

A STUDY OF THE TRANSLATION OF THE TETRAGRAMMATON יְהוָה: ITS PHONETICS, PHONOLOGY, SEMANTICS AND ARGUMENT FOR RENDERING IN VERNACULAR LANGUAGES

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ABSTRACT

The subject of the translation, transliteration and rendering of the Tetragrammaton (יהוה) into vernacular languages has been one of heated debate. This paper will look into the Phonetics, Phonology and Semantics of the Tetragrammaton as well as the linguistic and scriptural reasons for advocating its translation and equivalent rendering. Considering the original Hebrew texts as well as texts from the 1st through to the 6th Centuries CE of the Septuagint in Greek and Hebrew will provide clear evidence for the appropriateness of translating the Divine Name. Through this powerful linguistic and historical evidence it will also further refute ancient superstitions as well as arguments which are the basis of modern efforts to suppress and ban the use of the Tetragrammaton in both written and spoken form.

Keywords: יהוה, Tetragrammaton, the Divine Name, Jehovah, Yahweh, Yehowah, Phonetics, Phonology, Semantics, Translation, Bible Studies

INTRODUCTION

The Tetragrammaton has a long and meaningful history across many cultures, languages and religions as such it has had a great impact on the development of various historical texts and remains one of major areas of debate and quandary for the translator. As the nature of translating the Tetragrammaton is one of significant sensitivity for some, it is of importance to understand the correct forms of translation and rendering into vernacular languages from the original Paleo-Hebrew and Hebrew texts.

The term defined in English as the Tetragrammaton can be divided into “Tetra” meaning four and “grammaton” to consist of letters or to consist of four letters being derived from the Greek τετραγράμματον. (Knight et al) This Tetragrammaton refers to the exclusive theonym of יהוה being commonly transliterated as YHWH but also YHVH, JHVH and JHWH (with vowels not included).

Along with this variation in possible rendering comes the ever present dispute over the correct rendering and pronunciation.

This paper will then discuss an argument supporting the rendering into modern vernacular languages and the appropriateness of the relevant and equivalent pronunciation in the target languages. It will outline the ethical and scriptural argument supported by linguistic evidence for translation.

The scriptures will be used to provide the foundation of supporting the translation of the Tetragrammaton and can be taken as the supreme authority for doing so.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Tetragrammaton has been the topic of heated debate between scholars from various schools of thought. There are those who vehemently oppose the rendering of the Tetragrammaton in both ancient and modern form as well as prohibit its pronunciation even within a religious setting notably scholars from Catholic and Jewish schools. On the contrary there are those that support, translate and publicize the Tetragrammaton. One proponent against the use of the Tetragrammaton is Arthur J. Serratelli a Catholic Bishop (himself a scholar). On the 8th of August 2008 he wrote an edict for “The Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments” stating that the Divine Name or Tetragrammaton should not be used in any religious services, effectively banning its use. The edict admits that a large portion for the basis of this is not from scholarly research but to uphold the Jewish practice and traditions of the church. This despite evidence to the contrary. He maintained that the exact phonetics and phonology cannot be ascertained. On this end of the spectrum are more scholars such as Bruce M. Metzger who wrote “*While it is almost if not quite certain that the Name was originally pronounced ‘Yahweh,’ this pronunciation was not indicated when the Masoretes added vowel sound to the consonantal Hebrew text. To the four consonants YHWH of the Name, which had come to be regarded as too sacred to be pronounced, they attached the vowel signs indicating that in its place should be read the Hebrew word Adonai meaning ‘Lord’ (or Elohim meaning ‘God’).*” He supposes that this is significant enough a reason to prohibit the modern rendering of the name. Many scholars against translation insist the name was not in use and that any modern attempt to find the phonetics, phonology and semantics of the Tetragrammaton is bound to be a fruitless endeavor. Critics such as Wolf Wilhelm Graf von Baudissin wrote strongly against the use of the Tetragrammaton in the 1st Century CE providing arguments in support of his ideas, however, archeological evidence that has surfaced since such revered writings shows this to be untrue. Proponents for the Divine Name such as Sidney Jellicoe reveal that the Fouad Papyrus and Fouad 266 fragment “flatly disapproved” statements claiming the Divine Name was not in historical use or that it was unpronounced. Jellicoe further points out that the phonology at least from the point of ancient Greek speaking Christians is possible because they recorded their Koine Greek equivalent in the Fouad Papyrus as well as other surviving fragments and manuscripts.

Killing a Dead Language: A Case against Emphasizing Vowel Pointing when Teaching Biblical Hebrew written by William P. Griffin, discusses how the system of Tiberian pointing has effected the understanding of Hebrew phonetics and phonology in relation to Ancient Biblical Hebrew. He makes the point that the Tiberian system is only one of three vowel pointing systems the others being Babylonian and Palestinian and that have significant phonological and phonetic importance. Therefore for proponents of the use of the Tetragrammaton the arguments between them may become not whether or not to pronounce the name but rather how it was pronounced. The 6th Century Byzantine Administrator John the Lydian (Ἰωάννης Λαυρέντιος ὁ Λυδός) wrote that the Greek equivalent of Jehovah in use in his day IAO (Yahoo) was in use even among the Chaldeans (Deissman). Kristin De Troyer in his work entitled *lectio difficilior: The Names of God. Their Pronunciation and Their Translation* states that while the phonological structure and phonetics of Hebrew show the name was likely Yahweh, that translators should render it as Adonai due to the Tiberian points, something that P. Griffin as previously stated has recommended to be an unreliable source for establishing pure phonetic and phonological forms today.

In their explanation on the phonetics of Hebrew, Paul Joüon and T. Muraoka explain that in their translation processes the phonetics they feel as the most acceptable is Yahweh and clearly state that in their translations they show a preference for using the form Yahweh over the traditional English form of Jehovah claiming it to be closer to the original phonology. It seems for the subject of the Tetragrammaton there are as many opinions as there are scholars. This paper will attempt to sift through the evidence and arguments Phonetically, Phonologically, Semantically and Scripturally.

PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY

Due to the right to left reading of both Paleo-Hebrew and Hebrew it should be noted that all references and examples to these should be read as such.

The phonetics of the Tetragrammaton is of a simplistic formation yet can be perceived in numerous ways due to the lack of proper vowels in Hebrew. Being an Abjad of 22 consonants it makes use of diacritics when vowels are required instead of employing the use of separate vowel symbols (Dever & Eerdmans). The lack of proper vowels is problematic and various dialects have existed throughout the centuries and still exist at present. The dialectal difference may hinder the efficiency of some translations however this remains a cause of concern for the spoken utterance of the Tetragrammaton rather than the written form.

The absence of vowels from ancient manuscripts means that the exact pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton is realistically unattainable, however an educated estimation can be made on natural speech forms from Modern Hebrew and the pronunciation that has been passed on through Jewish Liturgy.

The name is comprised of the Hebrew letters:

י Yod – corresponding to J but actually pronounced as Y

ה He - corresponding to H

ו Waw – W or also used as semi-vowel.

ה He – this may not be pronounced at the end of words in a way akin to English.

By reason of the consonant nature of He (ה) and the possibility of Yod (י) and Waw (ו) to be used as vocalic place holders, there is no way to accurately deduce the definite pronunciation.

On this basis there have been numerous proposals as to how the name should be rendered into vernacular languages. The most commonly accepted forms in English are Jehovah or Yahweh and can be found correspondingly throughout literature. The form translated as Jehovah or Yehowah/ Yehovah (יהוה) can be found 6,518 times in the original Masoretic Text with Tiberian pointing(יהוה) so as to read Adonai and Jehovih (יהוה) a total of 305. (Griffin)

One key area to take note of is that although held as scripture itself, the Tiberian Pointing is in itself one interpretation of a theoretically possible reading. However, criticism of the Tiberian Pointing System clearly shows that it applies the system to all Biblical Hebrew regardless of the era in which it was written. This can only serve to be a source of error as languages rarely remain stable and vowels in many languages are markedly different even between speakers with only a single generation gap.

Additionally, it has been proven that the confusion associated with the translation of Biblical Hebrew is significantly reduced through the disregarding of the Tiberian Points.

So while some have disputed the acceptability of the Yehowah pronunciation evidence shows it was in early use. (Kotansky & Spier)

While H (ה) can be used as a silent letter at the end of a word, it is never employed as such in the middle of a word in Biblical Hebrew. In an effort to prevent the pronunciation of the Divine Name Medieval Hebrew scholars omitted the vowel markings of YehVaH after the first H

when juxtaposed with the word Adonai (Lord) making it read as YeH?VaH. Later the word Yehovih is written using the Hebrew “I” pointing equivalent to remind the reader to read Elohim (God). However, when reading the YeHoViH form there was not prefixed marking that would prevent it being read out loud as YeHoViH, this means that the scribes were not concerned with this pronunciation as it was not the true pronunciation. Through simple cross elimination by the comparison of YeH?Vah and YeHoViH it can be logically concluded that the correct pronunciation was likely Yehovah (or distinctly similar). This is further supported by the LenB19a Masoretic manuscript in which scribes through human error failed to suppress the “o” some 50 times therefore giving the true, Yehovah reading.

In other names containing the abbreviated form of Yehovah, such as Joshua (Yehoshua-Yehovah saves) and numerous others from the period.

It is interesting to note that this pronunciation is one that was maintained by the Karaites of Persia which had been geographically isolated from rabbinical spheres of influence in Galilee and Babylonia. They had therefore preserved the direct interpretation of the law (Torah) rather than the adages of the Mishnah and Talmud. Attempts by the Masoretes to alter the readings to prevent pronunciation were actively resisted by the Karaites (Gordon)

The English rendering of the name Yehovah as Jehovah is appropriate in that it follows the acceptable standard of Latinization of a non-Latin script and non-Latin language. (In Hebrew it would be considered incorrect as Hebrew has no true J sound.)

The reason for the suppression of the Tetragrammaton and justification for translation will be considered in the following sections.



Figure 1: Post- Babylonian Exile script with Tetragrammaton written in original Paleo-Hebrew.



Figure 2: Fragment 8HevXIIa (LXXVTS10a, Rahlfs 943a) written in Koine Greek with Tetragrammaton written in Hebrew. Dated as end of the First Century C.E

SEMANTICS

The word Semantics comes from the Greek *σημαντικός* *sēmantikós* meaning significant. Therefore when trying to understand the meaning of a word its significance in both literal and inferred meaning must be carefully weighed.

In regard to the Tetragrammaton the meaning is strongly significant. While the Tetragrammaton is meant to be used as the personal name of the only True God, Creator or Supreme Ruler of the Universe it also has a profound meaning that in itself has been the subject of considerable analysis.

The name יהוה contains the root verb היה (HWH,HVH) “to be” or “come to pass” with the Yod (י) denoting to bring about, which would render it Semantically in English as “He causes to become”(NWT). It is unlikely that the Hebrews who originally used this name would have realized the full significance of its meaning. It denotes that Jehovah/ Yehovah is actively involved in the outworking of his purpose thus causing things to come into the condition of being in accord with His purpose for them.

This meaning then poses a difficulty in translation as it is inefficacious to retain the meaning in most languages (Joüon & Muraoka).

A GUIDE TO TRANSLATION AND RENDITION

The translator therefore stands at a dilemma, a crossroads so to speak when translating or rendering the Tetragrammaton into vernacular languages. Two questions stand at the fore:

Should the name be translated phonetically, or
Should the name be translated via meaning?

In almost all cases it should be translated in its closest possible rendering or recognized standard within the language. It is acceptable for it to be rendered as the commonly recognized form in that it could be considered the standard for the language, this is one reason why Jehovah, which follows the common consonant and vowel groups in standard English and which is the most widely accepted should be considered as one of the acceptable pronunciations and renderings of the Tetragrammaton. However when translating it should be carefully weighed how it can be naturally expressed in the language with emphasis on pronunciation.

For illustrative purposes consider the name Arabic name Muhammad. When translating it from the original Arabic script emphasis is put on its pronunciation and not meaning. If one were to call the person “Praiseworthy” which is what Muhammad means, the individual would not be

able to recognize that you were addressing them. Even if the speaker pronounced the name Muhammad in a similar manner to the true Arabic, the non-native speaker still would not be able to pronounce the name with the stress and inflection as would a native Arabic speaker, however the speaker would still recognize his name. Similarly the Tetragrammaton should be translated with a view as to its clear pronunciation in the target language not necessarily the original and should be done in such a way that it cannot be confuse with preexisting words in the target language.

In order to retain the meaning and convey the meaning then it is advisable to create annotations or footnotes explaining the meaning of the name and its significance in the target language. By doing so the respectful and befitting invocation of the name came be performed.

LINGUISTIC AND SCRIPTURAL JUSTIFICATION FOR THE USE OF THE TETRAGRAMMATON IN VERNACULAR LANGUAGES IN PHONETIC, PHONOLOGICAL, SEMANTIC AND SCRIPTURAL CONTEXT

The main issue regarding the use of the Tetragrammaton is the misinterpretation of the words of Exodus 20: 7.

The prohibition in this verse is often misunderstood to mean that the Tetragrammaton should not be pronounced. This misguided conclusion has reached the point of superstitious dread despite it having no linguistic basis. Compare the texts from different translations that do make use of the Tetragrammaton.

Literal Translation of the Holy Bible – LITV renders this verse as:

“You shall not take the name of Jehovah your God in vain; for Jehovah will not leave unpunished the one who takes His name in vain.”

The Rotherham Emphasized Bible;

Thou shalt not utter the name of Yahweh thy God for falsehood, for Yahweh will not let him go unpunished who uttereth his name for falsehood.

The Concordant Literal Version;

You shall not take up the name of Yahweh your Elohim for futility, for Yahweh shall not hold innocent him who takes up His name for futility.

Young’s Literal Translation;

Thou dost not take up the name of Jehovah thy God for a vain thing, for Jehovah acquitteth not him who taketh up His name for a vain thing.

The Exegeses Companion Bible;

Bear not the name of Yah Veh your Elohim in defamation; for Yah Veh exonerates him not who bears his name in defamation.

The original language word here (וַיִּשָׁא) does not hold any prohibition on the correct use of the Tetragrammaton rather is prohibits the blasphemous, disrespectful use of the name or use that would in any way bring reproach upon it. Hence none of these translations try to impose the idea that the name itself should not be used. Consider the following verse in Hebrew of Exodus 20:7. (Masoretic Text)

וּלֹא תִשָּׂא אֶת-שֵׁם-יְהוָה
 אֱלֹהֶיךָ, לְשׂוּא: כִּי לֹא יִנְקֶה
 יְהוָה, אֶת אֲשֶׁר-יִשָּׂא אֶת-
 שְׁמוֹ לְשׂוּא. } פ

Figure 3: Excerpt from Masoretic Text. (Exodus 20:7) The blue script for Yehovah/Jehovah and the red script for vain, falsely evil. (Masoretic Text) (Highlights by author).

Accordingly שָׁוּי (shâv^e'), shawv; or שָׁו shav; can be taken to mean desolating; evil (as destructive), literally (ruin) or morally (especially guile); figuratively idolatry (as false, subjective), uselessness (as deceptive, objective; also adverbially, in vain):—false (-ly), lie, lying, vain, vanity (Harris et al)

The key to note from this text is that the sacredness of the Tetragrammaton is to be maintained. The misuse of the Tetragrammaton would therefore be a grave blasphemy. This would remain the case regardless of its equivalent rendering into a vernacular language.

The scriptures logically show time and time again that the correct use of the Tetragrammaton is beneficial to the worshipper.

Consider Malachi 3:16-17~

New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures (Revised Edition);

16 At that time those who fear Jehovah spoke with one another, each one with his companion, and Jehovah kept paying attention and listening. And a book of remembrance was written before him for those fearing Jehovah and for those meditating on his name.

17 “And they will be mine,” says Jehovah of armies, “in the day when I produce a special property I will show them compassion, just as a man shows compassion to his son who serves him.

Green’s Literal Translation;

16 Then those fearing Jehovah spoke together, each man to his neighbor. And Jehovah gave attention and heard. And a Book of Remembrance was written before Him for those who feared Jehovah, and for those esteeming His name.

17 And they shall be Mine, says Jehovah of hosts, for the day that I will make up My treasure. And I will pity them as a man has pity on his son who serves him.

It is an impossibility from both a linguistic and logical point of view that one could either esteem or meditate upon a name which one does not know or use. Consider Figure 4.

טו אֲז נְדַבְרוּ יְרֵאֵי יְהוָה, אִישׁ
אֶל-רֵעֵהוּ; וַיִּקְשֹׁב יְהוָה, וַיִּשְׁמָע,
וַיִּכְתֹּב סֵפֶר זְכוֹרֹן לְפָנָיו לְיְרֵאֵי
יְהוָה, וּלְחֹשְׁבֵי שְׁמוֹ.

יז וְהָיוּ לִי, אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת,
לְיוֹם, אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי עֹשֶׂה סִגְלָה;
וְחִמְלָתִי עֲלֵיהֶם--כֹּאֲשֶׁר יִחְמַל
אִישׁ, עַל-בְּנוֹ הָעֶבֶד אֹתוֹ.

Figure 4: Excerpt from Masoretic Text. (Malachi 3:16-17) (Highlights by author.)

The script in blue (irai Yehovah) signifies “those fearing Jehovah”.

Green, (ulchshbi shm-u) in English “ones reckoning of name of him”. Classified under Strong’s Number H2803, H2804 it gives the definition of to think, esteem and account (as in remembrance). This is a Verb Qal Participle (Harris et al) that indicates the action is under way and is continuous, as such it is often equated to “-ing” form in English. Therefore linguistically all evidence points to the notion that the name should be continually used. No logical explanation to the contrary could be provided.

Orange highlights (sgle) “special-possession” registered as #5459 in Strong’s Lexicon this word is a feminine noun and can be further expressed as a possession, jewel or valued property. Doubtless all these are high in worth, this word then denotes the high regard that Jehovah has

for those who correctly use his name further likening them to (בְּנוֹי ב'נו) or sons of Jehovah. It implies the magnitude to which Jehovah feels affection for those thinking upon/ using His name.

Further, the text of Proverbs 18:10 provides yet more evidence that the name should be used.

מְגִדָּל-עֹז, שֵׁם יְהוָה
בּוֹ-יָרוּץ צַדִּיק וְנִשְׁגָּב.

Figure 5: Excerpt from Masoretic Text.(Proverbs 18:10)

The green (u'nshgb) shows that one becomes spiritually impregnable through the fleeing into or living in accord with the Divine Name. Hence knowing this name would be a requirement of spiritual fortification. How will such fortification occur if one does not know the name? Once again, this would be an illogical conclusion. The Julia Smith Translation renders it as; *The name of Jehovah a tower of strength: into it the just one shall run and be exalted.*

The Concordant Literal Version as;

The name of Yahweh is a strong tower; The righteous one runs to it and is made impregnable.

In all instances the action of fleeing or running to is preceded by the knowledge or knowing of the Divine Name. Similarly other translations that favor the removal of the Tetragrammaton still read in the same manner.

Perhaps the most powerful argument for the pronunciation of the Divine Name can be found in Joel 2:32. Which directly employs the word יִקְרָא (iqra) meaning call out to, call to, to call on or shout. Directly following this verb is בְּשֵׁם (b'shm) "on the name" thereafter followed by the Tetragrammaton יְהוָה. This verse could then be rendered as "call out the name of Jehovah".

וְהָיָה כָּל אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָא בְּשֵׁם
יְהוָה יִמְלֹט כִּי בְהַר צִיּוֹן
וּבִירוּשָׁלַם תִּהְיֶה פְּלִיטָה כְּאֲשֶׁר
אָמַר יְהוָה וּבִשְׂרֵי־דָיִם אֲשֶׁר
יְהוָה קָרָא

Figure 6: Excerpt from Hebrew Old Testament with Strong's Numbers, A Masoretic Text (Joel 2:32). Red Text יִקְרָא (iqra) call on/ call out followed by blue בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה (b'shm yhw) on the name of Jehovah. (Note the lack of Tiberian Points.)

Various Translations support this argument.

The New Simplified Bible says;

It will happen that whoever calls on the name of Jehovah will be saved. There will be those on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem that will escape, even among the survivors whom Jehovah calls.

Lexham English Bible:

And it will happen—everyone who calls on the name of Yahweh will be rescued, because on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be those who escape, as Yahweh said, and among the survivors whom Yahweh is calling.*

It is interesting to note that even in Bibles where the Tetragrammaton has been actively removed and replaced with Lord or God, this verse still reads the same. Hence, producing a confusing reading.

The Breton English Septuagint Translation reads;

And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved: for in mount Sion and in Jerusalem shall the saved one be as the Lord has said, and they that have glad tidings preached to them, whom the Lord has called.

Bibles that remove the Tetragrammaton in this verse (that is to say translations that remove the Divine Name at all) do the reader a great disservice. They encourage the reader to call upon the name of “the Lord” yet do not provide the name so as to be call upon. Comparatively this can be illustrated in a hypothetical conversation between two individuals.

A: Who should I talk to about this serious matter?

B: You should talk to Mr._(Awkward Silence) _.

A: Talk to who?

B: I already said Mr._(Awkward Silence) _.

A: You haven’t said anything, you just stand there silently....

As preposterous as this conversation may sound it is in essence the exact same situation, yet all the more serious as it pertains to worship.

This faulty line of reasoning become all the more linguistically incorrect when Psalm 83:18 is translated. An appropriate reading could be as found in the Modern Spelling Version of Tyndale-Coverdale;

And they shall know that thou, whose name is Jehovah, art only the most highest over all the earth.

Certain Translations render this without any rendering of the Divine Name for example the Charles Thompson Translation reads;

And let them know that thy name is the Lord; that thou alone art the Most High over all the earth.

Just a brief glance at this verse reveals serious grammatical flaws that come about in the effort to suppress the Tetragrammaton. “Thy name is the Lord” is completely incorrect. “The Lord” is not a name, it is a title and attempting to masquerade it as a name is unethical and willfully deceptive. The Hebrew word שִׁמְךָ (shm’k) “name of you” or “whose name is” for a personal name is used. Hence in Hebrew Psalm 83:18 reads as שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה (shm’k yhw) “whose name is Jehovah”.

וידעו כי אתה שִׁמְךָ יהוה לבדך
עליון על כל הארץ:

Figure 7: Excerpt from Hebrew Old Testament with Strong’s Numbers, A Masoretic Text (Psalm 83:18). שִׁמְךָ (shm’k) “name of you” in green, the Tetragrammaton in blue.

Based on the overwhelming evidence, any Contemporary claims that the name should not be used or pronounced then run in complete contradiction with the scriptural direction to do so.

Edicts given to ban the name from translation such as that given by "United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Divine Worship" having no proper argument as based on scripture and that serve only to perpetuate human traditions should be disregarded by the translator (Catholic Bishops Committee). Contradictory terms are used by advocates of suppressing the Tetragrammaton. A common line of reasoning is followed by these advocates for suppression. One such instance is;

“In order that the Word of God, written in sacred texts, may be covered and transmitted in an integral and faithful manner, every modern translation of the books of the bible aims at being a faithful and accurate transposition of the original text. Such a literary effort requires that the original text be translated with maximum integrity and accuracy, without omissions or additions with regard to the contents.” (Catholic Bishops Committee) At first glance this is a

fine and satisfactory approach and mindset to have when translating the scriptures. A very weak argument based on a particular interpretation of scriptures but ignoring all the scriptures presented here is then used. The same document goes on to say;

Apart from a purely philological order, there is also that of remaining faithful to the Church's tradition, from the beginning that the sacred Tetragrammaton was never pronounced in the Christian context".

It appears that the main motivation therefore cannot truly be said to be scriptural rather a traditional "idea" not fact that the divine name was not used. It further makes claims that are clearly refuted by archaeological evidence to the contrary;

The Greek translation of the Old Testament, the so called Septuagint, dating back to the last centuries prior to the Christian era, had regularly rendered the Hebrew Tetragrammaton with the Greek word Kyrios, which means Lord. Since the text of the Septuagint constituted the Bible of the first generation of Greek-speaking Christians, in which language all the books of the New Testament are also written, these Christians, too, from the beginning never pronounced the Tetragrammaton". These critics have claimed that the Early Christians omitted the Tetragrammaton from texts and replace it with the titles of Adonai and Elohim in Hebrew or Kyrios in Greek meaning Lord or God. Evidence clearly shows that the Early Christians both knew and used the Tetragrammaton going so far as to preserve it in its original form (Paleo-Hebrew or Hebrew) when translating scriptures. They also translated it into Greek. Thus various sources show that the practice of removing the Divine Name began taking place only AFTER the Christian era had already begun.

Consider the Greek Text of 8HevXII gr (Tov) and note the Tetragrammaton clearly preserved in Paleo-Hebrew along with the Greek. Figure 8 : Full Text and Figure 9: Enlargement

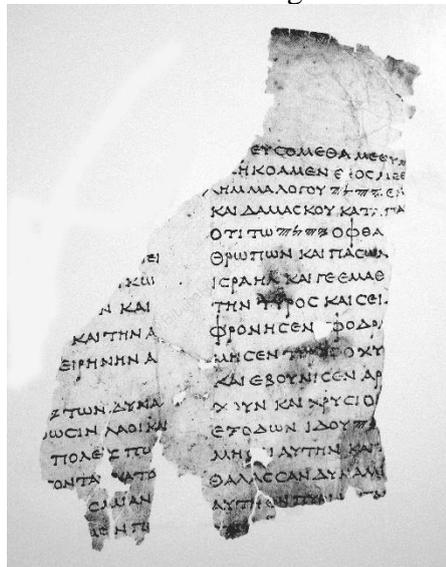


Figure 8: Col. B1–2 (according to E. Tov) of the Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever (8HevXII gr). Zachariah 8

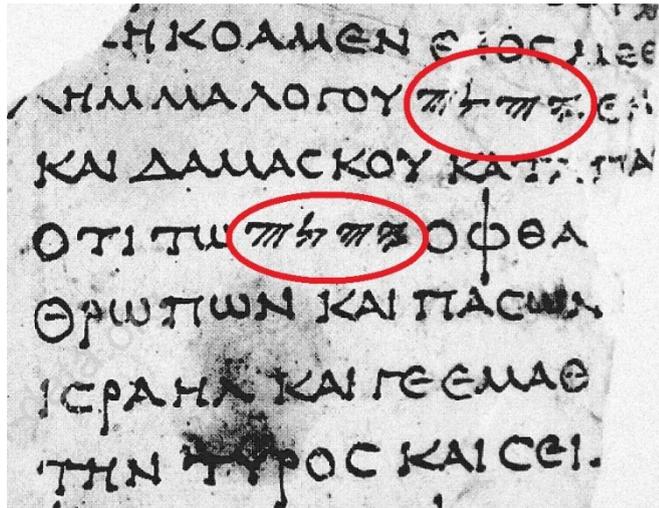


Figure 9: Col. B1–2 (according to E. Tov) of the Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever (8HevXII gr). Enlarged view with Paleo-Hebrew Tetragrammaton clearly identified in Zachariah 8.

8HevXII contains the Tetragrammaton in numerous instances.

The Greek manuscript 4Q120 (also pap4QLXXLevb) is a Septuagint manuscript of Leviticus. It gives further proof that the Divine Name was not only written but also in oral usage (Deissmann) during the First Century CE. It used the Hellenized form of the way the Tetragrammaton was understood to be pronounced in the period (Troyer). It is noted as ΙΑΩ which in Greek could be pronounced as Yaho and is found in Leviticus 3:12 in Fragment Number 6 as well as 4:27 in Fragment Number 20 (Skehan). The use of ΙΑΩ then predates the unscriptural practice of replacing the Tetragrammaton with Kyrios meaning Lord.

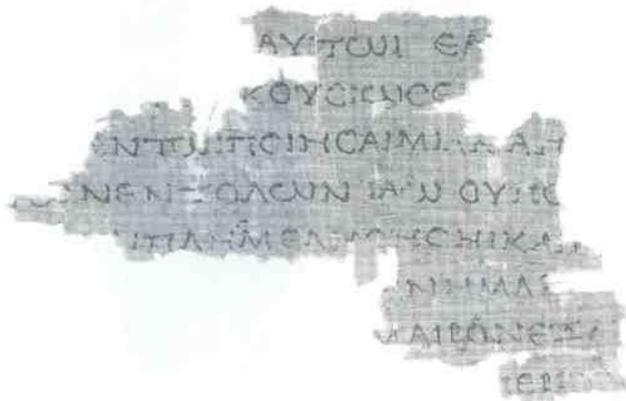


Figure 10: 4Q120, fragment 20, 1st-century BCE (Leviticus 4:27).



Figure 11: Detail of the Greek ΙΑΩ translation of the Tetragrammaton.

As late as the 2nd Century the Tetragrammaton was still being used by some translators and copyists. Papyrus Vindobonensis Graecus 39777 signed as SymP.Vindob.G.39777 is a papyrus scroll containing surviving fragments of Psalm 69 and 81. This is the copy translated by Symmachus. The surviving fragments clearly show the Tetragrammaton at Psalm 69:13,30 &31 (Kraus)

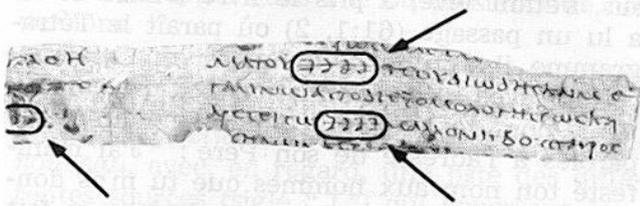


Figure 12: Papyrus Vindobonensis Graecus 39777 with Tetragrammaton selected.

The purpose of Symmachus translation was intended to be an elegant message from Hebrew to Greek and not a literal translation, yet he saw fit, due to its immense importance to include the Tetragrammaton, this is a noteworthy point (Metzger)

The AqTaylor Manuscript dated to the middle or latter part of the 5th Century and which is based on the translation of Aquila from the year c.130CE makes liberal use of the Paleo-Hebrew form of the Tetragrammaton (Taylor). It contains Psalms 90-103. The manuscript is written in Koine Greek, with the Tetragrammaton found in in Ps 91:2, 9; 92:1, 4, 5, 8, 9; 96:7, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13; 97:1, 5, 9, 10, 12; 102:15, 16, 19, 21; 103:1, 2, 6, 8.

The AqBurkitt Manuscript also based on the Greek translation by Aquila also contains the Tetragrammaton in Paleo-Hebrew at 1 Kings 20:13, 14; 2 Kings 23:12, 16, 21, 23, 25, 26, 27. This dispels the idea that ALL translators were in favor of removing the name even in later centuries. (Baudissin) Even during the 6th Century, some honest hearted translators did not suppress the name as can be seen from the Codex Marchalianus where the Greek translator wrote εγω εμυ to mean “I am Yhwh” in Isaiah 45:18. This was changed by some later individual to read “I am Lord” (Townsend).

Other notable individuals who used the name in its contemporary form for the period are Diodorus Siculus of the 1st Century who referred to it as Ἰαῶ (Iao) (Siculus), Origen of Alexandria (d. c. 254), Ἰαώ (Iao) (Origen), Porphyry (d. c. 305) Ἰεῦώ (Ieuo)(Eusebius) and Clement of Alexandria (d. c. 215) wrote Ἰαοὺ (Iaou)(Clement).

These references are by no means exhaustive and further evidence of use in the 1st Centuries BCE and CE can be found namely;

Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 3522 –

Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 5101

Taylor-Schechter 12.182

Ambrosiano O 39 sup.

Papyrus Fouad 266b

It is therefore both linguistically and scripturally sound to make use of the divine name in its original form, equivalent pronunciation and/ or equivalent script in the target language for the translation. It is also required not only for the sake of accuracy but to honor the Bible’s Divine author, Jehovah God.

MODERN RENDERING

Based on the words of Isaiah 2:2-3 “And many peoples shall go and say—Come ye, and let us ascend Unto the mountain of Yahweh Unto the house of the God of Jacob, That he may teach

us of his ways, And we may walk in his paths” (REB) one can feel the need to render the Tetragrammaton into its appropriate form in the target language. Some acceptable forms include.

English	Jehovah, Yahweh, Yehovah
Italian	Geova
Modern Greek	Ιεχωβά, Ιεχώβα
Arabic	يهوه
Spanish	Jehová
Portuguese	Jeová
Persian	يهوه
Japanese	エホバ
Swahili	Yehova
Dutch	Jehova
Armenian	Եհովա
Georgian	იეჰოვა
Basque	Jehovaren
Galician	Xehová
Bengali	যিহোবার
Kannada	ಯೆಹೋವನ
Russian	Иеговы
Korean	여호와

Table 2: A few examples of proper renderings in Vernacular Languages.

The modern translator should carefully consider the previously outlined Phonetics, Phonology and Semantics in order to render the Tetragrammaton as accurately as possible.

CONCLUSION

By virtue of the clear linguistic, scriptural and historical evidence considered, there cannot be any speculation on these grounds, for argument against the translation, transliteration and rendering of the Tetragrammaton into Vernacular languages. Linguistically there is no doubt about how the Tetragrammaton is to be used, with respect and meaningfully in worship, taking care to make sure that it is kept Sacred at all times. Scripturally the use is encouraged for all true worshippers and is a requirement for worship. Historically it has been used by both the Jews and the Early Christians but obscured due to human traditions and unscriptural superstitions. Despite opposition to its use it has been preserved until our time as one of the most important parts of mankind’s Divine Heritage. Despite concerted efforts to prevent it being known it will continue to survive for the words of Habakkuk 2:14 are sure to come to fulfillment.

The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah as the waters cover the sea. (NWT)

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