



The Names: January & Jehovah

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was, and Who is, and Who is to come.

Revelation 4:8

Do you know why our first month is called January? Some of you may already know that January is actually named after a Roman god called Janus. This is because Janus was a god of doorways and transitions and is usually depicted with two faces. And so January is the month that looks back on the old year and forward on the new year. We also think of January as a time to reflect on the past and make plans for the future. Is this idea a good idea for us to think about? Does it relate to the New Church idea of the Lord? The Lord is called the Alpha and Omega, and first and last. As we know He is the only God and all others are merely idols. But the ideas about these other gods usually come from some attribute of Lord which they attributed to individual gods.

Religion existed from the most ancient times, and the inhabitants of all parts of the world knew about God, and something about life after death. This knowledge did not come from them themselves or their own intelligence, but from the ancient Word ...But because the Word had to be written by means of representatives, which are the sort of things in the world which correspond to heavenly things and so stand for them, the religious beliefs of the heathen turned to idolatry, and in Greece to fables. The attributes and qualities of God became so many gods, and they set over them the highest whom they called Jove, perhaps after Jehovah. TCR 275

Also: *“The name Jehovah means ‘He is’ and ‘He who is.’ ...It also means ‘He was’ and ‘He is to come,’ since the past and the future in Him are present.” (AR 13:2)*

The name Jehovah comes from the Hebrew (YHWH) and means “I AM” it is probably related to the Hebrew verb “to be” which is HYH. This name was considered so holy that the Israelites feared to even speak it. This is ironic since we are told that when the name Jehovah or Lord is used rather than God when the Word is emphasizing love, mercy, and conjunction with Him (AC 222, 709). Because of this practice it has been unclear how to pronounce this name. Certain Scholars have decided that Yaweh or Yahuah is the most likely original pronunciation. The Heavenly Doctrines explain that the name is Jehovah or sometimes Jehovih (AC 300, 1793). The vowels in Hebrew words can change according to meaning and in heaven vowels are pronounced differently according to the affections of the angels (HH 261). It is also important to understand that neither Latin or Hebrew have separate letters for Y, I or J and V, U or W. Words containing those letters could have been pronounced as a range of sound of any of those English letters. New Church scholars prefer the pronunciation Yehowah noting that Celestial angels prefer softer and flowing sounds and words and that in both Latin and Hebrew Jehovah and “יהוה” can be, (and probably were) pronounced with soft consonants (AC 241).

While the specific pronunciation may be debatable, it is important to understand the meaning this name because it teaches us not only is our God is not just Lord of past and future but He is present with us every moment and holding us up and leading us towards heaven.

I will love Thee, O Jehovah my strength; And Thou hast given me the shield of Thy salvation; and Thy right hand sustains me, For who is God, besides Jehovah? And who is a rock, except our God? Psalm 18:1,31,35