

(7a) The Revelation (Disclosure) of the Divine Name

Based on Exodus 3.

For Moses to ask God, what is your name, is practically the same as asking, “Who are you?” For the ancient Hebrews, God’s name conveyed God’s character and told them something about God.

Information:

- ◇ The term LORD, in our English Bibles, signals that the Hebrew is Yhwh (pronounce: Yahweh)
(No problem in Korean: 여호와.)
- ◇ **YHWH** is a **tetragrammaton**. A tetragrammaton is four letters to stand for one word.
- ◇ The Hebrew alphabet had no vowels/only consonants. So the consonants are: YHWH. Scholars must infer the original pronunciation. It is now agreed that the original pronunciation was probably: Yahweh.

[Modern English translations have the word LORD rather than YHWH in order to respect those who wish to honor the divine name by not pronouncing it. Orthodox Jews, in their worship, will say *adonai* which means “Lord” just to show respect for the divine name and not pronounce it, **but** it is **not** erroneous or wrong, from an academic point of view, to say “Yahweh.” **In this class, we will say: “Yahweh,” keeping in mind respect for the divine name.**]

Chapter 3 upholds two claims: a.) It identifies Yahweh with the God of the ancestors (Exod. 3:6, 13, 15), and b.) It connects the Hebrew verb “to be” *hyh* or *hwh* with the divine name.¹ This divine name is *Yhwh*.

How to Interpret the Divine Name:

1. Hebrew: Yhwh
2. Pronunciation: Yahweh
3. verb root: *h-y-h* or *h-w-h* means: “to be”

¹ J. Andrew Dearman, *Religion and Culture in Ancient Israel* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1992), 23.