh'* 7121, which is a Qal verb stem in the imperfective form. *Kāh-rāh'* means **to proclaim publicly by reading aloud** (Brown, Driver and Briggs, pp. 894-895). The God of the Old Testament, Who later became Jesus Christ, inspired Moses to prophesy that although Israel would sin so greatly

that He would have to cast them out of the land, they would not forget His name. The name יהוה would be preserved in Scripture and would be publicly proclaimed by reading aloud the words of Moses and the other prophets.

The name יהוה could not have been publicly proclaimed aloud unless those reading the Scriptures knew how to pronounce it. Nor could the name have been proclaimed publicly if such proclamation were forbidden due to the superstition that it was too sacred to pronounce. Because the song of Moses declares that the name יהוה would be publicly proclaimed aloud, we can be assured that the pronunciation of this name was not lost. It was passed down from generation to generation as a perpetual reminder of the punishment that was inflicted on Israel for her unfaithfulness to יהוה, with Whom she had covenanted.

As יהוה had warned when He delivered the words of the covenant, "I the LORD [Hebrew יהוה *J'hōh-vāh'* ³⁰⁶⁸] thy God am a **jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children...**(Ex. 20:5).

That is why the descendants of Israel and Judah rejected the name Jehovah. This covenant name stands as a testimony to the sins of their forefathers, for which they they were cast out of the land.

Are We Taking God's Name in Vain?

Exodus 20:7 commands: "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD [Hebrew יהוה *J'hōh-vāh'* ³⁰⁶⁸] thy God [Hebrew אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל *elōh-heem'* ⁴³⁰] in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain."

Mansager believes that we are taking God's name in vain when we refer to the Father as God in our prayer and worship. He expresses this view in his article:

"The Third Commandment is ignored and broken especially on the Sabbath, as well as on Sunday, when groups gather. **Instead of respectfully calling Him by His Name Yahweh, they refer to Him simply as 'God.'** Notice that your King James Bible refers to Satan as 'god' " ("Facts and Myths About the Sacred Name," *YNCA Light*, May-June, 98, p. 4, *emphasis added*).

Mansager denounces any reference to the Father as God and declares that we should always address Him as Yahweh. He maintains that this name is the **most holy and most powerful thing** that exists. Notice his words:

"The Bible speaks of something **most powerful and holy in the entire universe**. It is the **most holy thing in the Bible**. Yet, if you ask the man on the street what it is, only a few would likely know. You can read most Bibles from Genesis through Revelation and never have it fully revealed to you. **The most precious and holy thing in the Bible is the Name of the Heavenly Father**. His Name defines who He is and what He does for His true people" ("Facts and Myths About the Sacred Name," *YNCA Light*, May-June, 98, p. 3, *emphasis added*).

Stop for a minute and consider what this man is teaching. Take a close look at his words: "The Bible speaks of something **MOST POWERFUL and holy in the entire universe**. It is the **MOST HOLY thing in the Bible....The most precious and holy thing in the Bible is THE NAME of the Heavenly Father**."

Do not these words show that Mansager is **worshiping a NAME** rather than a personal Being? He proclaims "**the Name**" as "**the MOST HOLY thing in the Bible**" and in the entire universe. But the name Yahweh, which he reveres above everything that exists, did not come from the Bible. Yahweh was the god of the Amorites--not the God of Israel. The Amoritic name Yahweh was passed down by the Samaritans, who dwelt in the land of Israel after the ten tribes were taken captive by the Assyrians. The God of Israel was not Yahweh but יהוה, and this name is clearly designated in the Hebrew text as Jehovah. But Jehovah was not the only name of the God of the Old Testament. He had many titles--including El, Eloah, Elohim and Jah, which are generally translated "God."

When Jehovah delivered the Ten Commandments to Moses, He called Himself Elohim, which is the equivalent of our English word "God":

"And God spake all these words, saying, '*I am the LORD* [Hebrew יהוה *J'hōh-vāh'* ³⁰⁶⁸] **thy God** [Hebrew אֱלֹהֵימָא *elōh-heem'* ⁴³⁰], Which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me" (Ex. 20:1-3).

In this command--the first of the Ten Commandments--and in each of the

next four commandments, Jehovah refers to Himself as "the LORD [Hebrew יהוה *J'hōh-vāh'* ³⁰⁶⁸] thy God [Hebrew אֱלֹהֵי יְיָ *elōh-heem'* ⁴³⁰]." If He called Himself "the LORD" and "thy God," how can it be sin for us to address Him as Lord and God? The terms "LORD" and "God" are valid translations of יהוה (*J'hōh-vāh'*) and אֱלֹהֵי יְיָ (*elōh-heem'*).

It is not we who are taking Jehovah's name in vain by calling Him God, but those who idolize the name of the false god Yahweh who are taking His name in vain. When sacred namers reject the name Jehovah, which is the true pronunciation of יהוה, and use this Hebrew name to worship Yahweh, they are using the name of God for vain purposes. To use the name of God to promote the worship of an Amoritic god is a false and idolatrous purpose. To teach that this name is somehow magical and more powerful than God Himself is a false and idolatrous purpose. To teach that there is salvation in the name Yahweh and that this name is sacred is a false and idolatrous purpose. To do all these things is most assuredly taking God's name in vain.

When sacred namers exalt the name Yahweh, they are also breaking the second commandment. This name has become the graven image--the golden calf of the sacred-name movement--before which many thousands bow in worship. The second commandment expressly forbids such idolatry:

"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness *of any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for *I* the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep My commandments" (Ex. 20:4-6).

The God Who spoke these words to the children of Israel, commanding them to worship Him only, was Jehovah--not Yahweh. Jehovah was the God of their fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the God of all the righteous men and women of old. His name is preserved in the books of the Old Testament, from Genesis to Malachi. The patriarchs prayed to Him, the psalmists praised Him, and the prophets pronounced His judgments.

The book of Psalms is filled with songs of praise to Jehovah. David, who wrote many of these psalms, exhorted all people and all creatures to praise

the name of God. But David did not exalt God's name above everything else in the Bible and in the entire universe! Notice the words that David wrote in Psalm 138:

"I will worship toward Thy holy temple, and **praise Thy name** for Thy lovingkindness and **for Thy TRUTH: for Thou hast magnified Thy WORD above all Thy name**" (Verse 2).

David was inspired to proclaim that God Himself exalts **His Word** above even His name. Let us do the same. Let us praise the name of God, but let us magnify and exalt the Truth of God above all else.

The Origin of the Teaching that God is Evil

Mansager regards God as an evil name because it has the same pronunciation as the word "god," which is used as a title of Satan. To illustrate his point, Mansager quotes the words of the apostle Paul:

" 'In whom **the god of this world** has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious evangel of Messiah, who is **the image of God**, should shine unto them" (2 Cor. 4:4).'

"Notice there are **two 'gods' mentioned here**. Whether this title appears with a lower case 'g' (god) or upper case 'G' (God), **they sound the same**.

"**Even the sensual appetites of humans is called 'god'**: 'Whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things' (Phil. 3:19)" ("Facts and Myths About the Sacred Name," *YNCA Light*, May-June, 98, p. 4, *emphasis added*).

Mansager does not realize that when he rejects the name God, he is following in the footsteps of rabbinic Kabbalists. The teaching that the word "God" is evil and pagan can be traced to Kabbalistic writings. One of the most influential promoters of this Kabbalistic doctrine is a young Jewish man named Isaac E. Mozeson, who founded the discipline of Emetology. Emetology is a new field of historical linguistics that studies Biblical Hebrew roots.

Mozeson is an English professor who appears to be intent on undermining the foundations of the English language and the King James Version of the Bible. In 1997, he published an essay entitled "Is God Good?" Mozeson's contempt for the name God is evident in his writing:

"Is God good? The dictionaries don't think so. **GOD is made a cognate of GIDDY** under the invented Indo-European root gheu (to call, invoke). The point of our Hebrewless dictionaries is that **gods are things** that giddy men make up. **Neither will you find GOD at the source of GOOD and TOGETHER**, a root called ghedh (to unite, join, fit). This root, however, is precisely what the Hebrew family of Gimel-Dalet words are about.

"Sound is always sence [sic], and **the same GD sound** echoes in Hebrew AKaiD (bound up together, as in the binding of Isaac) and **the word for ONE, EKHaD**. **The most solemn line of Hebrew prayer states that God is EKHaD (one) and his name is EKHaD**. While oneness is divine, isolation is bad. Thus BAD should be linked to BaDaD (isolate) and leBHaD (alone). God is in the details united, but never in non-related BITS and BYTES (*emphasis added*)."

Mozeson scorns and derides the name of God, and regards the name Ekhad as far superior. But the God that we worship is not the monotheistic god Ekhad. The Ekhad, or One, whom the Kabbalist Mozeson worships is the same false god that the children of ancient Israel went whoring after. Their abominable practices are described by the prophet Isaiah, who soundly condemned them. For evidence of these facts write for a free copy of the study papers *The Oneness of God*, *The Two Jehovahs of the Psalms* and *The Two Jehovahs of the Pentateuch*. (The mailing address is given at the end of this paper.)

Mozeson supports the name Ekhad, because it is the name of **the One--the monotheistic god** of esoteric Kabbalistic Judaism. It is no coincidence that Mozeson's work is advertized at the *Echad Messianic Books and Gifts* website. The logo at this site is that of a dove supporting a Menorah, out of which ascend the Hebrew characters that form the name Yeshua. Out of these Hebrew characters ascend seven tongues of fire--the universal sign of gnosticism!

The ancient philosophy of gnosticism is the foundation of Kabbalistic teachings. According to these teachings, the entire universe--and all life in it--was created from the Hebrew alphabet. These Kabbalistic teachings are being promoted by the Meru Foundation, which recently published Mozeson's essay "Is God Good?" at their website. The Meru Foundation was founded in 1983 by Stan Tenen, whose project it sponsors. Tenen states, "The Meru Project is based on 25 years of research...into **the origin and nature of the Hebrew alphabet, and the mathematical structure underlying the sequence of letters of the Hebrew text of Genesis.**"

In his introductory text to Meru philosophy, Tenen links the supposed sequence of letters in the book of Genesis with the religious teachings of the ancient world. He writes, "The Meru Project has discovered an extraordinary and unexpected geometric metaphor in **the letter-sequence of the Hebrew text of Genesis** that underlies and is held in common by **the spiritual traditions of the ancient world** [the ancient "mysteries" of Egypt and Babylon, which were combined with Scripture to create Kabbalism]. This metaphor models embryonic growth and self-organization. It applies to all whole systems, including those as seemingly diverse as meditational practices and the mathematics fundamental to physics and cosmology....Meru Project findings demonstrate that the relationship between physical theory and consciousness, expressed in explicit geometric metaphor, was understood and developed several thousand years ago" (*emphasis added*).

The work of Isaac Mozeson and the Meru Foundation is a continuation of the work of ancient Kabbalists, who taught that the Hebrew alphabet is the origin of all languages and of everything in the universe. According to Kabbalists, all life and all matter was created from the Hebrew characters **יהוה**. The Kabbalists worship Hebrew as a sacred language, and the chief object of their worship is the name **יהוה**. The following statement by one of the world's leading experts in the philosophy of Kabbalism will verify these facts. This detailed explanation of Kabbalistic teaching is recorded in the *Sepher Yetzirah*, an early Kabbalistic work:

"We have seen that the World of BRIA' is that of Creation, but whatever reservations may be inferred from **later Kabbalistic writers** on the axiom

ex nihilo nihil fit [He provides this footnote: According to Myer, the speculative or metaphysical Kabbalah is an attempt to harmonise Hebrew monotheism with the 'fundamental principle of ancient philosophy,' namely the axiom quoted above.], we have seen also that **their use of the term Creation does not at all correspond to the sense of Christian cosmology**, because that which they called Nothing evasively was the plenitude in which the All lay latent. Further, the World of BRIA' was not that in which anything material was formed, emanated, or otherwise brought into actual being; it was rather the Elohistic World, that of Panurgic [rogue] force and intelligence [i.e., Satan], which became formative in YETZIRAH, but did not produce matter except in the Fourth World [rabbinic pantheism]. Now **the MATERIALS used and shaped**, or, perhaps, more properly speaking, **the instruments**, the matrices of the material world, **were in all simplicity the LETTERS OF THE HEBREW ALPHABET**, as explained previously. According to SE'PHER YETZIRAH, **God imparted to them form and weight** [thus creating matter] **by combining and transforming them in divers manners**, ALEPH with all the rest and all the rest with ALEPH; BETH with all and all with BETH; and so of the rest. Some hundreds of permutations were obtained in this manner, which ex hypothesi are **the ORIGIN not only of ALL LANGUAGES but of ALL CREATURES**. As these permutations can also, by a later hypothesis, be **reduced to a single Name**, that of TETRAGRAMMATON, otherwise JOD, HE, VAU, HE = Jehovah or Yahwe, it is said that **THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE PROCEEDS FROM THIS NAME** [He provides this footnote: And thus **THE NAME** in its realisation--[i.e.] understood in the heart and mind--**GIVES ALL KNOWLEDGE** according to the Kabbalists. Compare Eliphas Levi, who reduces the doctrine to an axiom: '**ALL KNOWLEDGE IS IN A WORD, ALL POWER IN A NAME; the intelligence of his name is the Science of Abraham and Solomon.**' CLEFS MAJEURES, Paris, 1895]. The reader will discern at once the nature of the device, which may be methodised [in the following non sequitur] by a simple process:

**"The world came forth from God:
But the name of God is YHVH;
Therefore the world came forth from YHVH
[the four Hebrew letters]"**

(Waite, *The Holy Kabbalah*, pp. 612-613,
emphasis added).

These are the Kabbalistic teachings that underlie Mozeson's etymologies of Hebrew words. Like the Kabbalists of old, he shifts and molds the words into patterns of his own choosing. He creates artificial links between unrelated words, forming an imaginary chain of words that he can use to promote his Kabbalistic views. Regrettably, these pseudo etymologies are being accepted and promoted by many sacred-name organizations.

Jerry Healan of the Evangelistic Assembly of Yahweh in Atlanta, Texas, is typical of sacred namers who concur with Mozeson's pseudo etymologies. Like Mozeson, he also holds the name of God in contempt. Healan wrote a personal letter to me, dated November 18, 1996, in which he presents an etymology of the word "god" that closely resembles Mozeson's. A portion of Healan's letter is reprinted below:

"Let me show you, Carl, what one of your scholastic bed-fellows has revealed concerning the word that you proudly proclaim as the modern day name, i.e., God. Here is what Garner Ted Armstrong wrote in his booklet entitled *What is God's Name?* 'Take for example, our English word "God." Where did it come from? The *Encyclopedia Britannica*, eleventh edition, says, "God. The common Teutonic word for a person OBJECT OF WORSHIP (emphasis mine)...**The word 'God' [German "Gott" from Goth, which was related to Taurus, the Bull]** on the conversion of the Teutonic races to Christianity, was adopted as the name of the one Supreme Being, the Creator of the universe..'God' is a word common to all Teutonic languages. In Gothic is *Guth*; Dutch has the same form as English; Danish and Swedish have *Gud*, German *Gott*. According to the *New English Dictionary*, the original may be found in two Aryan roots, both of the form *gheu*, one of which means 'to invoke,' the other 'to pour'; the last is used of sacrificial offerings. The word would thus mean the object either of religious invocation or of religious worship by sacrifice. It has also been suggested that the word might mean a 'molten image' from the sense of 'pour' " (Vol. 12; p. 169).'

"Here are the root origins of *gheu* as related in *The Roots of English* by Robert Claiborne; GHEU-I, L fundere, fus-, to pour, whence the FUNNEL through which you pour things, and the FOUNDRY in which FUSED (molten) metal is poured into molds. Figurative uses include CONFUSE ('pour together'), DIFFUSE ('pour apart'), PROFUSE ('pouring forth'), TRANSFUSE ('pour across'), and REFUND ('pour back'). To REFUSE is

another kind of 'pouring back'--though some derive the word from a quite different root. A more remote L. relative is *futilis*, easily emptied, leaky; pouring water into a leaky vessel is FUTILE.

"Gc. members of the tribe include GUSH, GUST (a 'gush' of wind), the GEYSER from which hot water gushes, and improbably but pretty certainly--GUT (? because the guts of a butchered animal 'pour out').

"**GHEU-**, to yawn or gape (?related to *ghai-*) whence the GUMS you expose when you do. A Gk. word for a yawning chasm gave us CHAOS, from which a seventeenth-century Dutch scientist coined GAS.

"**GHEU (h)-**, to call, invoke, **whence the Gc. GOD one invokes, and GIDDY--**a word much weakened from its original sense, '**possessed by a god, insane**' (*emphasis added*)."

Do some of these words sound familiar? This same pseudo etymology is found in Mozeson's essay. Writers who publish these false etymologies are promoting the teachings of rabbinic Kabbalism, whether they realize it or not! Furthermore, those who believe in these silly etymologies are supporting the Kabbalistic effort to destroy the name of God.

Mozeson recently published an etymological work entitled *THE WORD: The Dictionary that Reveals the Hebrew Sources of English*. In this work, Mozeson promotes the Kabbalistic view of Hebrew as the mother of all languages. Mozeson's dictionary, which contains over 22,000 word deconstructions, received raving reviews from *The Jerusalem Post*, *The New York Jewish Week*, *The Jewish Journal of Los Angeles* and the *Boston Jewish Times*.

As Mozeson's own words show, his etymologies are not based on ancient Biblical Hebrew but on the Yiddish speech of modern Jews. Notice:

"The Bible has no vowel marks in the original, handwritten parchment form. Only oral tradition allows the scribe or public Torah reader to read a ך as a B rather than a V, or vice versa. The ן is only pronounced as a T in

standard Israeli pronunciation, a recent and unhistoric development. **Variants in pronunciation** emerge when noting **the spoken Hebrew** among Jews from Yemen, Iraq, Italy and elsewhere. Variations in spelling, also along the lines of Grimm's Laws [Named after Jakob Grimm, who developed a system of "**hypothesized prehistoric sound shifts**" (see *Webster's New World College Dictionary*). He and his brother Wilhelm are more widely known for their collection of fairy tales.], are common enough in the Bible to encourage the reader to hear--rather than see--the examined words in this book."

Mozeson's etymologies are, like those of the Grimm brothers, **purely hypothetical**. These false etymologies ignore the revealed meaning of the Hebrew words as marked in the Masoretic text, and substitute any number of **philosophical** and **esoteric** meanings. Mozeson views those who do not take such liberties with the Scriptures as "uninitiated":

"Classic Bible commentaries encourage variant readings of standard Hebrew words because alternative, intended **multiple meanings** emerge. **Only the uninitiated do not treat a word from the Hebrew Bible as an infinitely open formula**" (*THE WORD: The Dictionary that Reveals the Hebrew Sources of English*, p. 10, *emphasis added*).

This approach to interpreting the Scriptures is not new. It was practiced in ancient times by the gnostics, who taught that all spiritual knowledge comes through direct revelation. Today, it is being practiced not only by the Kabbalists but by many unwitting Christians who do not recognize its pagan origin. The apostle Peter warns us not to adopt this gnostic practice:

"Knowing this first, that **no prophecy [inspired word] of the Scripture is of any private interpretation**. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Pet. 1:20-21).

The words that the Holy Spirit inspired in the days of old were recorded in the Hebrew text, which was entrusted to the Masoretic Levites. They carefully safeguarded every word in the text, preserving the exact

pronunciation and meaning of the Hebrew words. Masoretic texts of the Ben Asher family are still in existence. These are the Hebrew manuscripts that the translators of the King James Version used to determine the meaning of each word in the Old Testament. All of these handwritten manuscripts are pointed with vowel marks and have been so pointed since the 500's A.D. To look for multiple meanings of the Hebrew words is pure Kabbalistic gnosticism!

As Jesus warned His followers centuries ago to beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees, so we today must be on guard against the gnostic teachings of the Kabbalists. Their variant versions of the Hebrew text are--like the Grimms' fairy tales--purely imaginary. They are not etymological facts!

The study papers *The Oneness of God*, *The Two Jehovahs of the Psalms* and *The Two Jehovahs of the Pentateuch* will help you defend yourself from these deceptive teachings. You may request free copies of these study papers by writing to the following address:

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