



Good day Worthy Knights,

In this part 66, Adonai and the Tetragrammaton

(Wikipedia)

Adonai

Adonai (lit. "My Lords") is the plural form of adon ("Lord") along with the first-person singular pronoun enclitic. As with Elohim, Adonai's grammatical form is usually explained as a plural of majesty. In the Hebrew Bible, it is nearly always used to refer to God.

As pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton came to be avoided in the Hellenistic period, Jews may have begun to drop the Tetragrammaton when presented alongside Adonai and subsequently expand it to cover for the Tetragrammaton in the forms of spoken prayer and written scripture.

The singular forms adon and adoni ("my lord") are used in the Hebrew Bible as royal titles, as in the First Book of Samuel and for distinguished persons. The Phoenicians used it as a title of Tammuz, the origin of the Greek Adonis.

Deuteronomy has the proper name Yahweh alongside the superlative constructions "God of gods" and "Lord of lords"

The final syllable of Adonai uses the vowel kamatz, rather than patach which would be expected from the Hebrew for "my lord(s)".

Enclitic : a word pronounced with so little emphasis that it is shortened and forms part of the preceding word, for example n't in can't.

Tetragrammaton, YHWH

The name of God used most often in the Hebrew Bible is (יהוה), generally transcribed as YHWH and is called the Tetragrammaton (Greek for "something written with four letters"). Hebrew script is an abjad, so that the letters Yōd, Hē, Vav, Hē in this name are normally consonants, usually expanded in English as "Yahweh".

Modern Jewish culture judges it forbidden to pronounce this name. In prayers it is replaced by the word Adonai ("The Lord"), and in discussion by HaShem ("The Name"). Nothing in the Torah explicitly prohibits speaking the name and the Book of Ruth shows it was being pronounced as late as the 5th century BCE.

It had ceased to be spoken aloud by at least the 3rd century BCE, during Second Temple Judaism and vowel points began to be added to the Hebrew text only in the early medieval period. The Masoretic Text adds to the Tetragrammaton the vowel points of Adonai or Elohim, indicating that these are the words to be pronounced in place of the Tetragrammaton, as shown also by the subtle pronunciation changes when combined with a preposition or a conjunction.

The Tetragrammaton appears in Genesis and in the Stuttgart edition of the Masoretic Text. It is thought to be an archaic third-person singular of the imperfective aspect of the verb "to be" (i.e., "[He] is/was/will be"). This agrees with the passage in Exodus where God names himself as "I Will Be What I Will Be" using the first-person singular imperfective aspect, open to interpretation as present tense ("I am what I am"), future ("I shall be what I shall be"), imperfect ("I used to be what I used to be").

Rabbinical Judaism teaches that the name is forbidden to all except the High Priest, who should only speak it in the Holy of Holies of the Temple in Jerusalem on Yom Kippur.

He then pronounces the name "just as it is written". As each blessing was made, the people in the courtyard were to prostrate themselves completely as they heard it spoken aloud. As the Temple has not been rebuilt since its destruction in 70 AD and as we have seen, most modern Jews never pronounce YHWH but instead read Adonai ("My Lord") during prayer and while reading the Torah and as HaShem ("The Name") at other times.

Similarly, the Vulgate used Dominus ("The Lord") and most English translations of the Bible write "the Lord" for YHWH and "the Lord God" or "the Sovereign Lord" for Adonai YHWH instead of transcribing the name.

The Septuagint may have originally used the Hebrew letters themselves amid its Greek text but there is no scholarly consensus on this point. All surviving Christian-era manuscripts use Kyrios [Κυριος, "Lord"] or very occasionally Theos [Θεος, "God"] to translate the many thousand occurrences of the Name. However, given the great preponderance of the Kyrios solution for translating YHWH in the Septuagint and some disambiguation efforts by Christian-era copyists, Theos should probably not be considered historically as a serious early contender substitute for the divine Name.



Ancient fragment of the Septuagint dated between 50 BCE and 50 CE (AD) showing the Tetragrammaton. If this dating is correct, it would have been written near the time of Jesus ministry.