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GROUP STUDY GUIDE

HaShem – Part 4: Yehovah

Use with the full teaching and a Bible. Read or watch first, complete the questions, then discuss and apply. For family study, an adult can select suitable portions and accept spoken answers.

Test the teaching's explanations against the cited passages. Keep the answer key and facilitator notes separate when distributing learner pages.

[Open the full teaching](#)

Teaching summary

The pronunciation Yehovah is examined through the evidence commonly offered for it. The study disputes claims that the debate is settled while encouraging patience toward those who reach different conclusions. Its central concern is whether vowel marks in medieval Hebrew manuscripts reveal the original pronunciation or direct the reader to substitute another word.

The Masoretes added vowel signs to preserve reading traditions. The Aleppo and Leningrad codices contain several forms of the tetragrammaton with different vowel marks. Ketiv means what is written, while qere means what is to be read. The study understands the varying forms as reading cues for Adonai or Elohim under the tradition of not pronouncing the name.

The teaching therefore treats Yehovah as a reading form rather than a secure recovery of the ancient pronunciation. If later manuscripts depend on the same tradition, finding more of them does not establish independent evidence. It also challenges claims that a scribe accidentally revealed the pronunciation and that such an error could never be corrected.

The study then considers Josephus's reference to four vowels and the behavior of vowel marks when Hebrew prepositions are attached to YHWH. It argues that the grammar supports a substitute reading, especially Adonai. These arguments are presented against treating the written vowel points as a direct pronunciation guide.

The concluding questions address preservation of the name, manuscript dates, scribal correction, and theophoric names. The teaching compares Yeho prefixes with Yah or Yahu endings and proposes pronunciation changes over time. Its discussion of the Murasu archive notes that the cuneiform evidence cannot distinguish every proposed vowel. The teaching favors Yah or Yahu as older evidence while rejecting certainty about the full pronunciation and urging kindness.

Summary points

- The study challenges claims that Yehovah settles the pronunciation question.
- Masoretic vowel signs preserve reading traditions.
- Ketiv refers to what is written.
- Qere refers to what is to be read.
- Multiple pointed forms appear in the Aleppo and Leningrad codices.
- The forms are understood as cues to read Adonai or Elohim.
- Repeated dependent manuscripts do not create independent proof.
- Josephus and Hebrew grammar are examined as supporting evidence.

- Theophoric names and changes in dialect are considered.
- The study urges respectful disagreement and rejects certainty about the full name.

Fill in the blank

Use the teaching and the cited Bible passages. Equivalent wording is welcome when it expresses the same meaning.

Basic

1. The scribes who added the vowel signs discussed were the _____.
2. Ketiv refers to what is _____.
3. Qere refers to what is to be _____.
4. The study compares the Aleppo and _____ codices.
5. One substitute reading indicated by the vowel signs is _____, meaning Lord.
6. The alternative substitute title discussed is _____.

Challenging

1. Josephus describes the sacred name as four _____.
2. The Hebrew vowel under the initial yod discussed in the grammar argument is _____.
3. The preposition vowel used as evidence for an Adonai reading is _____.
4. Names containing a divine-name element are called _____ names.
5. The Babylonian archive cited in the discussion of Yahu is the _____ archive.
6. Repeating a dependent source does not turn it into _____ evidence.

Group discussion

Discuss respectfully and support answers from the passages. Use these lines for brief notes or a notebook for longer responses.

1. How does ketiv-qere change the interpretation of the written vowel points?

2. Why does the source of a manuscript matter more than the number of copies repeating it?

3. How does the study answer the claim that accidental spellings could not be corrected?

4. What roles do Josephus and the preposition argument play in the case presented?

5. How does the discussion of Yeho and Yahu introduce the possibility of language change?

6. How can believers examine strong disagreements without treating one another harshly?

Answer key

For the leader or parent. Answers follow the teaching and the passages. Accept equivalent wording that expresses the same meaning.

Basic

1. Masoretes

Teaching opening explanation of the codices

2. written

Teaching explanation of ketiv and qere

3. read

Teaching explanation of ketiv and qere

4. Leningrad

Teaching opening explanation of the codices

5. Adonai

Teaching explanation of the substitute readings

6. Elohim

Teaching explanation of the substitute readings

Challenging

1. vowels

Teaching section The Josephus Contradiction; Jewish War 5.5.7

2. sheva

Teaching section The Hebrew Grammar Problem

3. patach

Teaching section The Hebrew Grammar Problem

4. theophoric

Teaching Questions and Answers on theophoric names

5. Murasu (also: Murashu)

Teaching Questions and Answers on the Murasu archive

6. independent

Teaching discussion of manuscript dependence

Facilitator notes

These responses give direction for discussion. They are not a test of identical wording. Invite participants to explain the passages and consider a faithful practical response.

1. It distinguishes the written consonants from what readers are directed to say. The teaching treats the vowel marks as cues to a substitute reading, so it rejects simply combining them with the consonants as secure evidence of the ancient pronunciation.

Teaching explanation of ketiv and qere

2. Copies that depend on one tradition do not automatically become independent witnesses. We need to examine dating and dependence, not merely count examples. The source's broad claims about every manuscript should be tested individually.

Teaching discussion of manuscript dependence

3. The teaching reports Penkower's account of marking a mistaken form for correction or replacing the relevant parchment. This answers the claim that a scribal error necessarily had to remain untouched; it does not by itself prove how every manuscript arose.

Teaching Questions and Answers; quoted response from Jordan Penkower

4. Josephus supplies an ancient remark that the teaching interprets; the preposition discussion addresses how the Masoretic pointing functions. They are different kinds of evidence. Neither should be reduced to a claim that Josephus recorded every sound of Yahweh.

Teaching sections The Josephus Contradiction and The Hebrew Grammar Problem

5. The teaching compares forms in names with ancient records and proposes historical pronunciation change. It also notes a limitation of the cuneiform evidence concerning the o vowel. Keep that qualification visible rather than treating the proposed development as certain.

Teaching Questions and Answers on Yeho, Yah, Yahu, and the Murasu archive

6. We can test each claim, admit uncertainty, and allow others to follow their studied conviction without hostility. The teaching's final concern is respectful conduct and honoring YHWH's character, even where its arguments are strongly worded.

Teaching section To Pronounce or Not to Pronounce and final conclusion

Put it into practice

Choose one response to the passages. What will we do, and when will we revisit it? Share only what you are comfortable sharing.