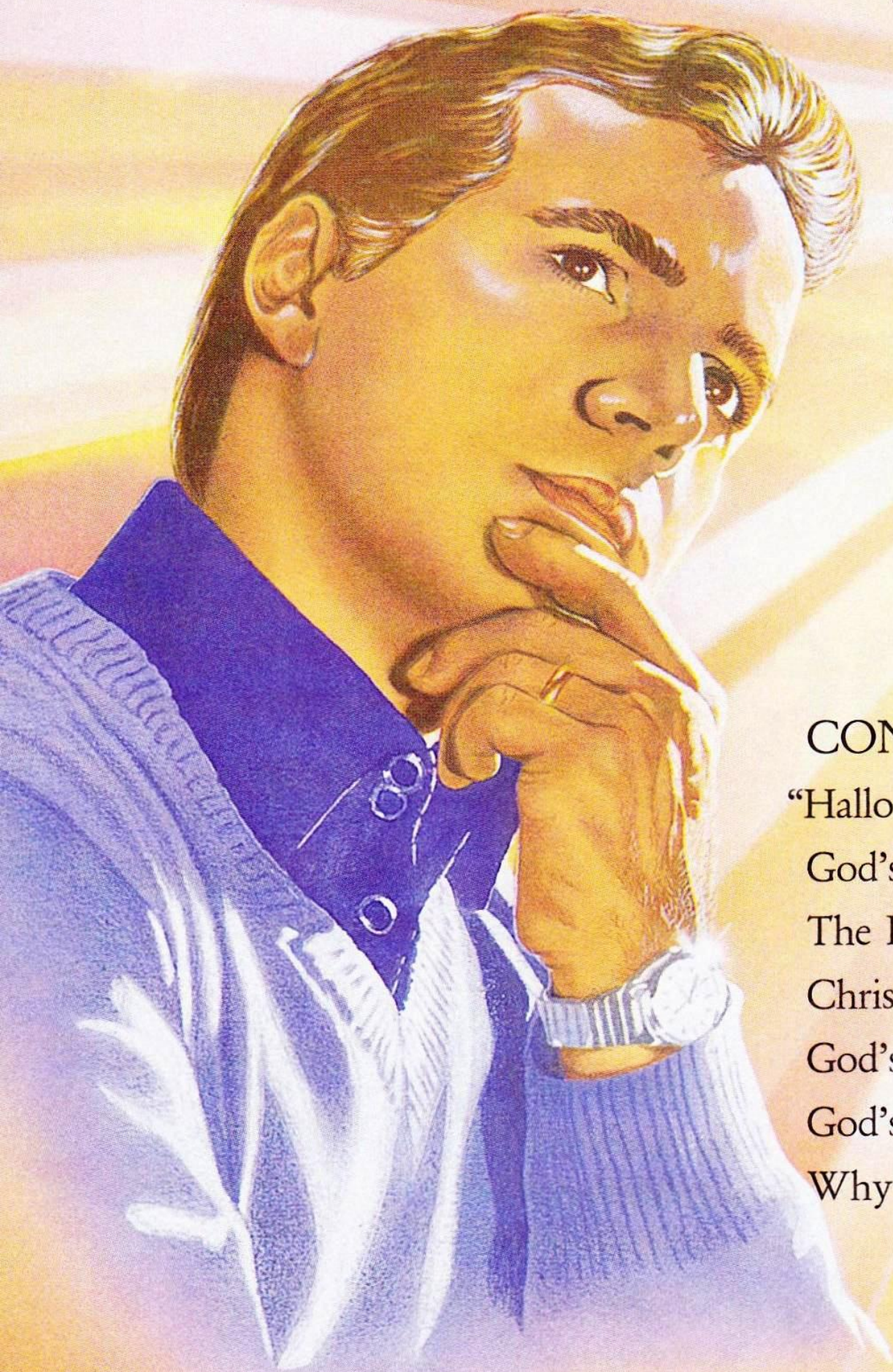


The background of the image is a vibrant sunset or sunrise. The sun is a bright, glowing orb positioned slightly to the right of the center, casting a brilliant, golden light across the sky and reflecting on the water below. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds in shades of yellow, orange, and white. In the foreground, the water is dark with horizontal ripples, and a large number of birds, likely seagulls, are captured in various stages of flight. Some are silhouetted against the bright light, while others are partially illuminated, creating a sense of movement and activity. The overall mood is one of awe and tranquility.

**The
DIVINE NAME
That Will Endure
Forever**



The DIVINE NAME That Will Endure Forever

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The Divine Name That Will Endure Forever
English (na-E)

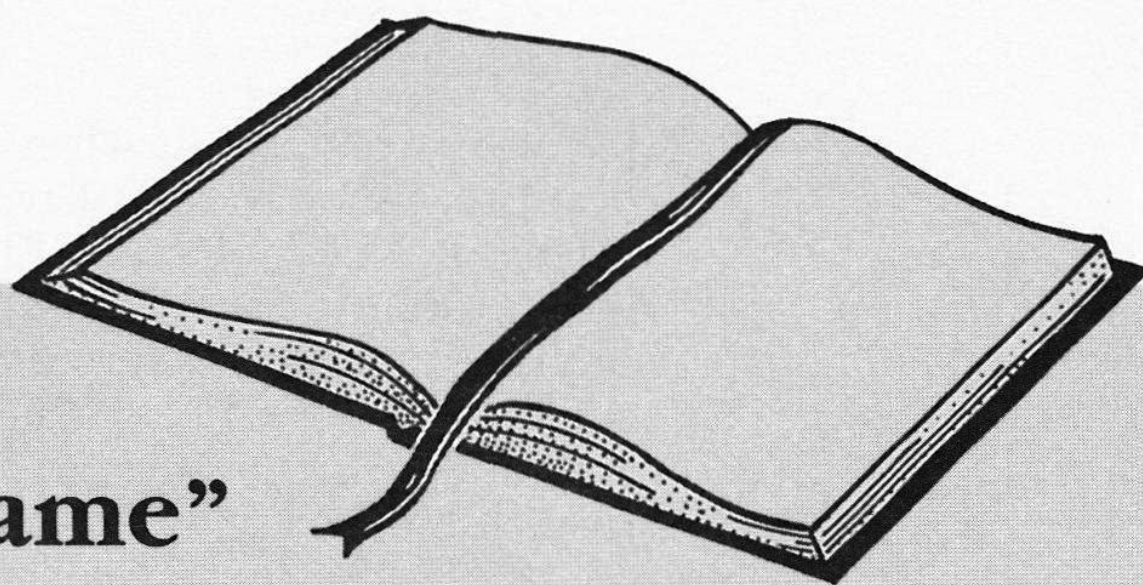
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“Hallowed Be Your Name” —What Name?



ARE you a religious person? Then doubtless, like many others, you believe in a Supreme Being. And likely you have great respect for the well-known prayer to that Being, taught by Jesus to his followers and known as the Lord's Prayer, or the Our Father. The prayer begins like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name."—Matthew 6:9, *New International Version*.

Have you ever wondered why Jesus put the 'hallowing,' or sanctifying, of God's name first in this prayer? Afterward, he mentioned other things such as the coming of God's Kingdom, God's will being done on earth and our sins being forgiven. The fulfillment of these other requests will ultimately mean lasting peace on earth and everlasting life for mankind. Can you think of anything more important than that? Nevertheless, Jesus told us to pray first of all for the sanctification of God's name.

It was not merely by chance that Jesus taught his followers to put God's name first in their prayers. That name was clearly of crucial importance to him, since he mentioned it repeatedly in his own prayers. On one occasion when he was praying publicly to God, he was heard to say: "Father, glorify your name!" And God himself answered: "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again."—John 12:28, *The Jerusalem Bible*.

The evening before Jesus died, he

was praying to God in the hearing of his disciples, and once again they heard him highlight the importance of God's name. He said: "I have made your name known to the men you took from the world to give me." Later, he repeated: "I have made your name known to them and will continue to make it known."—John 17:6, 26, *JB*.

Why was God's name so important to Jesus? Why did he show that it is important for *us*, too, by telling us to pray for its sanctification? To understand this, we need to realize how names were viewed in Bible times.

Names in Bible Times

Jehovah God evidently put in man a desire to name things. The first human had a name, Adam. In the story of creation, one of the first things Adam is reported as doing is naming the animals. When God gave Adam a wife, immediately Adam called her "Woman" ('*Ish-shah*', in Hebrew). Later, he gave her the name Eve, meaning "Living One," because "she had to become the mother of every-one living." (Genesis 2:19, 23; 3:20) Even today we follow the custom of giving names to people. Indeed, it is hard to imagine how we could manage without names.

In Israelite times, however, names were not mere labels. They meant something. For example, the name of Isaac, "Laughter," recalled the laugh-

ter of his aged parents when they first heard that they were to have a child. (Genesis 17:17, 19; 18:12) Esau's name meant "Hairy," describing a physical characteristic. His other name, Edom, "Red," or "Ruddy," was a reminder that he sold his birthright for a dish of red stew. (Genesis 25:25, 30-34; 27:11; 36:1) Jacob, although he was only slightly younger than his twin brother, Esau, bought the birthright from Esau and received the first-born's blessing from his father. From

Angels, people, animals, as well as stars and other inanimate things, have names. Would it be consistent for the Creator of all these things to be nameless?

birth, the meaning of Jacob's name was "Taking Hold of the Heel" or "Supplanter." (Genesis 27:36) Similarly the name of Solomon, during whose reign Israel enjoyed peace and prosperity, meant "Peaceable." —1 Chronicles 22:9.

Thus, *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Volume 1, page 572) states the following: "A study of the word 'name' in the O[ld] T[estament] reveals how much it means in Hebrew. The name is no mere label, but is significant of the real personality of him to whom it belongs."

The fact that God views names as important is seen in that, through an angel, he instructed the future parents of John the Baptist and Jesus as to what their sons' names should be. (Luke 1:13, 31) And at times he changed names, or he gave people additional names, to show the place they were to have in his purpose. For example, when God foretold that his servant Abram ("Father of Exaltation") would become father to many nations He changed his name to Abraham ("Father of a Multitude"). And he changed the name of Abraham's

wife, Sarai ("Contentious"), to Sarah ("Princess"), since she would be the mother of Abraham's seed.—Genesis 17:5, 15, 16; compare Genesis 32:28; 2 Samuel 12:24, 25.

Jesus, too, recognized the importance of names and he referred to Peter's name in giving him a privilege of service. (Matthew 16:16-19) Even spirit creatures have names. Two mentioned in the Bible are Gabriel and Michael. (Luke 1:26; Jude 9) And when man gives names to inanimate things such as stars, planets, towns, mountains and rivers, he is merely imitating his Creator. For example, the Bible tells us that God calls all the stars by name.—Isaiah 40:26.

Yes, names are important in God's eyes, and he put in man the desire to identify people and things by means of names. Thus angels, people, animals, as well as stars and other inanimate things, have names. Would it be consistent for the Creator of all these things to leave himself nameless? Of course not, especially in view of the psalmist's words: "Let all flesh bless [God's] holy name to time indefinite, even forever."—Psalm 145:21.

The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (Volume 2, page 649) says: "One of the most fundamental and essential features of the biblical revelation is the fact that God is not without a name: he has a personal name, by which he can, and is to be, invoked." Jesus certainly had that name in mind when he taught his followers to pray: "Our Father in the heavens, let *your name* be sanctified." —Matthew 6:9.

In view of all of this, it is evidently important for us to know what God's name is. Do *you* know God's personal name?

What Is God's Name?

Surprisingly, the majority of the hundreds of millions of members of

the churches of Christendom would probably find it difficult to answer that question. Some would say that God's name is Jesus Christ. Yet Jesus was praying to someone else when he said: "I have made *your* name manifest to the men *you* gave me out of the world." (John 17:6) He was praying to God in heaven, as a son speaking to his father. (John 17:1) It was his heavenly Father's name that had to be "hallowed," or "sanctified."

Yet many modern Bibles do not contain the name, and it is rarely used in the churches. Hence, far from being "hallowed," it has been lost to millions of Bible readers. As an example of the way Bible translators have treated God's name, consider just one verse where it appears: Psalm 83:18. Here is how this scripture is rendered in four different Bibles:

"Let them know that thou alone, whose name is the *LORD*, art the Most High over all the earth." (*Revised Standard Version* of 1952)

"To teach them that thou, O *Eternal*, thou art God Most High o'er all the world." (*A New Translation of the Bible*, by James Moffatt, of 1922)

"Let them know this: you alone bear the name *Yahweh*, Most High over the whole world." (*Catholic Jerusalem Bible* of 1966)

"That men may know that thou, whose name alone is *JEHOVAH*, art the most high over all the earth." (*Authorized, or King James, Version* of 1611)

Why does God's name look so different in these versions? Is his name *LORD*, the *Eternal*, *Yahweh* or *Jehovah*? Or are these all acceptable?

To answer this, we have to remember that the Bible was not originally written in English. The Bible writers were Hebrews, and they mostly wrote in the Hebrew and Greek languages of

their day. Most of us do not speak those ancient languages. But the Bible has been translated into numerous modern tongues, and we can use these translations when we want to read God's Word.

Christians have a deep respect for the Bible and rightly believe that "all Scripture is inspired of God." (2 Timothy 3:16) Hence, translating the Bible is a weighty responsibility. If someone deliberately changes or omits part of the contents of the Bible, he is tampering with the inspired Word. To such a one the Scriptural warning would apply: "If anyone makes an addition to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this scroll; and if anyone takes anything away from the words of the

God's name was clearly of crucial importance to Jesus, since he mentioned it repeatedly in his prayers

scroll of this prophecy, God will take his portion away from the trees of life."—Revelation 22:18, 19; see also Deuteronomy 4:2.

Most Bible translators doubtless respect the Bible and sincerely want to make it understandable in this modern age. But translators are not inspired. Most of them have strong opinions, too, on religious matters and may be influenced by personal ideas and preferences. They can also make human errors or mistakes in judgment.

Hence, we have the right to ask some important questions: What is God's real name? And why do different Bible translations have different names for God? Having established the answer to these questions, we can return to our original problem: Why is the sanctification of God's name so important?

God's Name

—Its Meaning and Pronunciation

ONE of the Bible writers asked: "Who has gathered the wind in the hollow of both hands? Who has wrapped up the waters in a mantle? Who has made all the ends of the earth to rise? *What is his name* and what the name of his son, in case you know?" (Proverbs 30:4) How can *we* find out what God's name is? That is an important question. The creation is a powerful proof that God must exist, but it does not tell us his name. (Romans 1:20) In fact, we could never know God's name *unless the*

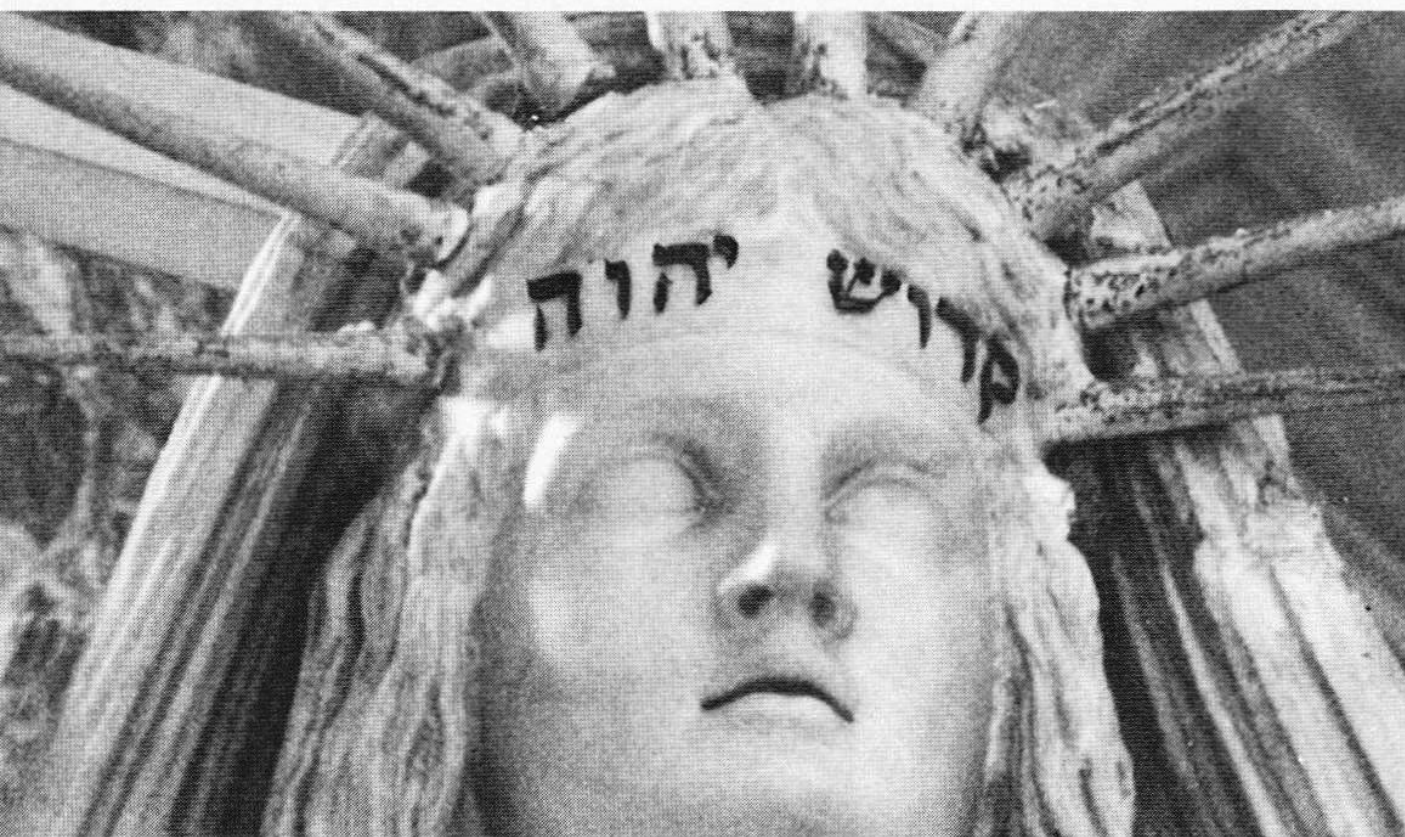
wrote an account of that event that has been preserved in the Bible down to our day. (Exodus 34:5) God even wrote his name with his own "finger." When he had given Moses what we today call the Ten Commandments, God miraculously wrote them down. The record says: "Now as soon as [God] had finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai he proceeded to give Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone written on by God's finger." (Exodus 31:18) God's name appears eight times in the original Ten Commandments. (Exodus 20:1-17) Thus God himself has revealed his name to man both verbally and in writing. So, what is that name?

In the Hebrew language it is written יהוה. These four letters, called the Tetragrammaton, are read from right to left in Hebrew and can be represented in many modern languages as YHWH or JHVH. God's name, represented by these four consonants, appears almost 7,000 times in the original "Old Testament," or Hebrew Scriptures.

The name is a form of a Hebrew verb *ha·wah'* (הוה), meaning "to become," and actually signifies "He Causes to Become."* Thus, God's name identifies him as the One who progressively fulfills his promises and unfailingly realizes his purposes. Only the true God could bear such a meaningful name.

Do you remember the different

* See Appendix 1A in the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, 1984 edition.



Detail of an angel with God's name, found on the tomb of Pope Clement XIII in St. Peter's Basilica, the Vatican

Creator himself told us. And he has done that in his own Book, the Holy Bible.

On one celebrated occasion, God pronounced his own name, repeating it in the hearing of Moses. Moses

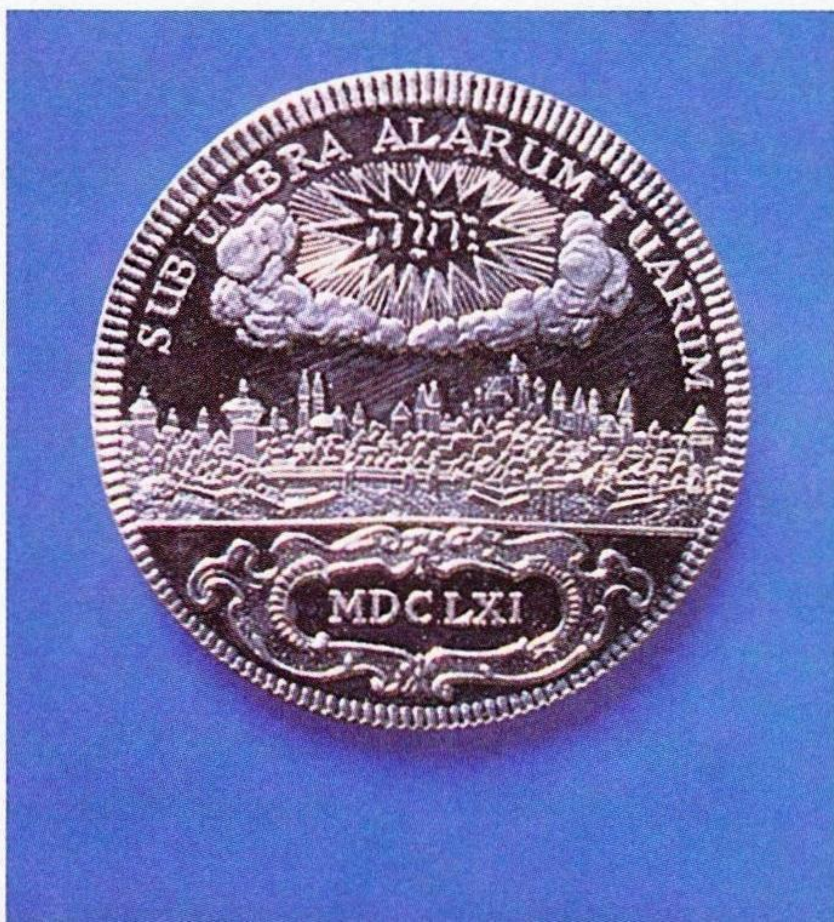
ways that God's name appeared in Psalm 83:18, as set out in the previous section (page 5)? Two of those translations had mere titles ("the LORD," the "Eternal") as substitutes for God's name. But in two of them, Yahweh and Jehovah, you can see the four letters of God's name. However, the pronunciation is different. Why?

How Is God's Name Pronounced?

The truth is, nobody knows for sure how the name of God was originally pronounced. Why not? Well, the first language used in writing the Bible was Hebrew, and when the Hebrew language was written down, the writers wrote only consonants—not vowels. Hence, when the inspired writers wrote God's name, they naturally did the same thing and wrote only the consonants.

While ancient Hebrew was an everyday spoken language, this presented no problem. The pronunciation of the Name was familiar to the Israelites and when they saw it in writing they

Many coins were minted bearing God's name. This one, dated 1661, is from Nuremberg, Germany. The Latin text reads: "Under the shadow of your wings"



Different scholars have different ideas about how the name YHWH was originally pronounced.

In *The Mysterious Name of Y.H.W.H.*, page 74, Dr. M. Reisel said that the "vocalisation of the Tetragrammaton must originally have been Y^eHūàH or YaHūàH."

Canon D. D. Williams of Cambridge held that the "evidence indicates, nay almost proves, that Jāhwéh was not the true pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton . . . The Name itself was probably JĀHŌH." —*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* (Periodical for Old Testament Knowledge), 1936, Volume 54, page 269.

In the glossary of the French *Revised Second Version*, page 9, the following comment is made: "The pronunciation *Yahvé* used in some recent translations is based on a few ancient witnesses, but they are not conclusive. If one takes into account personal names that include the divine name, such as the Hebrew name of the prophet Elijah (*Eliyahou*) the pronunciation might just as well be *Yaho* or *Yahou*."

In 1749 the German Bible scholar Teller told of some different pronunciations of God's name he had read: "Diodorus from Sicily, Macrobius, Clemens Alexandrinus, Saint Jerome and Origenes wrote *Jao*; the Samaritans, Epiphanius, Theodoretus, *Jabe*, or *Jave*; Ludwig Cappel reads *Javoh*; Drusius, *Jahve*; Hottinger, *Jehva*; Mercerus, *Jehovah*; Castellio, *Jovah*; and le Clerc, *Jawoh*, or *Javoh*."

Thus it is evident that the original pronunciation of God's name is no longer known. Nor is it really important. If it were, then God himself would have made sure that it was preserved for us to use. The important thing is to use God's name according to its conventional pronunciation in our own language.

Forms of the divine name in different languages, indicating international acceptance of the form Jehovah

supplied the vowels without thinking (just as, for an English reader, the abbreviation “Ltd.” represents “Limited” and “bldg.” represents “building”).

Two things happened to change this situation. First, a superstitious idea arose among the Jews that it was wrong to say the divine name out loud; so when they came to it in their Bible reading they uttered the Hebrew word *'Adho·nai'* (“Sovereign Lord”). Further, as time went by, the ancient Hebrew language itself ceased to be spoken in everyday conversation, and in this way the original Hebrew pronunciation of God’s name was eventually forgotten.

In order to ensure that the pronunciation of the Hebrew language as a whole would not be lost, Jewish scholars of the second half of the first millennium C.E. invented a system of points to represent the missing vowels, and they placed these around the consonants in the Hebrew Bible. Thus, both vowels *and* consonants were written down, and the pronunciation as it was at that time was preserved.

When it came to God’s name, instead of putting the proper vowel signs around it, in most cases they put other vowel signs to remind the reader that he should say *'Adho·nai'*. From this came the spelling Iehouah, and, eventually, Jehovah became the accepted pronunciation of the divine name in English. This retains the essential elements of God’s name from the Hebrew original.

Which Pronunciation Will You Use?

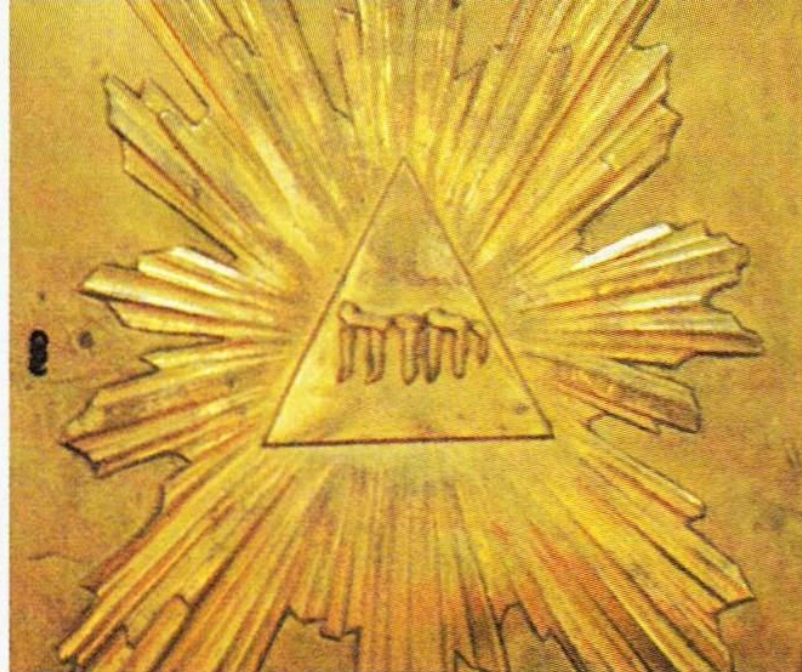
Where, though, did pronunciations like Yahweh come from? These are

Awabakal - Yehóa
Bugotu - Jihova
Cantonese - Yehwovah
Danish - Jehova
Dutch - Jehovah
Efik - Jehovah
English - Jehovah
Fijian - Jiova
Finnish - Jehova
French - Jéhovah
Futuna - Ihova
German - Jehova
Hungarian - Jehova
Igbo - Jehova
Italian - Geova
Japanese - Ehoba
Maori - Ihowa
Motu - Iehova
Mwala-Malu - Jihova
Narrinyeri - Jehovah
Nembe - Jihova
Petats - Jihouva
Polish - Jehowa
Portuguese - Jeová
Romanian - Iehova
Samoan - Ieova
Sotho - Jehova
Spanish - Jehová
Swahili - Yehova
Swedish - Jehova
Tahitian - Iehova
Tagalog - Jehova
Tongan - Jihova
Venda - Yehova
Xhosa - uYehova
Yoruba - Jehofah
Zulu - uJehova

forms that have been suggested by modern scholars trying to deduce the original pronunciation of God’s name. Some—though not all—feel that the Israelites before the time of Jesus probably pronounced God’s name



Fourvière Catholic Basilica,
Lyons, France



Bourges Cathedral,
France



Church in La Celle
Dunoise, France

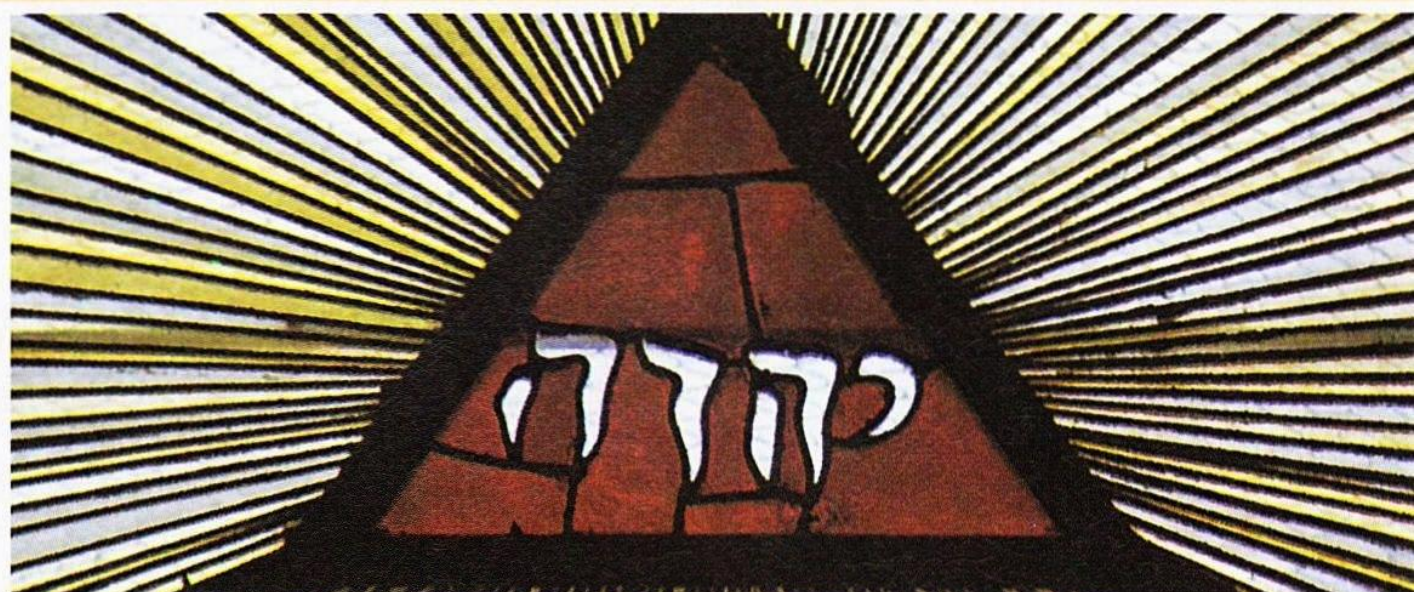
In times past, God's name in the form of the Tetragrammaton was made part of the decoration of many religious buildings

Yahweh. But no one can be sure. Perhaps they pronounced it that way, perhaps not.

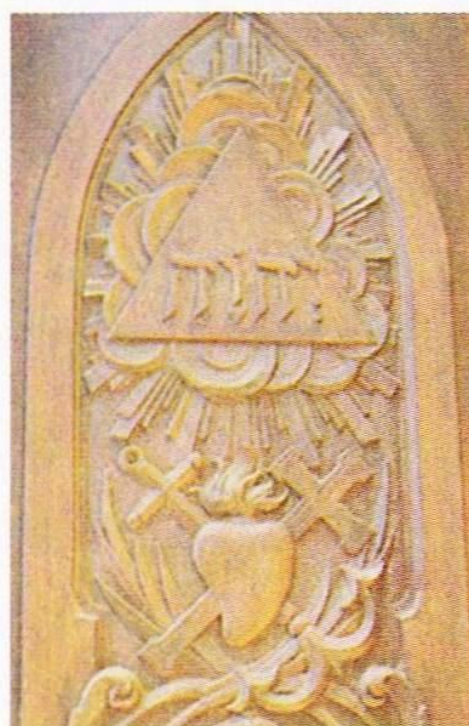
Nevertheless, many prefer the pronunciation Jehovah. Why? Because it has a currency and familiarity that Yahweh does not have. Would it not, though, be better to use the form that might be closer to the original pronunciation? Not really, for that is not the custom with Bible names.

To take the most prominent example, consider the name of Jesus. Do *you* know how Jesus' family and friends addressed him in day-to-day conversation while he was growing up in Nazareth? The truth is, no human knows for certain, although it may have been something like Yeshua (or perhaps Yehoshua). It certainly was *not* Jesus.

However, when the accounts of his life were written in the Greek language, the inspired writers did not try to preserve that original Hebrew pronunciation. Rather, they rendered the name in Greek, *I-e-sous*'. Today, it is rendered differently according to the language of the reader of the Bible.



Church in Digne, southern France



Church in
São Paulo, Brazil



Strasbourg Cathedral,
France



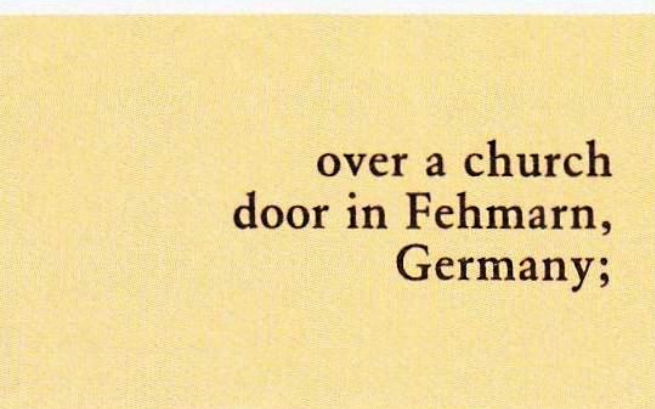
Saint Mark's Cathedral, Venice, Italy



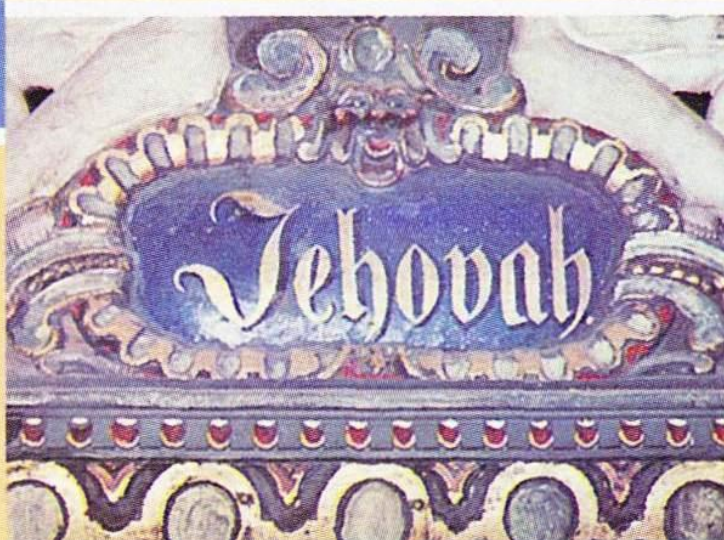
Jehovah's name as it appears in a monastery in Bordesholm, Germany;



on a German coin dated 1635;



over a church door in Fehmarn, Germany;



and on an 1845 gravestone in Harmannschlag, Lower Austria



Spanish Bible readers encounter *Jesús* (pronounced *Hes-soos'*). Italians spell it *Gesù* (pronounced *Djay-zoo'*). And Germans spell it *Jesus* (pronounced *Yay'soos*).

Must we stop using the name of Jesus because most of us, or even all of us, do not really know its original pronunciation? So far, no translator has suggested this. We like to use the name, for it identifies the beloved Son of God, Jesus Christ, who gave his lifeblood for us. Would it be showing honor to Jesus to remove all mention of his name in the Bible and replace it with a mere title like "Teacher," or "Mediator"? Of course not! We can relate to Jesus when we use his name the way it is commonly pronounced in our language.

Similar comments could be made regarding all the names we read in the Bible. We pronounce them in our own language and do not try to imitate the original pronunciation. Thus we say "Jeremiah," not *Yir-me-ya'hu*. Similarly we say Isaiah, although in his own day this prophet likely was known as *Yesha'-ya'hu*. Even scholars who are aware of the original pronunciation of these names use the modern pronunciation, not the ancient, when speaking about them.

And the same is true with the name Jehovah. Even though the modern pronunciation Jehovah might not be exactly the way it was pronounced originally, this in no way detracts from the importance of the name. It identifies the Creator, the living God, the Most High to whom Jesus said: "Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified."—Matthew 6:9.

'It Cannot Be Supplanted'

While many translators favor the pronunciation Yahweh, the *New World Translation* and also a number of other translations continue the use

of the form Jehovah because of people's familiarity with it for centuries. Moreover, it preserves, equally with other forms, the four letters of the Tetragrammaton, *YHWH* or *JHVH*.*

Earlier, the German professor Gustav Friedrich Oehler made a similar decision for much the same reason. He discussed various pronunciations and concluded: "From this point onward I use the word Jehovah, because, as a matter of fact, this name has now become more naturalized in our vocabulary, and cannot be supplanted."—*Theologie des Alten Testaments* (Theology of the Old Testament), second edition, published in 1882, page 143.

Similarly, in his *Grammaire de l'hébreu biblique* (Grammar of Biblical Hebrew), 1923 edition, in a footnote on page 49, Jesuit scholar Paul Joüon states: "In our translations, instead of the (hypothetical) form *Yahweh*, we have used the form *Jéhovah* . . . which is the conventional literary form used in French." In many other languages Bible translators use a similar form, as indicated in the box on page 8.

Is it, then, wrong to use a form like *Yahweh*? Not at all. It is just that the form Jehovah is likely to meet with a quicker response from the reader because it is the form that has been "naturalized" into most languages. The important thing is that we use the name and declare it to others. "Give thanks to Jehovah, you people! Call upon his name. Make known among the peoples his dealings. Make mention that his name is put on high."—Isaiah 12:4.

Let us see how God's servants have acted in harmony with that command through the centuries.

* See Appendix 1A in the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, 1984 edition.

"Jehovah" has become widely known as the name of God even in non-Biblical contexts.

Franz Schubert composed the music for the lyric entitled "The Almighty," written by Johann Ladislav Pyrker, in which the name Jehovah appears twice. It is also used at the end of the last scene of Verdi's opera "Nabucco."

Additionally, French composer Arthur Honegger's oratorio "King David" gives prominence to the name Jehovah, and renowned French author Victor Hugo used it in over 30 of his works. Both he and Lamartine wrote poems entitled "Jehovah."

In the book *Deutsche Taler* (The German Taler), published in 1967 by Germany's Federal Bank, there is a picture of what is one of the oldest coins bearing the name "Jehovah," a 1634 Reichstaler from the Duchy of Silesia. Regarding the picture on the coin's reverse side, it says: "Under the radiant name JEHOVAH, rising up out of the midst of clouds, is a crowned shield with the Silesian coat of arms."

In a museum in Rudolstadt, East Germany, you can see on the collar of the suit of armor once worn by Gustavus II Adolph, a 17th-century king of Sweden, the name JEHOVAH in capital letters.

Thus, for centuries the form Jehovah has been the internationally recognized way to pronounce God's name, and people who hear it instantly recognize who is being spoken about. As Professor Oehler said, "This name has now become more naturalized in our vocabulary, and cannot be supplanted."—*Theologie des Alten Testaments* (Theology of the Old Testament).

The Divine Name Through the Ages

JEHOVAH God wants man to know and use his name. This is evident from the fact that He revealed His name to the very first two persons on earth. We know that Adam and Eve were familiar with God's name because after Eve gave birth to Cain, according to the original Hebrew text, she said: "I have produced a man with the aid of Jehovah."—Genesis 4:1.

Later we read that faithful men like Enoch and Noah "walked with the true God." (Genesis 5:24; 6:9) They also, then, must have known God's name. The name survived the great Flood with the righteous man Noah and his family. In spite of the great rebellion some time later at Babel, true servants of God kept on using his name. It appears hundreds of times in the laws that God gave to Israel. In the book of Deuteronomy alone, it appears 551 times.

In the days of the judges, the Israelites evidently did not shy away from using God's name. They even used it in

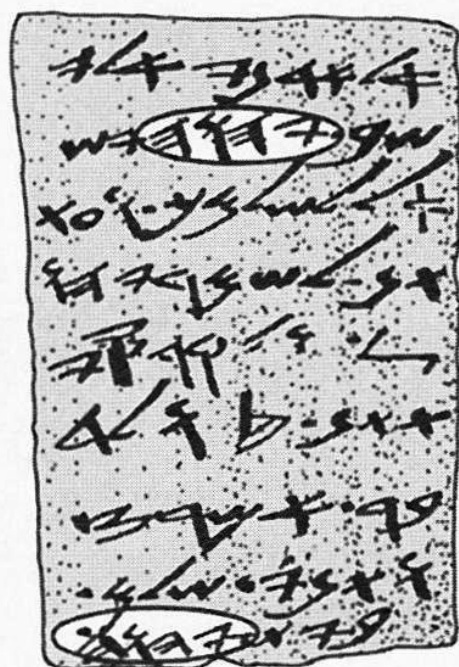
agreeable to God's own heart, used the divine name extensively—it appears hundreds of times in the psalms that he wrote. (Acts 13:22) God's name was also incorporated in many Israelite personal names. Thus we read of Adonijah ("My Lord Is Jah"—"Jah" is a shortened form of Jehovah), Isaiah ("Salvation of Jehovah"), Jonathan ("Jehovah Has Given"), Micah ("Who is like Jah?") and Joshua ("Jehovah Is Salvation").

Outside the Bible

There is also evidence from sources outside the Bible of the extensive use of the divine name in ancient times. In 1961 an ancient burial cave was uncovered a short distance to the southwest of Jerusalem, according to a report in the *Israel Exploration Journal* (Volume 13, No. 2). On its walls were Hebrew inscriptions that appear to date from the second half of the eighth century B.C.E. The inscriptions contain statements such as "Jehovah is the God of the whole earth."

In 1966 a report was published in the *Israel Exploration Journal* (Volume 16, No. 1) about pottery fragments with Hebrew writing on them that were found in Arad, in southern Israel. These were written in the second half of the seventh century B.C.E. One of them was a private letter to a man named Eliashib. The letter begins: "To my lord Eliashib: May Jehovah ask for your peace." And it ends: "He dwells in the house of Jehovah."

In 1975 and 1976, archaeologists working in the Negev uncovered a collection of Hebrew and Phoenician inscriptions on plaster walls, large



In this letter, written on a fragment of pottery in the second half of the seventh century B.C.E., God's name appears twice. (Picture by courtesy of the Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums)

greeting one another. We read (in the original Hebrew) of Boaz greeting his harvesters: "Jehovah be with you." They returned his greeting by saying: "Jehovah bless you."—Ruth 2:4.

Throughout the history of the Israelites right up until the time that they returned to Judah after their captivity in Babylon, Jehovah's name continued in common usage. King David, a man

storage jars and stone vessels. The inscriptions included the Hebrew word for God, as well as God's name, YHWH, in Hebrew letters. In Jerusalem itself, there was recently discovered a small, rolled-up strip of silver, apparently dating from before the Babylonian exile. Researchers say that when it was unrolled, the name of Jehovah in Hebrew was found to be written on it.—*Biblical Archaeology Review*, March/April 1983, page 18.

Another example of the use of God's name is found in the so-called Lachish Letters. These letters, written on potsherds, were found between the years 1935 and 1938 in the ruins of Lachish, a fortified city that figured prominently in Israel's history. They appear to have been written by an officer at a Judean outpost to his superior, named Yaosh, at Lachish, apparently during the war between Israel and Babylon toward the end of the seventh century B.C.E.

Of the eight legible shards, seven begin their message with a salutation such as: "May Jehovah cause my lord to see this season in good health!" Altogether, God's name appears 11 times in the seven messages, clearly indicating that the name of Jehovah enjoyed everyday usage toward the end of the seventh century B.C.E.

Even pagan rulers knew and used the divine name when referring to the God of the Israelites. Thus, on the Moabite Stone, King Mesha of Moab boasts of his military exploits against Israel and, among other things, states: "Chemosh said to me, 'Go, take Nebo from Israel!' So I went by night and fought against it from the break of dawn until noon, taking it and slaying all . . . And I took from there the [vessels] of Jehovah, dragging them before Chemosh."

In reference to these non-Biblical uses of the name of God, the *Theolo-*

gisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament (Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament), in Volume 3, column 538, says: "Thus some 19 documentary evidences of the Tetragrammaton in the form *yhwh* testify in this regard to the reliability of the M[asoretic] T[ext]; more can be expected, above all from the Arad-Archives."—Translated from German.

God's Name Not Forgotten

This familiarity with and use of God's name continued right up to the days of Malachi, who lived about 400 years before Jesus' time. In the Bible book bearing his name, Malachi gives great prominence to the divine name, using it altogether 48 times.

As time went on, many Jews came to live far from the land of Israel, and some could no longer read the Bible in



God's name is also found in the Lachish Letters and on the Moabite Stone

the Hebrew language. Hence, in the third century B.C.E., a start was made in translating the part of the Bible that existed then (the "Old Testament") into Greek, the new international language. But the name of God was not neglected. The translators retained it, writing it in its Hebrew form. Ancient copies of the Greek *Septuagint* that have been preserved to our day testify to that.

What, though, was the situation when Jesus walked the earth? How can we know whether he and his apostles used God's name?

Christians and the Name

NO ONE can say for sure exactly when orthodox Jews ceased to pronounce God's name out loud and instead substituted the Hebrew words for God and Sovereign Lord. Some believe that God's name passed out of everyday use well before Jesus' time. But there is strong evidence that the high priest continued to pronounce it at religious services at the temple—particularly on the day of Atonement—right up until the temple was destroyed in 70 C.E. Hence, when Jesus was on earth, the pronunciation of the name was known, although perhaps it was not widely used.

Why did the Jews cease to pronounce God's name? Probably, at least in part, because of misapplying the words of the third commandment: "You must not take up the name of Jehovah your God in a worthless way." (Exodus 20:7) Of course, this commandment did not prohibit the use of God's name. Otherwise, why did God's ancient servants such as David use it so freely and still enjoy Jehovah's blessing? And why did God pronounce it to Moses and tell Moses to explain to the Israelites who it was

way. For example, the fourth of the Ten Commandments obligated the Jews to observe the seventh day of each week as a day of rest, a Sabbath. (Exodus 20:8-11) Orthodox Jews took that command to ridiculous lengths, making innumerable rules to govern even the smallest act that could or could not be done on the Sabbath. It was doubtless in the same spirit that they took a reasonable command, that God's name must not be dishonored, to a most unreasonable extreme, saying that the name should not even be pronounced.*

Jesus and the Name

Would Jesus have followed such an unscriptural tradition? Hardly! He certainly did not hold back from doing works of healing on the Sabbath, even though this meant breaking the man-made rules of the Jews and even risking his life. (Matthew 12:9-14) In fact, Jesus condemned the Pharisees as hypocrites because their traditions went beyond God's inspired Word.

* Some suggest another reason: The Jews may have been influenced by Greek philosophy. For example, Philo, a Jewish philosopher of Alexandria who was approximately contemporary with Jesus, was greatly influenced by the Greek philosopher Plato, who he thought was divinely inspired. The *Lexikon des Judentums* (Lexicon of Judaism), under "Philo," states that Philo "united the language and ideas of Greek philosophy (Plato) with the revealed faith of the Jews" and that to begin with he "had a visible effect upon the Christian church fathers." Philo taught that God was indefinable and, hence, unnameable.



This picture of a Jewish high priest, with the sign on his turban in Hebrew meaning "Holiness Belongs to Jehovah," is found in the Vatican

that had sent him?—Psalm 18:1-3, 6, 13; Exodus 6:2-8.

Nevertheless, by Jesus' time there was a strong tendency to take the reasonable commands of God and interpret them in a highly unreasonable

Nazareth, wo er erzogen wurde, sprach er: Heute gehet die von
 kam, begab er sich nach seiner mir herabgelesene Stelle in. Er-
 Gewohnheit am Sabbathstage in füllung. Alle gaben ihm Beyfall, 22
 die Synagoge. Auch hier stand und bewunderten seinen angeneh-
 17 er auf, um vorzulesen o). Man men Vortrag; insonderheit, als
 reichte ihm das Buch des Prophe- sie beobachteten, daß er Josephs Sohn
 ten Isaias, und als er es aufrollte, sey. Jesus aber sprach zu ihnen, 23
 18 fiel er auf folgende Stelle: ich ihr könnt mir freylich das Sprich-
 werde vom Geiste des Jhova an- wort vorhalten: Arzt! hilf dir
 getrieben, der mich erkehren hat t), selbst! verrichte auch in deinem Ha-
 um den unglücklichen frohe M die Thaten, die du, wie
 richt zu verkündigen u), die haben, in Kapernaum
 19 trübten zu trösten, den ist. Allein es ist ge- 24
 genen die Befreyung h. daß kein Pros-
 die Oeffnung der and

As this 1805 German translation of the Bible indicates, when Jesus read in the synagogue from the scroll of Isaiah, he pronounced God's name out loud.—Luke 4:18, 19

(Matthew 15:1-9) Hence, it is unlikely that he would have held back from pronouncing God's name, especially in view of the fact that his own name, Jesus, meant "Jehovah is Salvation."

On one occasion, Jesus stood up in a synagogue and read a portion of the scroll of Isaiah. The section he read was what we today call Isaiah 61:1, 2, where God's name appears more than once. (Luke 4:16-21) Would he have refused to pronounce the divine name there, substituting "Lord" or "God"? Of course not. That would have meant following the unscriptural tradition of the Jewish religious leaders. Rather, we read: "He was teaching them as a person having authority, and *not* as their scribes."—Matthew 7:29.

In fact, as we learned earlier, he taught his followers to pray to God:

"Let your name be sanctified." (Matthew 6:9) And in prayer on the night before his execution, he said to his Father: "I have made your name man-

ifest to the men you gave me out of the world . . . Holy Father, watch over them on account of your own name which you have given me.”—John 17:6, 11.

Regarding these references by Jesus to God’s name, the book *Der Name Gottes* (The Name of God) explains, on page 76: “We must appreciate the astonishing fact that the traditional Old Testament understanding of God’s revelation is that it is a revelation of his name and that this is carried on through to the final parts of the Old Testament, yes, continues even into the last parts of the New Testament, where, for example at John 17:6, we read: ‘I have made your name manifest.’”

Yes, it would be most unreasonable to think that Jesus held back from using God’s name, especially when he quoted from those portions of the Hebrew Scriptures that contained it.

The Early Christians

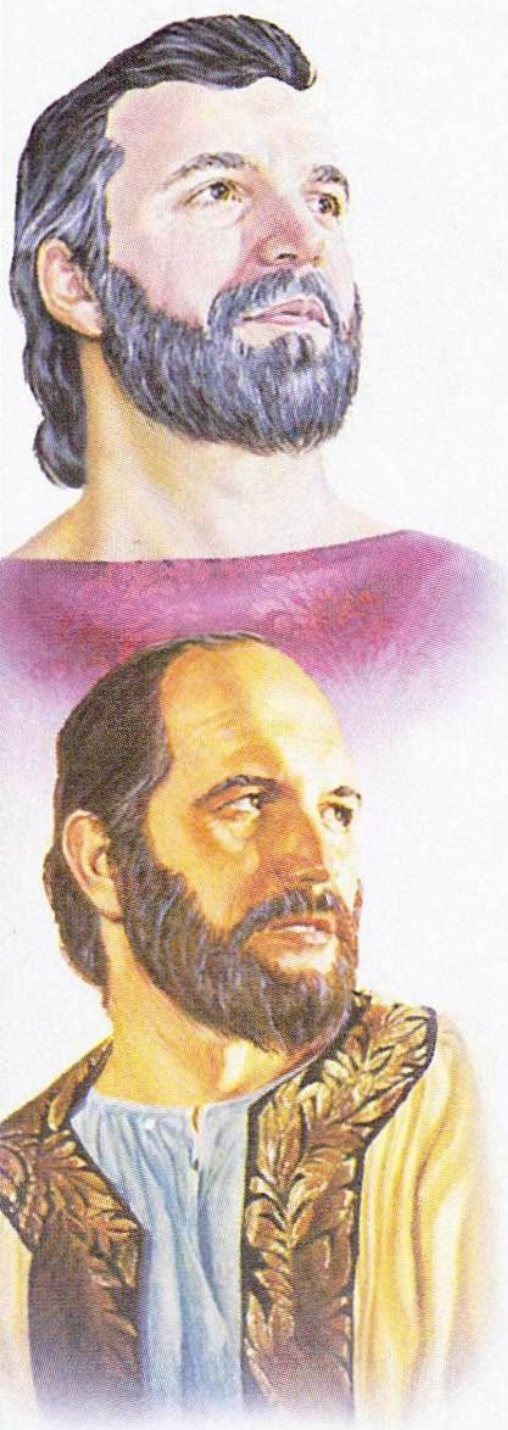
Did Jesus’ followers in the first century use God’s name? They had been commanded by Jesus to make disciples of people of all nations. (Matthew 28:19, 20) Many of the people to be preached to had no conception of the God who had revealed himself to the Jews by the name Jehovah. How would the Christians be able to identify the true God to them? Would it

the false ones? Only by using the true God’s name.

Thus, the disciple James remarked during a conference of the elders at Jerusalem: “Symeon has related thoroughly how God for the first time turned his attention to the nations to take out of them a people *for his name*. And with this the words of the Prophets agree.” (Acts 15:14, 15) The apostle Peter, in his well-known speech at Pentecost, pointed out a vital part of the Christian message when he quoted the words of the prophet Joel: “Everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah will get away safe.”—Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21.

The apostle Paul leaves no doubt about the importance to him of God’s name. In his letter to the Romans, he quotes the same words by the prophet Joel and goes on to encourage fellow Christians to show their faith in that statement by going out to preach about God’s name to others in order that these, too, might be saved. (Romans 10:13-15) Later he wrote in his letter to Timothy: “Let everyone naming the name of Jehovah renounce unrighteousness.” (2 Timothy 2:19) At the end of the first century, the apostle John used the divine name in his writings. The expression “Hallelujah,” meaning “Praise Jah,” appears repeatedly in the book of Revelation. —Revelation 19:1, 3, 4, 6.

However, Jesus and his followers had prophesied that an apostasy would occur in the Christian congregation. The apostle Peter had written: “There will also be false teachers among you.” (2 Peter 2:1; see also Matthew 13:36-43; Acts 20:29, 30; 2 Thessalonians 2:3; 1 John 2:18, 19.) These warnings were fulfilled. One result was that God’s name was pushed into the background. It even got removed from copies and translations of the Bible! Let us see how that happened.



Peter and Paul used God’s name when they quoted from Joel’s prophecy.—Acts 2:21; Romans 10:13

be enough to call him God or Lord? No. The nations had their own gods and lords. (1 Corinthians 8:5) How could the Christians have made a clear difference between the true God and

3 And I appeared unto Abraham,
unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, the
Name of God Almighty, but by
name **IEHOVAH** was I not known
to them..

God's Name and Bible Translators

EARLY in the second century, after the last of the apostles had died, the falling away from the Christian faith foretold by Jesus and his followers began in earnest. Pagan philosophies and doctrines infiltrated the congregation; sects and divisions arose, and the original purity of faith was corrupted. And God's name ceased to be used.

As this apostate Christianity spread, the need arose to translate the Bible from its original Hebrew and Greek into other languages. How did the translators render God's name in their translations? Usually, they used the equivalent of "Lord." A very influential version of that time was the Latin *Vulgate*, a translation of the Bible by Jerome into everyday Latin. Jerome rendered the Tetragrammaton (YHWH) by substituting *Dominus*, "Lord."

Eventually, new languages, such as French, English and Spanish, began to emerge in Europe. However, the Catholic Church discouraged the translating of the Bible into these new languages. Thus, while Jews, using the Bible in the original Hebrew language, refused to pronounce God's name when they saw it, most "Christians"

heard the Bible read in Latin translations that did not use the name.

In time, God's name came back into use. In 1278 it appeared in Latin in the work *Pugio fidei* (Dagger of Faith), by Raymundus Martini, a Spanish monk.

The translators of the *Authorized Version* preserved God's name, Jehovah, in only four verses, substituting GOD and LORD everywhere else

Raymundus Martini used the spelling *Yohoua*.^{*} Soon after, in 1303, Porchetus de Salvaticis completed a work entitled *Victoria Porcheti adversus impios Hebraeos* (Porchetus' Victory Against the Ungodly Hebrews). In this he, too, mentioned God's name, spelling it variously *Iohouah*, *Iohoua* and *Ihouah*. Then, in 1518, Petrus Galatinus published a work entitled *De arcanis catholicae veritatis* (Concerning Secrets of the Universal Truth) in which he spells God's name *Iehoua*.

The name first appeared in an En-

^{*} Printings of this work dated some centuries later, however, have the divine name spelled *Jehova*.



God's name in the form *Yohoua* appeared in 1278 in the work *Pugio fidei* as seen in this manuscript (dated to the 13th or 14th century) from the Ste. Geneviève library, Paris, France (folio 162b)

glish Bible in 1530, when William Tyndale published a translation of the first five books of the Bible. In this he included the name of God, usually spelled *Iehouah*, in several verses,* and in a note in this edition he wrote:

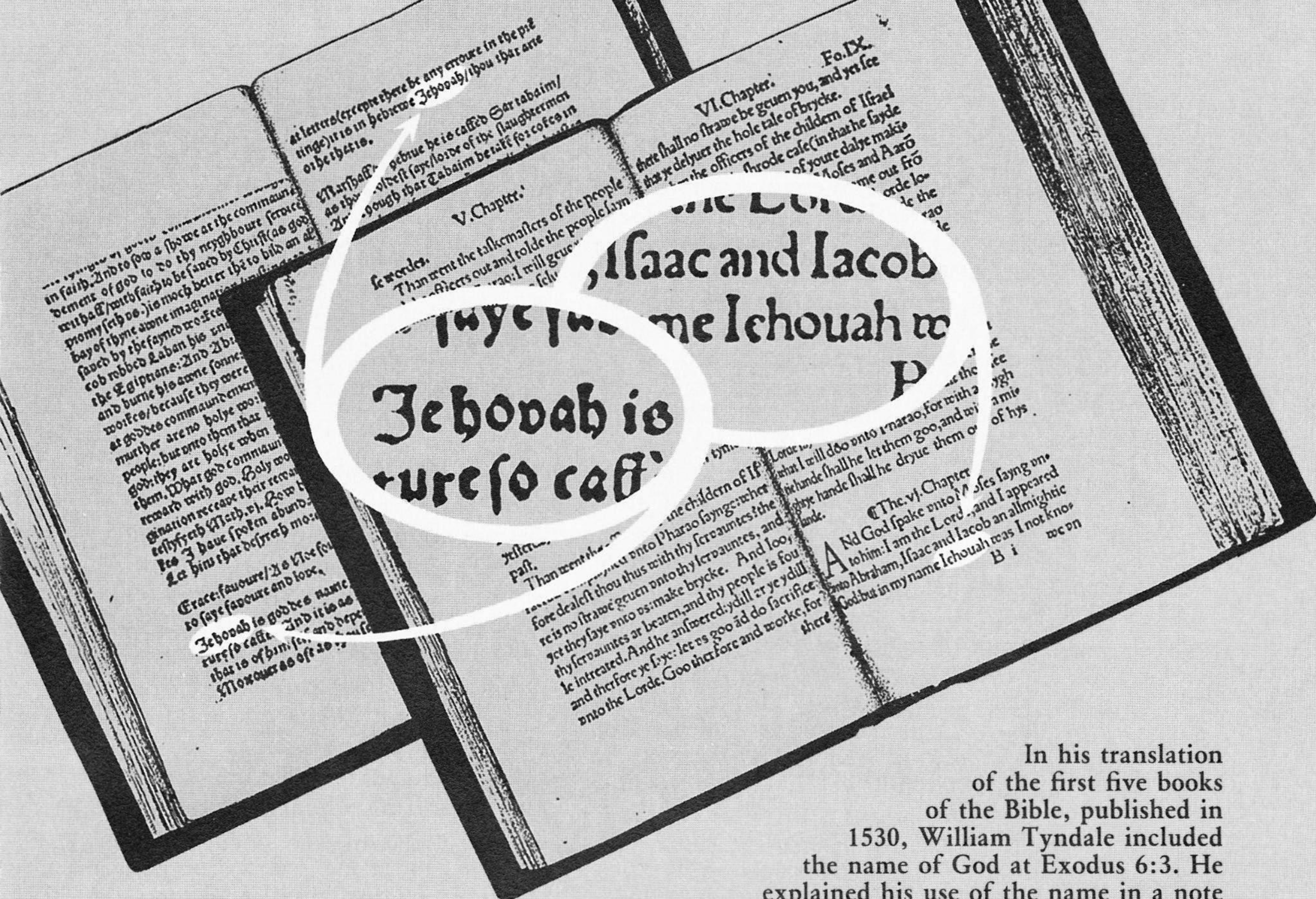
* Genesis 15:2; Exodus 6:3; 15:3; 17:16; 23:17; 33:19; 34:23; Deuteronomy 3:24. Tyndale also included God's name in Ezekiel 18:23 and 36:23, in his translations that were added at the end of *The New Testament*, Antwerp, 1534.

"Jehovah is God's name . . . Moreover as oft as thou seist LORD in great letters (except there be any error in the printing) it is in Hebrew Iehovah." From this the practice arose of using Jehovah's name in just a few verses and writing "LORD" or "GOD" in most other places where the Tetragrammaton occurs in the Hebrew text.

In 1611 what became the most widely used English translation, the *Authorized Version*, was published. In this, the name appeared four times in the main text. (Exodus 6:3; Psalm 83:18; Isaiah 12:2; 26:4) "Jah," a poetic abbreviation of the name, appeared in Psalm 68:4. And the name appeared in full in place-names such as "Jehovah-jireh." (Genesis 22:14; Exodus 17:15; Judges 6:24) However, following the example of Tyndale, the translators in most instances substituted "LORD" or "GOD" for God's name. But if God's name could appear in four verses, why could it not appear in all the other thousands of verses that contain it in the original Hebrew?

Something similar was happening in the German language. In 1534 Martin Luther published his complete translation of the Bible, which he based on the original languages. For some reason he did not include the name of God but used substitutes, such as HERR ("LORD"). However, he was aware of the divine name, since in a sermon on Jeremiah 23:1-8, which he delivered in 1526, he said: "This name Jehovah, Lord, belongs exclusively to the true God."

In 1543 Luther wrote with characteristic frankness: "That they [the Jews] now allege the name Jehovah to be unpronounceable, they do not know what they are talking about . . . If it can be written with pen and ink, why should it not be spoken, which is much better than being written with



In his translation of the first five books of the Bible, published in 1530, William Tyndale included the name of God at Exodus 6:3. He explained his use of the name in a note to the translation (Photograph courtesy of the American Bible Society Library, New York)

pen and ink? Why do they not also call it unwriteable, unreadable or unthinkable? All things considered, there is something foul." Nevertheless, Luther had not rectified matters in his translation of the Bible. In later years, however, other German Bibles did contain the name in the text of Exodus 6:3.

In succeeding centuries, Bible translators went in one of two directions. Some avoided any use of God's name, while others used it extensively in the Hebrew Scriptures, either in the form Jehovah or in the form Yahweh. Let us consider two translations that avoided the name and see why, according to their translators, this was done.

Why They Left It Out

When J. M. Powis Smith and Edgar J. Goodspeed produced a modern translation of the Bible in 1935, readers found that LORD and GOD had been used in most places as a substitution for God's name. The reason was explained in a preface: "In this translation we have followed the orthodox Jewish tradition and substituted 'the Lord' for the name 'Yahweh' and the phrase 'the Lord God' for the phrase 'the Lord Yahweh.' In all cases where 'Lord' or 'God' represents an original 'Yahweh' small capitals are employed."

Then, in an unusual reversal of the tradition of the Jews who read YHWH but pronounced it "Lord," the preface

Hostility to God's Name?

says: "Anyone, therefore, who desires to retain the flavor of the original text has but to read 'Yahweh' wherever he sees LORD or GOD"!

On reading this, the question immediately comes to mind: If reading "Yahweh" instead of "LORD" retains the "flavor of the original text," why did the translators not use "Yahweh" in their translation? Why did they, in their own word, 'substitute' the word "LORD" for God's name and thus mask the flavor of the original text?

The translators say that they were following orthodox Jewish tradition. Yet is that wise for a Christian? Remember, it was the Pharisees, the preservers of orthodox Jewish tradition, who rejected Jesus and were told by him: "You have made the word of God invalid because of your tradition." (Matthew 15:6) Such substitution truly weakens the Word of God.

In 1952 the *Revised Standard Version* of the Hebrew Scriptures was published in English, and this Bible, too, used substitutions for God's name. This was noteworthy because the original *American Standard Version*, of which this was a revision, used the name Jehovah all through the Hebrew Scriptures. Hence, the omission of the name was an outstanding departure. Why was it done?

In the preface to the *Revised Standard Version*, we read: "For two reasons the Committee has returned to the more familiar usage of the King James Version [that is, omitting the name of God]: (1) the word 'Jehovah' does not accurately represent any form of the Name ever used in Hebrew; and (2) the use of any proper name for the one and only God, as though there were other gods from whom he had to be distinguished, was discontinued in Judaism before the Christian era and is entirely inappropriate for the universal faith of the Christian Church."

Are these sound arguments? Well, as discussed earlier, the name Jesus does not accurately represent the original form of the name of God's Son used by his followers. Yet this did not persuade the Committee to avoid using that name and to use instead a title such as "Mediator" or "Christ." True, these titles *are* used, but in addition to the name Jesus, not instead of it.

As to the argument that there are no other gods from whom the true God had to be differentiated, that is simply not true. There are *millions* of gods worshiped by mankind. The apostle Paul noted: "There are many 'gods.'" (1 Corinthians 8:5; Philippians 3:19) Of course, there is only one *true* God, as Paul goes on to say. Hence, one great advantage of using the name of the true God is that it keeps him separate from all the false gods. Besides, if using the name of God is "entirely inappropriate," why does it appear almost 7,000 times in the original Hebrew Scriptures?

The truth is, many translators have not felt that the name, with its modern pronunciation, is out of place in the Bible. They have included it in their versions, and the result has always been a translation that gives more honor to the Bible's Author and hews more faithfully to the original text. Some widely used versions that include the name are the *Valera* translation (Spanish, published in 1602), the *Almeida* version (Portuguese, pub-

At present, there is no current translation of the Bible in the Afrikaans language (spoken by South Africans of Dutch descent) that contains God's name. This is surprising, since many translations into the tribal languages spoken in that country use the name freely. Let us see how it came about.

On August 24, 1878, a strong plea was made at a meeting of the Society of True Afrikaners (G.R.A.) that a translation of the Bible be made in the Afrikaans language. Six years later, the matter was brought up again, and eventually it was decided to go ahead and translate the Bible from the original tongues. The work was entrusted to S. J. du Toit, Superintendent of Education in the Transvaal.

A letter of instruction to du Toit included the following guideline: "The proper name of the Lord, Jehovah or Jahvê, should be left untranslated [that is, not substituted for by Lord or God] throughout." S. J. du Toit translated seven Bible books into Afrikaans, and the name Jehovah appeared throughout.

Other South African publications, too, at one time contained God's name. For example, in *De Korte Catechismus* (The Short Catechism), by J. A. Malherbe, 1914, the following appeared: "What is God's preeminent Name?" The answer? "Jehovah, which is written LORD with capital letters in our Bibles. This [name] was never given to any creature."

In *Die Katkisasieboek* (a catechism published by the Federated Sunday School Commission of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa) the following question appeared: "May we then never use the name *Jehovah* or LORD? That is what the Jews do . . . That is not the meaning of the commandment. . . . We may use his Name, but never in vain." Until recently, reprints of *Die Halleluja* (a hymnbook) also contained the name Jehovah in some hymns.

However, du Toit's translation was not popular, and in 1916 a Commission for Bible Translation was appointed to see to the production of an Afrikaans Bible. This Commission had a policy of omitting from the Bible the name of Jehovah. In 1971 the Bible Society of South Africa published a "tentative translation" of a few Bible books in Afrikaans. While the name of God was mentioned in the introduction, it was not used in the text of the translation. Similarly, in 1979 a new translation of the "New Testament" and



A Dutch Reformed church in Paarl, South Africa. Originally, the name Jehovah was engraved on the cornerstone (above right). Later, it was replaced (above left)

Psalms appeared and it likewise omitted the name of God.

Moreover, since 1970 mention of the name Jehovah has been removed from *Die Halleluja*. And the sixth printing of the revised edition of *Die Katkisasieboek*, published by the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa, now also omits the name.

In fact, the efforts to eliminate the form Jehovah are not limited to books. A Dutch Reformed church in Paarl used to have a cornerstone on which were inscribed the words JEHOVAH JIREH ("Jehovah Will Provide"). A picture of this church and its cornerstone appeared in the October 22, 1974, issue of the magazine *Awake!* in the Afrikaans language. Since then, the cornerstone has been replaced by another with the words *DIE HERE SAL VOORSIEN* ("The LORD Will Provide"). The scripture citation and the date on the cornerstone have been left the same, but the name Jehovah has been removed.

Hence, many Afrikaners today are unaware of God's name. Church members who do know it shy away from using it. Some even argue against it, saying that God's name is LORD and accusing Jehovah's Witnesses of inventing the name Jehovah.

lished in 1681), the original *Elberfelder* version (German, published in 1871), as well as the *American Standard Version* (English, published in 1901). Some translations, notably *The Jerusalem Bible*, also consistently use God's name but with the spelling Yahweh.

Read now the comments of some translators who included the name in their translations and compare their reasoning with that of those who omitted the name.

Why Others Include the Name

Here is the comment of the translators of the *American Standard Version* of 1901: "[The translators] were brought to the unanimous conviction that a Jewish superstition, which regarded the Divine Name as too sacred to be uttered, ought no longer to dominate in the English or any other version of the Old Testament . . . This Memorial Name, explained in Ex. iii. 14, 15, and emphasized as such over and over in the original text of the Old Testament, designates God as the

highly important. What is highly important is to keep it clear that this is a personal name. There are several texts that cannot be properly understood if we translate this name by a common noun like 'Lord,' or, much worse, by a substantivized adjective [for example, the Eternal]."

The case of another translation, by J. B. Rotherham, is interesting. He used God's name in his translation but preferred the form Yahweh. However, in a later work, *Studies in the Psalms*, published in 1911, he returned to the form Jehovah. Why? He explains: "JEHOVAH.—The employment of this English form of the Memorial name (Exo. 3:18) in the present version of the Psalter does not arise from any misgiving as to the more correct pronunciation, as being Yahwéh; but solely from practical evidence personally selected of the desirability of keeping in touch with the public ear and eye in a matter of this kind, in which the principal thing is the easy recognition of the Divine name intended."

In Psalm 34:3 worshipers of Jehovah are exhorted: "O magnify Jehovah with me, you people, and let us exalt his name together." How can readers of Bible translations that omit God's name respond fully to that exhortation? Christians are happy that at least *some* translators have had the courage to include God's name in their renderings of the Hebrew Scriptures, and thus preserve what Smith and Goodspeed call the "flavor of the original text."

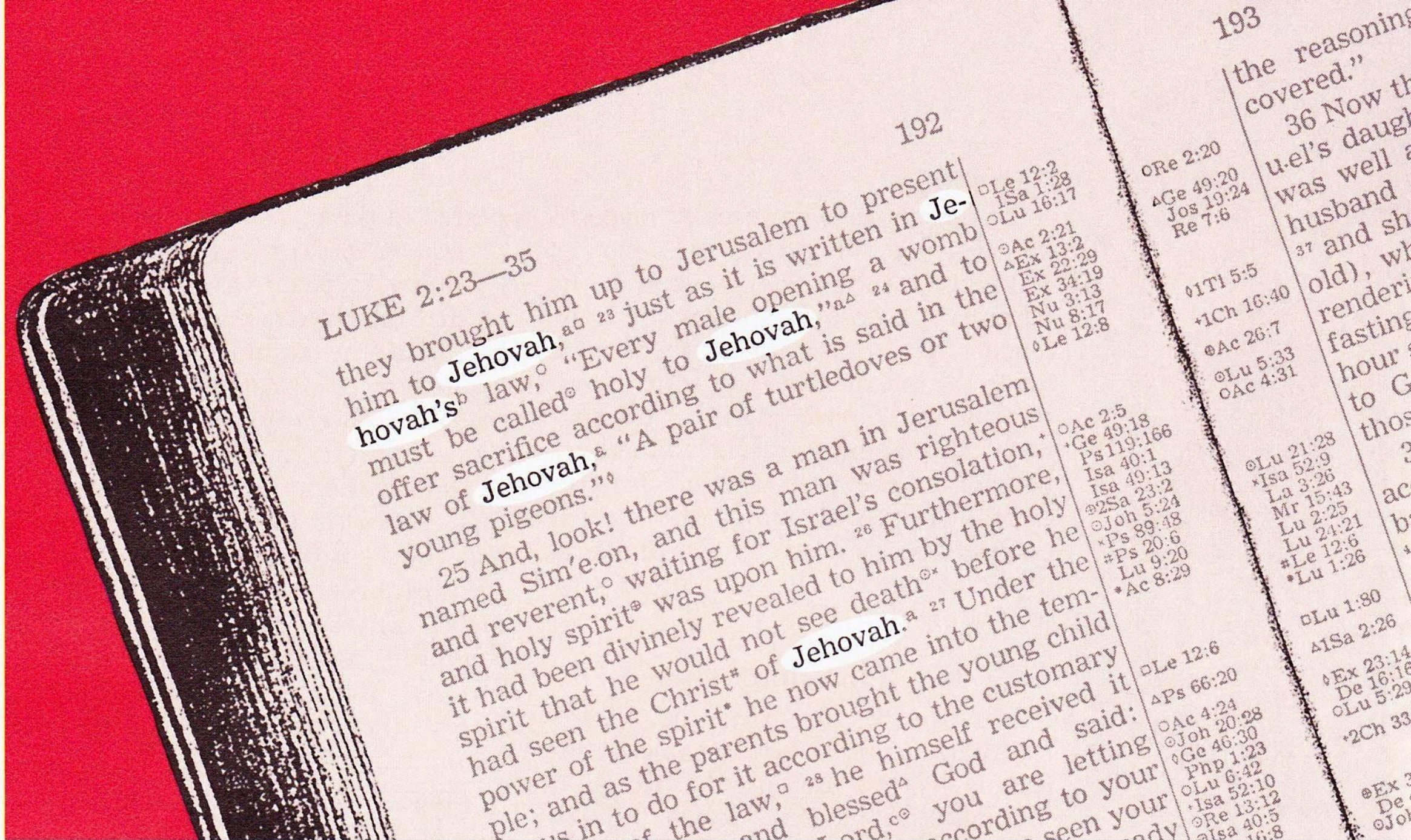
However, most translations, even when they include God's name in the Hebrew Scriptures, omit it from the Christian Greek Scriptures, the "New Testament." What is the reason for this? Is there any justification for including God's name in this last portion of the Bible?

If using the name of God is "entirely inappropriate," why does it appear almost 7,000 times in the original Hebrew text?

personal God, as the covenant God, the God of revelation, the Deliverer, the Friend of his people . . . This personal name, with its wealth of sacred associations, is now restored to the place in the sacred text to which it has an unquestionable claim."

Similarly, in the preface to the original German *Elberfelder Bibel* we read: "Jehova. We have retained this name of the Covenant God of Israel because the reader has been accustomed to it for years."

Steven T. Byington, translator of *The Bible in Living English*, explains why he uses God's name: "The spelling and the pronunciation are not



God's Name and the "New Testament"

THE position of God's name is unshakable in the Hebrew Scriptures, the "Old Testament." Although the Jews eventually stopped pronouncing it, their religious beliefs prevented them from removing the name when they made copies of older manuscripts of the Bible. Hence, the Hebrew Scriptures contain God's name more often than any other name.

With the Christian Greek Scriptures, the "New Testament," the situation is different. Manuscripts of the book of Revelation (the last book of the Bible) have God's name in its abbreviated form, "Jah," (in the word "Hallelujah"). But apart from that, no ancient Greek manuscript that we possess today of the books from Matthew to Revelation contains God's name in full. Does that mean that the

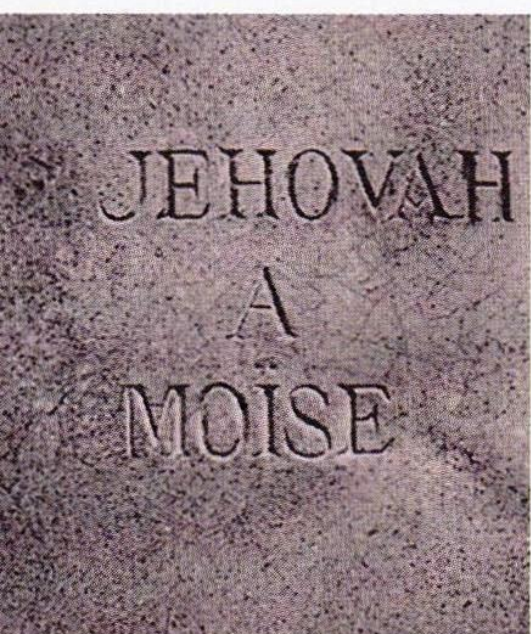
name should not be there? That would be surprising in view of the fact that Jesus' followers recognized the importance of God's name, and Jesus taught us to pray for God's name to be sanctified. So what happened?

The New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures properly uses God's name 237 times

To understand this, remember that the manuscripts of the Christian Greek Scriptures that we possess today are not the originals. The actual books written by Matthew, Luke and the other Bible writers were well used and quickly wore out. Hence, copies were made, and when those wore out, further copies were made of those copies. This is what we would expect,



God's name on
a church in
Minorca, Spain;



on a statue near
Paris, France;



and on the
Chiesa di
San Lorenzo,
Parma, Italy

since the copies were usually made to be used, not preserved.

There are thousands of copies of the Christian Greek Scriptures in existence today, but most of them were made during or after the fourth century of our Common Era. This suggests a possibility: Did something happen to the text of the Christian Greek Scriptures *before* the fourth century that resulted in the omission of God's name? The facts prove that something did.

The Name Was There

We can be sure that the apostle Matthew included God's name in his Gospel. Why? Because he wrote it originally in Hebrew. In the fourth century, Jerome, who translated the Latin *Vulgate*, reported: "Matthew, who is also Levi, and who from a publican came to be an apostle, first of all composed a Gospel of Christ in Judaea in the Hebrew language . . . Who translated it after that in Greek is not sufficiently ascertained. Moreover, the Hebrew itself is preserved to this day in the library at Caesarea."

Since Matthew wrote in Hebrew, it is inconceivable that he did not use God's name, especially when quoting from parts of the "Old Testament" that contained the name. However, other writers of the second part of the Bible wrote for a worldwide audience in the international language of that time, Greek. Hence, they did not quote from the original Hebrew writings but from the *Septuagint* Greek version. And even Matthew's Gospel was eventually translated into Greek. Would God's name have appeared in these Greek writings?

Well, some very old fragments of the *Septuagint Version* that actually existed in Jesus' day have survived down to our day, and it is noteworthy that the personal name of God ap-

peared in them. *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Volume 2, page 512) says: "Recent textual discoveries cast doubt on the idea that the compilers of the LXX [*Septuagint*] translated the tetragrammaton YHWH by *kyrios*. The oldest LXX MSS (fragments) now available to us have the tetragrammaton written in Heb[rew] characters in the G[ree]k text. This custom was retained by later Jewish translators of the O[ld] T[estament] in the first centuries A.D." Therefore, whether Jesus and his disciples read the Scriptures in Hebrew or Greek, they would come across the divine name.

Thus, Professor George Howard, of the University of Georgia, U.S.A., made this comment: "When the *Septuagint* which the New Testament church used and quoted contained the Hebrew form of the divine name, the New Testament writers no doubt included the Tetragrammaton in their quotations." (*Biblical Archaeology Review*, March 1978, page 14) What authority would they have had to do otherwise?

God's name remained in Greek translations of the "Old Testament" for a while longer. In the first half of the second century C.E., the Jewish proselyte Aquila made a new translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, and in this he represented God's name by the Tetragrammaton in ancient Hebrew characters. In the third century, Origen wrote: "And in the most accurate manuscripts THE NAME occurs in Hebrew characters, yet not in today's Hebrew [characters], but in the most ancient ones."

Even in the fourth century, Jerome writes in his prologue to the books of Samuel and Kings: "And we find the name of God, the Tetragrammaton [יהוה], in certain Greek volumes even

to this day expressed in ancient letters.”

The Removal of the Name

By this time, however, the apostasy foretold by Jesus had taken shape, and the name, although appearing in manuscripts, was used less and less. (Matthew 13:24-30; Acts 20:29, 30) Eventually, many readers did not even recognize what it was and Jerome reports that in his time “certain ignorant ones, because of the similarity of the characters, when they would find [the Tetragrammaton] in Greek books, were accustomed to read ΠΙΠΙ.”

In later copies of the *Septuagint*, God’s name was removed and words like “God” (*The·os*’) and “Lord” (*Ky’ri·os*) were substituted. We know that this happened because we have early fragments of the *Septuagint* where God’s name was included and later copies of those same parts of the *Septuagint* where God’s name has been removed.

The same thing occurred in the “New Testament,” or Christian Greek Scriptures. Professor George Howard goes on to say: “When the Hebrew form for the divine name was eliminated in favor of Greek substitutes in the Septuagint, it was eliminated also from the New Testament quotations of the Septuagint. . . . Before long the divine name was lost to the Gentile church except insofar as it was reflected in the contracted surrogates or remembered by scholars.”

Hence, while Jews refused to pronounce God’s name, the apostate Christian church managed to remove it completely from Greek language manuscripts of both parts of the Bible, as well as from other language versions.

The Need for the Name

Eventually, as we saw earlier, the name was restored to many translations of the Hebrew Scriptures. But

“The LORD” —Equivalent of “Jehovah”?

To remove God’s distinctive personal name from the Bible and substitute a title such as “Lord” or “God” makes the text weak and inadequate in many ways. For example, it can lead to meaningless combinations of words. In its foreword, *The Jerusalem Bible* says: “To say, ‘The Lord is God’ is surely a tautology [a needless, or meaningless, repetition], as to say ‘Yahweh is God’ is not.”

Such substitutions can also lead to awkward phrases. Thus in the *Authorized Version*, Psalm 8:9 reads: “O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!” What an improvement when the name Jehovah is restored to such a text! Thus, *Young’s Literal Translation of the Holy Bible* reads here: “Jehovah, our Lord, how honourable Thy name in all the earth!”

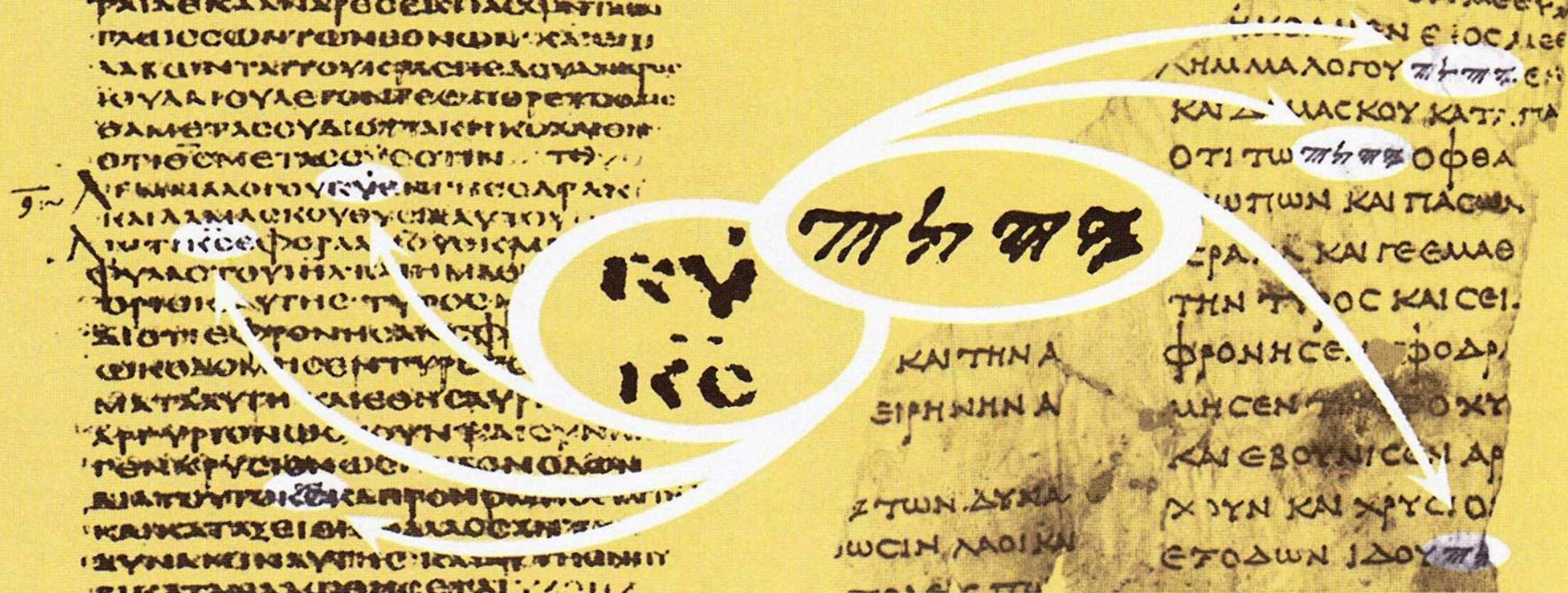
Removing the name can also lead to confusion. Psalm 110:1 says: “THE LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” (*Authorized Version*) Who is talking to whom? How much better the rendering: “The utterance of Jehovah to my Lord is: ‘Sit at my right hand until I place your enemies as a stool for your feet.’”—*New World Translation*.

Additionally, substituting “Lord” for “Jehovah” removes something of pivotal importance from the Bible: the personal name of God. *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Volume 1, page 572) states: “Strictly speaking, Yahweh is the only ‘name’ of God.”

The Imperial Bible-Dictionary (Volume 1, page 856) describes the difference between “God” (*Elohim*) and “Jehovah,” stating: “[Jehovah] is everywhere a *proper* name, denoting the personal God and him only; whereas Elohim partakes more of the character of a *common* noun, denoting usually, indeed, but not necessarily nor uniformly, the Supreme.”

J. A. Motyer, principal of Trinity College, England, adds: “Much is lost in Bible reading if we forget to look beyond the substitute word [Lord or God] to the personal, intimate name of God himself. By telling his people his name, God intended to reveal to them his inmost character.”—*Eerdmans’ Handbook to the Bible*, page 157.

No, one cannot render a distinctive proper name by a mere title. A title can never convey the full, rich meaning of the original name of God.



This fragment of the *Septuagint* (right) dated to the first century C.E. and containing Zechariah 8:19-21 and 8:23-9:4 is in Jerusalem's Israel Museum. It contains God's name four times, three of which are indicated here. In the Alexandrine Manuscript (left), a copy of the *Septuagint* made 400 years later, God's name has been replaced in those same verses by **KY** and **KC**, abbreviated forms of the Greek word *Ky'ri-os* ("Lord")

what about the Greek Scriptures? Well, Bible translators and students came to realize that without God's name, some parts of the Christian Greek Scriptures are very difficult to understand properly. Restoring the name is a big help in increasing the clarity and comprehensibility of this portion of the inspired Bible.

For example, consider the words of Paul to the Romans, as they appear in the *Authorized Version*: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Romans 10:13) Whose name do we have to call on to be saved? Since Jesus is often spoken of as "Lord," and one scripture even says: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," should we conclude that Paul was here speaking about Jesus?—Acts 16:31, *Authorized Version*.

No, we should not. A marginal reference to Romans 10:13 in the *Authorized Version* points us to Joel 2:32 in the Hebrew Scriptures. If you check that reference, you will find that Paul was actually quoting the words of Joel in his letter to the Romans; and what Joel said in the original Hebrew was: "Everyone who calls on the name of *Jehovah* will get away safe." (*New World Translation*)

Yes, Paul meant here that we should call on the name of *Jehovah*. Hence, while we have to believe in Jesus, our salvation is closely linked with a proper appreciation of God's name.

This example demonstrates how the removal of the name of God from the Greek Scriptures contributed to confusing Jesus and Jehovah in the minds of many. Undoubtedly, it contributed greatly to the development of the doctrine of the Trinity!

Should the Name Be Restored?

Would a translator have any right to restore the name, in view of the fact that existing manuscripts do not have it? Yes, he would have that right. Most Greek lexicons recognize that often the word "Lord" in the Bible refers to Jehovah. For example, in its section under the Greek word *Ky'ri-os* ("Lord"), Robinson's *A Greek and English Lexicon of the New Testament* (printed in 1859) says that it means "God as the Supreme Lord and sovereign of the universe, usually in Sept[uagint] for Heb[rew] יהוה *Jehovah*." Hence, in places where the Christian Greek Scripture writers quote the earlier Hebrew Scriptures, the translator has the right to render the word *Ky'ri-os* as "Jehovah" wherever the

divine name appeared in the Hebrew original.

Many translators have done this. Starting at least from the 14th century, numerous Hebrew translations were made of the Christian Greek Scriptures. What did the translators do when they came to quotations from the “Old Testament” where God’s name appeared? Often, they felt forced to restore God’s name to the text. Many translations of parts or all of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew contain God’s name.

Translations into modern languages, particularly those used by missionaries, have followed this example. Thus many African, Asian, American and Pacific-island language versions of the Greek Scriptures use the name Jehovah liberally, so that readers can clearly see the difference between the true God and the false ones. The name has appeared, too, in versions in European languages.

One translation that boldly restores God’s name with good authority is the *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures*. This version, currently available in 11 modern languages, including English, has restored God’s name every time that a portion of the Hebrew Scriptures containing it is quoted in the Greek Scriptures. Altogether, the name appears with a sound basis 237 times in that translation of the Greek Scriptures.

Opposition to the Name

In spite of the efforts of many translators to restore God’s name in the Bible, there has always been religious pressure to eliminate it. The Jews, while leaving it in their Bibles, refused to pronounce it. Apostate Christians of the second and third centuries removed it when they made copies of Greek Bible manuscripts and left it out when they made translations

of the Bible. Translators in modern times have removed it, even when they based their translations on the original Hebrew, where it appears almost 7,000 times. (It appears 6,973 times in the Hebrew text of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, 1984 edition.)

How does Jehovah view those who remove his name from the Bible? If you were an author, how would you feel about someone who went to great lengths to remove your name from the book you authored? Translators who object to the name, doing so on account of problems of pronunciation or because of Jewish tradition, might be compared to those who Jesus said “strain out the gnat but gulp down the camel!” (Matthew 23:24) They stumble over these smaller problems but end up creating a major problem—by removing the name of the greatest personage in the universe from the book that he inspired.

John W. Davis, a missionary in China during the 19th century, explained why he believed that God’s name should be in the Bible: “If the Holy Ghost says Jehovah in any given place in the Hebrew, why does the translator not say Jehovah in English or Chinese? What right has he to say, I will use Jehovah in this place and a substitute for it in that? . . . If any one should say that there are cases in which the use of Jehovah would be wrong, let him show the reason why; the *onus probandi* [burden of proof] rests upon him. He will find the task a hard one, for he must answer this simple question,—If in any given case it is wrong to use Jehovah in the translation then why did the inspired writer use it in the original?”—*The Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal*, Volume VII, Shanghai, 1876.

The psalmist wrote: “How long, O God, will the adversary keep reproaching? Will the enemy keep treating your name with disrespect forever?”—Psalm 74:10.

Why We Must Know God's Name



“EVERYONE who calls on the name of Jehovah will be saved.” (Romans 10:13) With these words the apostle Paul stressed how vital it is for us to know God's name. His statement brings us back to our original question: Why did Jesus put the ‘hallowing,’ or ‘sanctifying,’ of God's name at the very beginning of his Model Prayer, ahead of so many other important matters? To understand this, we need to grasp a little better the meanings of two key words.

First, what does the word ‘hallow,’ or ‘sanctify,’ really mean? Literally it means: “to make holy.” But is not God's name already holy? Of course it is. When we sanctify God's name, we do not make it more holy than it is. Rather we *recognize* it as holy, set it apart, hold it in the highest esteem. When we pray for God's name to be sanctified, we are looking forward to the time when all creation will respect it as holy.

‘Knowing God's name’ means more than merely having head knowledge of the fact that his name is Jehovah

Second, exactly what is the implication of the word “name”? We have seen that God has a name, Jehovah, and that his name appears thousands of times in the Bible. We have discussed, too, the importance of restoring that name to its rightful place in the Bible text. If the name is not there, how can the psalmist's words be ful-

filled: “Those knowing your name will trust in you, for you will certainly not leave those looking for you, O Jehovah.”—Psalm 9:10.

But does ‘knowing God's name’ involve merely an intellectual knowledge that God's name in Hebrew is YHWH, or in English, Jehovah? No, it means more than that. When Moses was in Mount Sinai, “Jehovah proceeded to come down in the cloud and station himself with [Moses] there and *declare the name of Jehovah.*” What did this declaring of the name of Jehovah entail? A description of his qualities: “Jehovah, Jehovah, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness and truth.” (Exodus 34:5, 6) Again, shortly before his death, Moses said to the Israelites: “I shall declare the name of Jehovah.” What followed? Mention of some of His grand attributes, and then a review of what God had accomplished toward Israel for the sake of His name. (Deuteronomy 32:3-43) Hence, knowing God's name means learning what that name represents and worshiping the God who possesses it.

Since Jehovah has linked his name with his qualities, purposes and acts, we can see why the Bible says that God's name is holy. (Leviticus 22:32) It is majestic, great, fear-inspiring and unreachably high. (Psalm 8:1; 99:3; 148:13) Yes, God's name is more than a mere label. It represents him as a person. It was not merely a temporary name to be used for a time and then to

be superseded by a title such as "Lord." Jehovah himself said to Moses: "'Jehovah . . . ' This is my name to time indefinite, and this is the memorial of me to generation after generation."—Exodus 3:15.

Try as he will, man will never eliminate God's name from the earth. "'From the sun's rising even to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place sacrificial smoke will be made, a presentation will be made to my name, even a clean gift; because my name will be great among the nations,' Jehovah of armies has said."—Malachi 1:11; Exodus 9:16; Ezekiel 36:23.

Hence, the sanctification of God's name is far more important than any other issue. All of God's purposes are linked to his name. Mankind's problems began when Satan first profaned Jehovah's name by calling Him, in effect, a liar and unfit to rule the human race. (Genesis 3:1-6; John 8:44) Only when God's name is properly vindicated will mankind enjoy complete relief from the disastrous effects of Satan's lie. That is why Christians pray so fervently for the sanctification of God's name. But there are things that they can *do*, also, to sanctify it.

How Can We Sanctify God's Name?

One way is to talk to others about Jehovah and point to his Kingdom by Christ Jesus as mankind's only hope. (Revelation 12:10) Many are doing this, in a modern fulfillment of these words of Isaiah's prophecy: "In that day you will certainly say: 'Give thanks to Jehovah, you people! Call upon his name. Make known among the peoples his dealings. Make mention that his name is put on high. Make melody to Jehovah, for he has done surpassingly. This is made

known in all the earth.'"—Isaiah 12:4, 5.

Another way is to obey God's laws and commands. Jehovah told the nation of Israel: "You must keep my commandments and do them. I am Jehovah. And you must not profane my holy name, and I must be sanctified in the midst of the sons of Israel. I am Jehovah who is sanctifying you."—Leviticus 22:31, 32.

How did the Israelites' keeping of Jehovah's Law sanctify his name? The Law was given to the Israelites on the basis of his name. (Exodus 20:2-17) Hence, when they kept the Law, they were showing proper honor and esteem for that name. Furthermore, Jehovah's name was on the Israelites as a nation. (Deuteronomy 28:10; 2 Chronicles 7:14) When they acted

In an article in the *Anglican Theological Review* (October 1959), Dr. Walter Lowrie highlighted the need to know God's name. He wrote: "In human relationships it is highly important to know the proper name, the personal name, of one we love, to whom we are speaking, or even about whom we speak. Precisely so it is in man's relation to God. A man who does not know God by name does not really know him as a person, has no speaking acquaintance with him (which is what is meant by prayer), and he cannot love him, if he knows him only as an impersonal force."

properly, this brought praise to him, just as a child who acts in a proper manner brings honor to his father.

On the other hand, when the Israelites failed to keep God's Law, they profaned his name. Thus, sins such as sacrificing to idols, swearing to a lie, oppressing the poor and committing

fornication are described in the Bible as ‘profaning God’s name.’—Leviticus 18:21; 19:12; Jeremiah 34:16; Ezekiel 43:7.

Similarly, Christians have been given commands in God’s name. (John 8:28) And they, too, are associated with ‘a people for Jehovah’s name.’ (Acts 15:14) Hence, a Christian who sincerely prays, “Hallowed be your name” will sanctify that name in his own life by obeying all of God’s commands. (1 John 5:3) This would include also obeying the commands given by God’s Son, Jesus, who always glorified his Father.—John 13:31, 34; Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20.

The night before his execution, Jesus highlighted the importance of God’s name to Christians. After saying to his Father: “I have made your name known to them and will make it known,” he goes on to explain, “*in*

Jehovah’s name is ‘majestic, great, fear-inspiring and unreachably high.’ All of God’s purposes are linked to his name

order that the love with which you loved me may be in them and I in union with them.” (John 17:26) The disciples’ learning the name of God involved their personally coming to know the love of God. Jesus had made it possible for them to *become acquainted* with God as their loving Father.—John 17:3.

How It Affects You

At a first-century meeting of the Christian apostles and older men in Jerusalem, the disciple James said: “Symeon has related thoroughly how God for the first time turned his attention to the nations to take out of them a people for his name.” Could you be identified with those whom

God takes out to be a “people for his name” if you fail to use or bear that name?—Acts 15:14.

Although many are reluctant to use the name Jehovah, and many Bible translators leave it out of their translations, millions of people around the world have gladly accepted the privilege of bearing God’s name, of using it not only in worship but in everyday speech, and of declaring it to others. If somebody spoke to you about the God of the Bible and used the name Jehovah, with which religious group would you associate him? There is but one group in the world that uses God’s name regularly in their worship, just as his worshipers of ancient times did. They are Jehovah’s Witnesses.

The Bible-based name Jehovah’s Witnesses identifies these Christians as a ‘people for God’s name.’ They are proud to bear that name, for it is one that Jehovah God himself gave to true worshipers. At Isaiah 43:10, we read: “‘You are my witnesses,’ is the utterance of Jehovah, ‘even my servant whom I have chosen.’” Who was God discussing here? Consider some of the preceding verses.

In verses 5 to 7 of the same chapter, Isaiah says: “Do not be afraid, for I am with you. From the sunrising I shall bring your seed, and from the sunset I shall collect you together. I shall say to the north, ‘Give up!’ and to the south, ‘Do not keep back. Bring my sons from far off, and my daughters from the extremity of the earth, everyone that is *called by my name* and that I have created for my own glory, that I have formed, yes, that I have made.’” In our day, those verses refer to God’s own people that he has collected from all nations to praise him and to be his witnesses. Thus God’s name not only identifies him but also helps to identify his true servants on earth today.

The Blessings From Knowing God's Name

Jehovah protects those who love his name. The psalmist said: "Because on me he has set his affection, I shall also provide him with escape. I shall protect him because he has come to *know my name*." (Psalm 91:14) He also remembers them: "At that time those in fear of Jehovah spoke with one another, each one with his companion, and Jehovah kept paying attention and listening. And a book of remembrance began to be written up before him for those in fear of Jehovah and *for those thinking upon his name*."—Malachi 3:16.

Thus, the benefits from knowing and loving God's name are not limited to this life only. To obedient mankind Jehovah has promised everlasting life in happiness on a Paradise earth. David was inspired to write: "Evildoers themselves will be cut off, but *those hoping in Jehovah* are the ones that will possess the earth. But the meek ones themselves will possess the earth, and

they will indeed find their exquisite delight in the abundance of peace."
—Psalm 37:9, 11.

How will this be possible? Jesus gave the answer. In the same Model Prayer where he taught us to pray, "Let your name be sanctified," he added: "Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth." (Matthew 6:9, 10) Yes, God's Kingdom in the hands of Jesus Christ will sanctify God's name and also bring good conditions to this earth. It will eliminate wickedness and take away war, crime, famine, sickness and death.—Psalm 46:8, 9; Isaiah 11:9; 25:6; 33:24; Revelation 21:3, 4.

You can enjoy everlasting life under that Kingdom. How? By coming to know God. "This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ." (John 17:3) Jehovah's Witnesses will be delighted to help you take in that life-giving knowledge.—Acts 8:29-31.

It is hoped that the information in this brochure has convinced you that the Creator has a personal name that is very precious to him. It should be very precious to you too. May you realize the importance of knowing and using that name, especially in worship.

And may you be determined to say as the prophet Micah boldly said many centuries ago: "All the peoples, for their part, will walk each one in the name of its god; but we, for our part, shall walk in the name of Jehovah our God to time indefinite, even forever."—Micah 4:5.

