

In the Name of the Father



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EDITOR'S NOTES

Scripture quotations are based on the World English Bible, a translation in the public domain.

Unless otherwise indicated, bolded or underlined text in reference materials & quotes was added for emphasis by the author.

ABOUT THE COVER

This picture contains a 14-line commentary on the Book of Habakkuk found among the Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran. It was written around 50 BCE using primarily an Aramaic script. The Hebrew Tetragrammaton can be clearly seen, written in ancient Paleo-Hebrew, in the middle of the 5th line from the top. The writer was quoting from Hab. 2:13-14.

Note: this image was found in an online gallery and is believed to be in the public domain.

In the Name of the Father

"I am come in My Father's Name, and you receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him you will receive." (John 5:43).

Introduction

Names are important. Just ask anyone who has ever been the victim of identity theft or been involved in a case of mistaken identity. On a more personal level, ask yourself how you would feel if your spouse, best friend, or a close relative continually called you by someone else's name? Suppose he/she substituted a generic title or non-specific word like "boy" or "woman" for your name? At first you might just be a little perplexed, but eventually you'd probably become offended and even angry that this loved one didn't seem to care enough about you to use your own name!

As important as names are in the world in which we live, they are even more important in the Bible, where a name often conveys the very essence of the one bearing it:

"The biblical concept of naming was rooted in the ancient world's understanding that a name expressed essence. To know the name of a person was to know that person's total character and nature... The knowing of a name implied a relationship between parties in which power to do harm or good was in force."¹

If names are so important in the Bible, have you ever wondered what the Name of the Creator of the heavens and the earth is? Most people, when asked this question, will generally respond with "God" or "the

Lord,” yet those titles don’t identify specifically who they mean. English-speaking adherents of all of the world’s major religions refer to the object of their worship as “God” and “Lord.” Obviously, those titles don’t clarify who they mean. While they could be referring to the “God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob”, they could just as easily be referring to Allah, Buddha, or even Satan himself. In fact, the King James Version of the Bible identifies Satan as the “**god** of this world.” (2 Cor. 4:4)

The Name of the Father

Our heavenly Father actually does have a personal Name, and it is clearly revealed in the original Old Testament Scriptures. Written as four Hebrew characters – יהוה – and referred to by scholars as the *Tetragrammaton* (Greek for “Four Letters”), it is written in English as Y-H-W-H and is pronounced Yahweh (“Yah-way”). Though this Name occurs 6,823 times in the original Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament, it has been replaced in most English versions of the Bible by generic titles – “the LORD” and “GOD”.

“The name of God holds an important key to understanding the doctrine of God and the doctrine of revelation. The name of God is a **personal disclosure** and reveals His relationship with His people. His Name is known only because He chooses to make it known. To the Hebrew mind, God was both hidden and revealed, transcendent and immanent. Even though He was mysterious, lofty, and unapproachable, He bridged the gap with humankind by revealing His Name... **The truth of God’s character is focused in His Name.** The divine Name reveals God’s power, authority, and holiness. This accounts for Israel’s great reverence for God’s Name... The covenant Name for God was ‘**Yahweh.**’ Israel’s faith was a new response to God based on His disclosure. This Name was so unique and powerful that God formed a covenant with His people based upon His self-revelation.”²

Consider this entry from the dictionary-concordance of the New King James version of the Bible: “Yahweh: The covenant God of

Israel, YHWH is the original Hebrew. According to **Jewish custom**, because of reverence the divine name was not to be spoken, so the Hebrew words for Lord and God were **substituted**. Whenever the words LORD and GOD appear in large and small capital letters, the original Hebrew reads YHWH.”³

Please notice that it was a Jewish custom not to speak the Name of Yahweh and to substitute titles for it. There is no Scriptural justification for such a practice; on the contrary, we’re actually instructed not to add to nor take away from His Word. The words “LORD” and “GOD”, whether capitalized or not, are **titles, not names**.

The key is to understand that proper names are not translated, they’re transliterated. The word ‘translate’ means “to change from one place, state, or form to another”, while the word ‘transliterate’ means “to represent or spell in the characters of another alphabet”. The pronunciation of a name doesn’t change when it is transliterated from one language to another. For example, the name Ronald Reagan is still pronounced as Ronald Reagan, whether one is speaking English, Russian, Arabic, Chinese, or Swahili. Similarly, Mikhail Gorbachev’s name is pronounced the same, regardless of the language. There might be a slight accent, depending upon who’s speaking, but that doesn’t change the fact that the names are still the same.

What About ‘Jehovah’?

Many people have been led to believe that the Father’s Name is ‘Jehovah’. Is this true?

To answer this question, it is important to note that there is no “J” or J-sound in either Hebrew or Greek, even to this day. In fact, the letter J is a fairly recent addition to the English alphabet and was originally used as a decorative “I” at the beginning of words:

“The form of J was unknown in **any alphabet** until the 14th century... Either symbol (J, I) used initially generally had the consonant sound of y (as in *year*)... Gradually, the two symbols (I and J) were differentiated, the J usually acquiring consonant force and thus becoming regarded as a consonant, and the I becoming the vowel... It was not until 1630 that the differentiation became general in England.”⁴

We can see an example of this in the following verse from the KJV of the Bible: "... Extol Him Who rides upon the heavens by His Name Jah, and rejoice before Him." (Psalm 68:4). Even today, the letter J still carries a "y" sound in some languages, such as German (e.g., Johann Sebastian Bach and jaegerschnitzel).

If there is no "J" in Hebrew, then where did the name 'Jehovah' originate?

"Jehovah is a modern mispronunciation of the Hebrew name, resulting from combining the consonants of that name, YHWH, with the vowels of the word Adonay, "Lord," which the Jews substituted for the proper name in reading the scriptures. In such cases of substitution, the vowels of the word which is to be read are written in the Hebrew text with the consonants of the word which is not to be read. The consonants of the word to be substituted are ordinarily written in the margin; but inasmuch as Adonay was regularly read instead of the ineffable name YHWH, it was deemed unnecessary to note the fact at every occurrence. When Christian scholars began to study the Old Testament in Hebrew, if they were ignorant of this general rule or regarded the substitution as a piece of Jewish superstition, reading what actually stood in the text, they would inevitably pronounce the name Jehovah ... The form Jehovah was used in the 16th century by many authors, both Catholic and Protestant ... It appeared in the English Bible in Tyndale's translation of the Pentateuch (1530), and is found in all English Protestant versions of the 16th century except that of Coverdale (1535). In the Authorized Version of 1611 it occurs in Exod. 6:3; Ps. 83:18; Isa. 12:2, 26:4, beside the compound names Jehovah-jireh, Jehovah-nissi, Jehovah-shalom"⁵

"Of the Names of God in the Old Testament, that which occurs most frequently (6,823 times) is the so-called Tetragrammaton, YHWH (יהוה), the distinctive personal Name of the God of Israel. This Name is commonly represented in modern translations by the form "Jehovah," which, however, is a **philological impossibility** ... This form has arisen through attempting to pronounce the consonants of the Name with the vowels of Adonai (= "Lord"), which the Masorites have inserted in the text ..."⁶

Philology is the study of how languages develop over time; “philological impossibility” is a fancy way of saying that ‘Jehovah’ can not possibly be the proper transliteration of the Tetragrammaton.

The Hebrew ו (vav) originally had the pronunciation of /waw/. In fact, in early texts of the English Bible, Dawiyd (‘David’) was spelled as Daudid, the same way that it was written in the Greek Septuagint. “In Latin, V was a vowel letter, but in Romance languages such as French and Italian its value before a second vowel evolved to the modern, consonantal pronunciation /v/. Until the 17c, V was ambiguous in English, capable of representing the sounds of both *u* and *v*.”⁷

Incidentally, the Hebrew word *hováh* means “ruin, mischief, or disaster” (#1943 in Strong’s concordance). It derives from *havváh* (Strong’s #1942) – “desire (in a bad sense); chasm (fig. of destruction), engulfing ruin, destruction, calamity.” It would certainly not be a part of our Creator’s holy Name!

Important People, Names & Titles

Consider the names of important men and women in the world today. George Bush, former president of the United States, is still called “George Bush”, regardless of the country. If he were to visit Mexico, they would not refer to him as “Jorge Arbusto”, although that is how his name would be translated. Why? Because that’s not his name! Whether he visits Russia, China, Israel, Germany, or any other nation, his name is still George Bush.

Any person visiting a foreign country could translate his or her name into the equivalent in the local dialect, yet that person would be unable to conduct business under that name; he or she wouldn’t be able to write a check or use a credit card in the translated name – because it isn’t his or her real name.

The Bible – the Old and New Testament Scriptures – is in fact a legal document, a covenant between Yahweh and His people. Whose name could be more important and more significant than the Name of the Father? And that Name is the same in any language, in any age. It doesn’t change any more than mine or yours does.

We might also think of it like this: let’s say your name is John Smith and that you live in America. Consider that there was a woman that you cared deeply about, and you decided to pour out your heart to

her in a letter. You say, “I, John Smith, love you so much... and I, John Smith, will take you as my wife...” Then someone comes along after you and substitutes “Charles” every time they find “John Smith.” What if this sweetheart of yours lived overseas and only spoke Spanish? A translator “friend” took it upon himself to replace every “John Smith” with “American man” or - worse yet – “Gringo.” How would you feel?

The Bible is Yahweh’s love letter to us – His children! And it is Messiah’s marriage contract – His covenant – with His bride!

The very validity of the 10 Commandments is based upon the revelation of Yahweh’s Name: “I am Yahweh your Elohim” (Exodus 20:2). “Elohim” (eh-low-HEEM) is a Hebrew word that means “Mighty One.” It is typically translated as “God.” The 3rd Commandment is: “You shall not take the Name of Yahweh your Elohim in vain; for Yahweh will not hold him guiltless that takes His Name in vain” (Exodus 20:7).

The literal translation of this verse is “You shall not bring the Name of Yahweh your Elohim to naught (to nothingness).” One way of bringing it to naught is by using it frivolously or taking it for granted, but another way is to ignore it or substitute something else for it.

Sadly, people down through the ages have done just that – ignored His Name and substituted something else for it. Even today, due to lack of teaching and inaccurate Bible translations, most professing Christians have unknowingly substituted “LORD” and “GOD” for the Name of Yahweh. Most Jews substitute “Ha Shem” (literally, “the Name”) or Adonai (“My Master”) for it.

Does it really matter what we call Him? Well, the Bible says that it does! In fact, Yahweh says that He is “jealous for (His) holy Name” (Eze. 39:25). “I am Yahweh – that is My Name, and My glory will I not give to another, nor My praise to carved images.” (Isa. 42:8). Clearly, Yahweh takes His Name very seriously, and He will not allow His glory or His praise to be given to someone or something else.

A proper name is not the same as a title. A person might have many titles during a lifetime: son, brother, husband, father, engineer, doctor, manager. But that person’s name remains the same – unless he or she decides to change it legally.

We can refer to Yahweh by titles; in fact, in Scripture He is called by many titles, including ‘Elohim’, ‘El Shaddai,’ ‘Adonai,’ and ‘El

Elyon'. But as we have seen, we are explicitly told not to take His Name in vain or substitute something else for it.

How Important Is the Name?

Using the Father's proper Name is much more than just keeping a commandment – it is honoring Him simply for Who He is:

- “Ascribe to Yahweh the glory due His Name.” (Psa. 96:8)
- “Save me, O Elohim, by Your Name.” (Psa. 54:1)
- “I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of Yahweh.” (Psa. 116:13)
- “Our help is in the Name of Yahweh, Who made heaven and earth.” (Psa 124:8)
- “The Name of Yahweh is a strong tower; the righteous runs into it and is safe.” (Pro. 18:10)
- “Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him. I will set him on high, because he has known My Name.” (Psa. 91:14)

*“I, even I, am Yahweh; and besides Me there is no savior.”
(Isa. 43:11)*

Did The Patriarchs Know the Name?

The patriarchs of Israel – from Adam through Jacob – actually knew and called upon the Name of Yahweh. Recall from our previous discussion that His Name is actually a personal disclosure by Him to His people.

The very first use of the Tetragrammaton in the Bible occurs in the second chapter of Genesis: “These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that Yahweh Elohim made the earth and the heavens.” (Gen. 2:3)

Adam and Eve knew the Name. “And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from Yahweh.” (Gen. 4:1)

Others knew and called upon the Name. "... then began men to call upon the Name of Yahweh." (Gen. 4:26). Obviously, men couldn't call on something they didn't know.

Noah, Abram and Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Hagar, Lot, and others knew and called upon the Name of Yahweh:

- "And Noah built an altar to Yahweh ..." (Gen. 8:20)
- "... (Abram) built an altar to Yahweh, and called upon the Name of Yahweh." (Gen. 12:8. See also Gen. 13:3-4, 14:22, 15:1-2, 18:27, 22:14)
- "And Sarah said to Abram, Behold now, Yahweh has restrained me from bearing..." (Gen. 16:2)
- "And (Hagar) called the Name of Yahweh that spoke to her, the El seeing me..." (*El-Roi*, Gen. 16:13)
- "And Lot went out and spoke to his sons in law... Up, get out of this place, for Yahweh will destroy this city..." (Gen. 19:14)
- "And (Abraham's servant) said, O Yahweh Elohim of my master Abraham..." (Gen. 24:12. See also Gen. 24:26-27)
- "Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceeds from Yahweh: we cannot speak to you evil or good." (Gen. 24:50)
- "And Isaac entreated Yahweh for his wife..." (Gen. 25:21. See also Gen. 26:25)
- (speaking to Jacob) "And behold, Yahweh stood above it, and said, I am Yahweh Elohim of Abraham your father, and the Elohim of Isaac..." (Gen. 28:13. See also v16)

There was even a saying that was "en vogue" during ancient times utilizing the Name: "(Nimrod) was a mighty hunter before Yahweh: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before Yahweh." (Gen. 10:9).

A "Burning Bush" Experience and a Misunderstand Scripture

When Moses was called to deliver the Israelites from bondage in Egypt, he desired to know in whose name he was being sent: "And

Moses said to Elohim, Behold, when I come to the children of Israel and shall say to them, The Elohim of your fathers has sent me to you; and they shall say to me, What is His Name? What shall I say to them?” (Exodus 3:13)

What was His response? “... You shall say to the children of Israel, **Yahweh** – the Elohim of your fathers, the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of Isaac, and the Elohim of Jacob – has sent me to you: this is My Name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.” (Ex.3:15)

Yahweh is His Name forever and it is His memorial – His remembrance – to all generations. His Name doesn’t change.

The Scriptures cited above clearly demonstrate that many people – including Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob – knew and called upon the Name of Yahweh. Yet we read in Exodus: “And Elohim spoke to Moses, and said to him, I am Yahweh: And I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as El Shaddai, but by My Name Yahweh was I not known to them.” (Exodus 6:2-3). Since Scripture cannot contradict Scripture, this presents an enigma. How do we reconcile this passage with those that we’ve already seen?

First, it is important to recognize that there was no punctuation in the original Hebrew manuscripts – no commas, periods, questions marks, etc. That, coupled with the overwhelming evidence that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob all DID know and call upon Yahweh’s Name, indicates that Exodus 6:3 must be a question rather than a statement. In fact, the sentence structure in the original Hebrew is in the form of a question. In essence, Yahweh is saying, “Yes, I was known to them as El Shaddai. But by My Name Yahweh was I not (also) known to them?”

The “Babylon” Effect

It is a historical fact that the Jewish people, as a whole, eventually stopped using the Name of Yahweh in the aftermath of the Babylonian captivity. As mentioned earlier, it is a Jewish custom not to speak the Name. Again, there is no Scriptural justification for such a practice; in fact, as we have seen and as will become even more apparent, we are encouraged to use and call upon His Name. So where did this custom originate, and why?

Interestingly, the prohibition against pronouncing the Name was actually prophesied more than 2,500 years ago. The prophet Jeremiah, writing between 628-586 BCE (Before the Common Era), recorded the following declaration from Yahweh: “Therefore hear the Word of Yahweh, all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt: Behold, I have sworn by My great Name, says Yahweh, that **My Name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah** in all the land of Egypt.” (Jer. 44:26)

Notice that this prophecy was specifically directed against the children of Judah – the Jews. Significantly, the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* states that, at least until the time of this prophetic utterance, the Name was commonly spoken:

“At least until the destruction of the First Temple in 586 B.C.E., this Name was regularly pronounced with its proper vowels, as is clear from the Lachish Letters^a [see End Notes], written shortly before that date. But at least by the third century B.C.E. the pronunciation of the Name YHWH was avoided, and Adonai, ‘the Lord,’ was substituted for it... The avoidance of pronouncing the Name YHWH is generally ascribed to a sense of reverence. More precisely, it was caused by a misunderstanding of the Third Commandment.”⁸

Also notice that Jeremiah’s prophecy does not say that the Jews wouldn’t know HOW to pronounce the Name, only that Yahweh would take it out of their mouths – that they would stop SPEAKING it. Why? Because of their idolatry (v20-25). That prophesy has been fulfilled – to the point that, even today, most Jews WILL NOT “name” His Name! However, this does NOT mean they don’t know how to pronounce it or, as some claim, that the pronunciation was lost:

“The true pronunciation of the Name YHWH [Yahweh] was **never lost**. Several early Greek writers of the Christian Church testify that the Name was pronounced ‘**Yahweh**.’ This is confirmed, at least for the vowel of the first syllable of the Name, by the shorter form Yah, which is sometimes used in poetry (e.g., Ex. 15:2) and the -yahu- or -yah that serves as the final syllable in very many Hebrew Names.”⁹

The shortened or poetic form ‘Yah’ can be seen in the Biblical

names Isaiah (IsaYah), Jeremiah (JeremiYah), Hezekiah (HezekiYah), Obadiah (ObadiYah), and Zechariah (ZechariYah), among others. It is also apparent in the word ‘HalleluYah’, which means “praise you Yah”.

The Aramaic Peshitta contains the oldest versions of the New Testament. In the Peshitta version of the Old Testament, the form MarYah is used for the Tetragrammaton (YHWH) almost 7,000 times. ‘Mar Yah’ simply means Master Yah.

With the prophecy in Jeremiah 44:26 in mind, consider the dire warning found in the Jewish Talmud that “one who pronounces the divine Name as it is spelt” forfeits his portion in the world to come.¹⁰

Again, there is no Scriptural support for such an assertion. This warning also demonstrates that the pronunciation is KNOWN, as does the following instruction regarding the Name from a modern Hebrew prayer book:

“The Four-Letter Name of HASHEM indicates that God is timeless and infinite ... This Name appears in some editions with vowel points and in others, such as the present edition, without vowels. In either case, this Name is <i>never</i> pronounced as it’s spelled.” (emphasis in original) ¹¹
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Why would such a warning be necessary to the average Hebrew reader, unless the proper pronunciation of the Name was self-evident? Clearly, the pronunciation of the Name has never been lost; it is pronounced the way it is spelled: **Yahweh**.

The Messiah of Israel

“... Who has established the ends of the earth? What is His Name and what is His Son’s Name, if you know?” (Prov. 30:4)

“I Am Come in My Father’s Name”

The promised Messiah of Israel was a Jewish boy born to Jewish parents in a Jewish town in the land of Israel, and He spoke Hebrew. No believer in the Messiah would dispute that. His entire Hebrew lineage – from Abraham on down – is listed in great detail in Matthew 1. All of these HEBREW NAMES are transliterated in English versions of the Bible, with the exception of all the J’s and the Greek-influenced addition of the S’s on the ends of some of names (for instance, *Ezekias* instead of *Hezekiah*, Matt. 1:10). Yet, when we get to the Messiah’s Name, most English Bibles render it as “Jesus,” an Anglo-Latin-Greek hybrid name that didn’t even exist at the time.

As previously mentioned, neither Hebrew nor Greek has a “J” or “J” sound, even to this day. In fact, there wasn’t even a “J” sound in English until roughly 400 years ago, nearly 1600 years AFTER Messiah walked this earth! So the Messiah’s Name could NOT have been “Jesus”! He undoubtedly had a Hebrew Name. Concerning the usage of the letter J in English writings, Funk and Wagnalls Encyclopedia states:

“Not until the middle of the 17th century did this usage become universal in English books; **in the King James bible of 1611 for example, the words Jesus and judge are invariably Iesus and iudge.**”¹²

Strong’s Concordance lists the name ‘Jesus’ as #2424, *Iesous* (ee-ay-sooce), “Jesus = Jehovah is Salvation”. As we have already seen, ‘Jehovah’ is an erroneous rendering of the Tetragrammaton YHWH (Yahweh). Strong’s states that ‘Iesous’ derives from the Hebrew #3091, *Yehowshuwa* (yeh-ho-shoo-ah), Joshua or Jehoshua, a compound derived from #3068, *YHWH*, and #3467, *Yasha*, to save/deliver. In other words, the Messiah’s Name is a compound of ‘Yahweh’ and His role, to save.

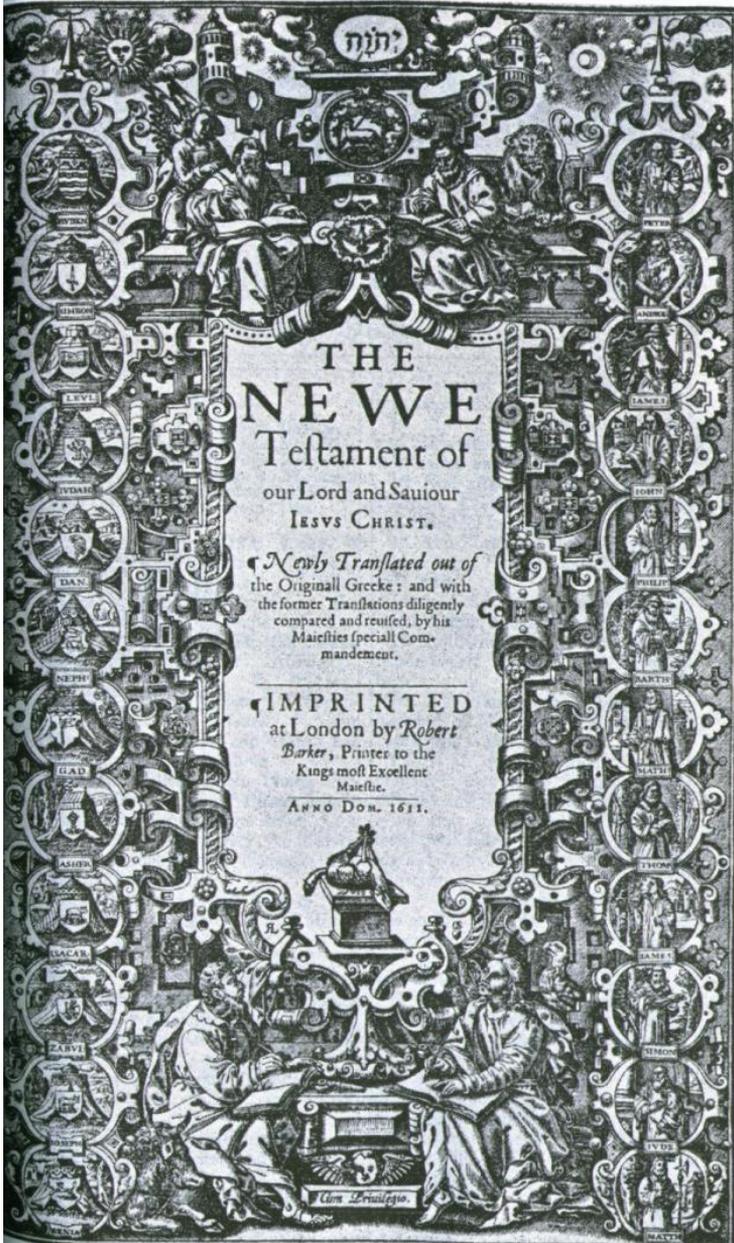
Messiah Himself said, “I have come in My Father’s Name and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you would receive.” (John 5:43). The Father’s Name is contained in Messiah’s Name, so Yahshua very literally came IN HIS FATHER’S NAME!

The angel Gabriel appeared to Joseph and told him that Mary would give birth to the promised Messiah of Israel, who was to be given a specific Name for a specific purpose: “And she shall bring forth a Son; and you shall call His Name **YAHSHUA**; for it is He that shall save His people from their sins. Now all this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Yahweh through the prophet, saying, Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a Son, And they shall call His Name Immanuel; which is, being interpreted, El with us. And Joseph arose from his sleep, and did as the angel of Yahweh commanded him, and took unto him his wife; and knew her not till she had brought forth a Son: and he called His Name **YAHSHUA**.” (Matt 1:21-25)

“For He will save His people [Israel] from their sins” (Matt. 1:21). Only the Hebrew Name ‘Yahshua’ carries that meaning (“Salvation of Yah” or “Yah is salvation”). Most Bible scholars agree that the Messiah actually had the same name as the Joshua of Mosaic times, or one very close to it. In fact, in several places in the New Testament, the King James Version of the Bible erroneously utilizes the name ‘Jesus’ in reference to the Joshua of the Exodus (see Acts 7:45 and Hebrews 4:8). By re-substituting a Y (Hebrew “yod”) for the J in Joshua, we get a pronunciation very close to ‘Yahshua’.

Speaking of the coming Messiah, Psalm 89:24 says “But My faithfulness and My mercy shall be with Him: and **in My Name** shall His horn be exalted.” And in Acts 4:12 we read – again in reference to the Messiah – that there is “no other Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Notice how the act of salvation is tied to the Name.

We also read the following regarding the Messiah and the importance of His Name: “Therefore also Yahweh highly exalted Him, and gave to Him the Name which is above every name; that in the Name of Yahshua every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Yahshua the Messiah is Master to the glory of Yahweh the Father.” (Phil. 2:9-11). Clearly this Name is important.



This is a scan from the original 1611 King James Version of the Bible. Notice the Tetragrammaton at the top center of the page and the usage of “IESVS” for the Messiah’s Name in the center.

The Messiah and the Father's Name

At the beginning of His earthly ministry, Yahshua went into the synagogue in Nazareth. Understanding that the prohibition against speaking the Father's Name was already in force in that day, let's examine this event:

“And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and He entered, as His custom was, into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up to read. And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And He opened the book, and found the place where it was written, The Spirit of **Yahweh** is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor: He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of **Yahweh**. And He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down: and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on Him. And He began to say unto them, Today has this Scripture been fulfilled in your ears.” (Luke 4:16-21)

The passage of Scripture that He read was Isaiah 61:1-2. In the original Hebrew manuscripts, the Name of Yahweh appears twice in these verses. We know that Yahshua lived a sinless life, therefore we know that He never once violated the 3rd commandment – bringing Yahweh's Name to naught. There is NO WAY He would have ignored His Father's Name or substituted something else for it, regardless of the “traditions” of the day. That is why “the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on Him” – the people had never been allowed to pronounce the Father's Name themselves and couldn't believe their ears! Notice that it was AFTER every eye was upon Him that He declared “Today has this Scripture been fulfilled.” He had certainly gotten their attention!

This event in Nazareth was just a preview of things to come. Yahshua continued to declare and manifest His Father's Name throughout His earthly ministry.

Yahshua's disciples asked Him to show them how to pray. He responded by saying, "After this manner therefore pray you. Our Father Who is in heaven, **hallowed be Your Name.** Your kingdom come..." (Matt. 6:9). How could they "hallow" something they didn't know? Would He instruct them to pray for something that they didn't know?

The Greatest Commandment

Later, one of the Jewish religious leaders tested Yahshua: "And one of the scribes came, and heard them questioning together, and knowing that He had answered them well, asked Him, What commandment is the first of all? Yahshua answered, The first is, Hear, O Israel; Yahweh is our Elohim, Yahweh is one: and you shall love Yahweh your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." (Mark 12:28-30. See also Matt. 22:34-38). Again, the Messiah's words were a direct quote from the Old Testament, scriptures that actually contain the Father's Name (compare Deut. 6:4-5).

At the end of His earthly ministry, Yahshua said that He had manifested the Father's Name to His disciples: "I manifested Your Name unto the men whom You gave Me out of the world: yours they were, and You gave them to me; and they have kept Your word" (John 17:6). Why was it important for the Messiah to have manifested the Father's Name to His disciples? Because of the Jewish tradition that prohibited the use of the Name of Yahweh!

He went on to say: "And I am no more in the world, and these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your Name which You have given Me, that they may be one, even as We [are]. While I was with them, I kept them in Your Name which You have given me: and I guarded them, and not one of them perished, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled...and I made known unto them Your Name, and will make it known; that the love wherewith You loved Me may be in them, and I in them." (John 17:11-12, 26).

Notice how the love of the Father in us is related to the manifestation of His Name.

Some Frequently Asked Questions

“Why Does It Matter What I Call Him? He Knows Who I Mean”

As we have seen, over and over and over again the Scriptures emphasize the importance of knowing, using, and reverencing the Father’s Name. He knew us before we knew Him and, in His incredible grace, He receives each of us despite our imperfect condition. However, He expects us to grow and mature in our walk with Him. “The times of our ignorance therefore Elohim overlooked; but now He commands men that they should all everywhere repent (change, turn back)” (Acts 17:30).

He also desires that we honor Him in all things, and that includes using His Name as He has revealed it to us. Once we have received knowledge of the truth, we become accountable for that truth. Man’s wisdom might state that “it doesn’t matter what I call Him – He knows who I mean”, but the truth is that we cannot call Him by the name of Buddha, Allah, Zeus, or any other false god and expect Him to answer. Nor should we, out of a false or mistaken reverence, think we aren’t worthy to call upon His Name. His Word says that we have been made worthy and that we should call upon His Name.

“The New Testament was written in Greek, not Hebrew, so ...”

Some have made the argument that the New Testament was originally written in Greek, not Hebrew, so therefore the Hebrew Name of Yahweh is not really that important. However, we need to recognize that surviving New Testament manuscripts are copies from copies from copies. Many people don’t realize that of the approximately 24,000 manuscripts or portions of the New Testament in existence, only about 5,300 are in Greek.

Too, many scholars believe that much of the New Testament was originally written in Hebrew. They believe this for several reasons: first, the ease of translation of surviving Greek manuscripts (back) into Hebrew; second, the appearance of numerous expressions in the New Testament that make little sense in either English or Greek but which were common Hebrew idioms in the land of Israel during Yahshua’s day.

In addition, there is evidence that the Father’s Name was actually replaced in New Testament Scriptures, which is why we don’t see it in the Greek. For instance, any Greek New Testament verses that are direct quotes from Old Testament verses containing the *Tetragrammaton* should have the equivalent (transliteration) in the Greek. If they don’t, we know something was changed. Why? Because proper names are NOT translated, they’re transliterated. The “original language” of the New Testament is not really the critical issue.

“If the Hebrew Names are so vital, why would He have allowed the Hebrew manuscripts to be destroyed?”

We live in a fallen, sin-filled world. Whenever there is a great tragedy – whether natural or man-made – people ask “why? Why would a loving Creator allow such a thing to happen?” But the reality of tragedy in no way nullifies the existence of Yahweh. In fact, the Bible tells us that the “god of this world” (Satan) comes to kill, steal, and destroy (John 10:10); that which he cannot destroy he will try to corrupt, obscure, or twist. Yet the same Bible also guarantees that those who earnestly seek after Truth will find it: “Ask, and it will be given you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives. He who seeks finds. To him who knocks it will be opened.” (Matt. 7:7-8). “It is the glory of Elohim to conceal a matter: but the honor of kings is to search out a matter.” (Pro. 25:2). If we have a heart for truth, our heavenly Father is faithful to make it known to us – according to His perfect will and in His perfect timing.

Though His Name has been hidden, it has never been lost. He has preserved it in His written word for those who will diligently seek Him.

“I don’t speak Hebrew. Why should I use a Hebrew Name?”

Some people are very intimidated by the challenges of a foreign language, especially one like Hebrew that is so different from English. While it’s true that most people in the western world don’t speak Hebrew, they can still pronounce names like “Benjamin Netanyahu”, “Ariel Sharon”, and even the Aramaic tongue-twister “Nebuchadnezzar.” Similarly, most don’t speak Hindi but can pronounce the name

“Mahatma Gandhi” with relative ease. And although few speak Arabic, they have absolutely no trouble pronouncing the names “Osama bin Laden” and “Saddam Hussein”. If we honor mere men – even some very despicable men – by using their proper names, should we show any less honor to the Creator of the heavens and the earth?

More and more people are recognizing and embracing the importance of the Names now than in previous centuries. Why? Perhaps because we ARE living in the last days. The renewed revelation of the Names is prophesied: “For then will I change (restore) to the peoples a pure language, that they may **call upon the Name of Yahweh**, to serve Him with one consent.” (Zeph. 3:9)

This prophesied restoration is for one purpose – so that people “may call upon the Name of Yahweh, to serve Him with one consent.” This isn’t the only place in Scripture that talks about this. In the book of Isaiah we’re told that Yahweh’s people will know His Name (Isa. 52:6).

Furthermore, our heavenly Father promises that His Name will be great, even among the nations of the world – “For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same My Name shall be great among the Gentiles (nations)...” (Mal. 1:11).

“The Names weren’t discussed at the Jerusalem Council, so they must not be that important.”

Many things were not discussed at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15), which occurred around 51 CE. In fact, the focus of the Council was on whether or not Gentile converts were required to be circumcised in order to be saved. In addressing this question, however, the apostle James made an interesting reference. The King James Version of the Bible records the account this way:

“And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon

whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.” (Acts 15:13-17, KJV)

James said that the Creator purposed to take out of the Gentiles a people for His Name, and that He would rebuild the tabernacle of David so that the residue of men and all Gentiles – upon whom His Name is called – might seek Him. A better rendering of these last 2 verses is: “After these things I will return, and I will build again the tabernacle of David, which has fallen; And I will build again the ruins of it, and I will set it up: That the residue of men may seek after Yahweh, And all the Gentiles, upon whom My Name is called, says Yahweh, Who makes these things known from old.” (Acts 15:17-18).

James’ declaration about rebuilding the tabernacle of David was a direct quote from Amos 9:11-12, which DOES contain the Father’s Name – the Tetragrammaton – in the original manuscripts. This prophecy states that Yahweh’s Name (not His title) will be called upon the Gentiles. James said that this prophecy was being fulfilled even in their day. This goes perfectly in line with Rom. 10:13 – “whoever shall call on the Name of Yahweh shall be saved” – which was a direct quote of Joel 2:32. Acts 4:12 refers to the only Name whereby we must be saved. As we have seen, the Name “Yahshua” contains the Father’s Name! When we call on Yahshua, we are calling upon the Name of Yahweh, and His Name is thereby being called upon us.

Additional Importance of the Names

Our heavenly Father has such regard for His Name that He threatens His wrath upon those who don’t call on His Name (Jer. 10:25). Refusing to give glory to His Name actually results in a curse: “If you will not hear, and if you will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto My Name, says Yahweh of hosts, then will I send the curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yes, I have cursed them already, because you do not lay it to heart.” (Mal. 2:1)

The following verses also demonstrate the importance of the Names:

Psa. 44:20 “If we have forgotten the Name of our Elohim, or spread forth our hands to a strange el (“god”); will not Elohim search this out?”

- Jer. 23:26-27** “How long shall this be in the hearts of the prophets that prophesy lies, even the prophets of the deceit of their own heart? That think to cause My people to forget My Name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbor, as their fathers forgot My Name for Ba'al.”
- Mal. 3:16** “Then they that feared Yahweh spoke one with another; and Yahweh listened, and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him, for them that feared Yahweh, and that thought upon His Name.”
- Rev. 3:8** “I know your works (behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one can shut), that you have a little power, and kept My word, and didn't deny My Name.”
- Eze. 39:7** “My holy Name will I make known in the midst of my people Israel; neither will I allow My holy Name to be profaned any more: and the nations shall know that I am Yahweh, the Holy One in Israel.”
- Eze. 36:21-23** “I had regard for My holy Name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations, where they went. Therefore say to the house of Israel, In this manner says the Sovereign Yahweh: I do not this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy Name, which you have profaned among the nations, where you went. And I will sanctify My great Name ... and the nations shall know that I am Yahweh ...”
- Jer. 14:9** “Yet you, O Yahweh, are in the middle of us, and we are called by Your Name; leave us not.”
- Jer. 16:21** “Therefore, behold, I will cause them to know, this once will I cause them to know My hand and My might; and they shall know that My Name is Yahweh.”
- Rev. 14:1** The Names of the Father and the Lamb will be written upon the foreheads of the firstfruits (144,000)

- Jer. 20:9** “And if I say, I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His Name, then there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with forbearing, and I cannot contain.”
- Mal. 4:2** “But unto you that fear My Name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings; and you shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.”
- Acts 2:21** “And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the Name of Yahweh shall be saved.”
- 1 Kings 18:24** “And call you on the name of your Elohim (‘gods’, mighty ones), and I will call on the Name of Yahweh: and the Elohim that answers by fire, let Him be Elohim. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.”
- Joel 2:32** “And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the Name of Yahweh shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as Yahweh has said, and in the remnant whom Yahweh shall call.”

Conclusion

Clearly, according to Scripture the Names of Yahweh and Yahshua are important, and it’s more than just “knowing” them – it’s using them. We are instructed to fear Yahweh’s Name, reverence it, praise and glorify it, exalt it, proclaim it, call upon it, think upon it, and give thanks to it. Our salvation, our help, our safety is in it. We are to make His deeds known among the people (Psa. 105:1), and make mention that His Name is exalted (Isa. 12:4). And even foreigners who join themselves to Yahweh, keep His commandments, and love His Name will be brought to His holy mountain and will be accepted by Him (Isa. 56:6-7). So we must ask ourselves a simple question: why would anyone want to substitute impersonal names/titles for the Name of the one true Father in

heaven? Why would anyone insist on calling the Messiah, the One Who died so that we might have everlasting life, by a name that was never His?

Yahweh is indeed restoring to His people a pure language, that they may call upon His Name and serve Him with one consent (Zeph. 3:9). He is making known His Name among the Gentiles [nations] (Mal. 1:11).

Each of us is responsible for that Truth that we have. “He who is faithful over a little, to him will more be given.” We must call upon Yahweh in truth. “Yahweh is near to all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth” (Psa. 145:18). Let us take this awesome knowledge – the revealed Names of the Father and Son – and incorporate it into our worship, for Yahweh is seeking true worshippers who will worship Him in Spirit and in Truth (John 4:23-24). HalleluYAH!

Glossary of Terms

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| God | – a generic English word used to indicate any object of worship, but commonly used to refer to the Creator. |
| Elohim | – Eh-low-HEEM – Hebrew term meaning “Mighty One(s).” Usually rendered as “God” in English translations of the Scriptures. |
| LORD | – a common term for “master, ruler”. Used as a title which translators substituted for the Father’s true Name – Yahweh. |
| Yahweh | – transliteration of the 4-letter Name for our heavenly Father. It is pronounced “Yah-way”. |
| Yah | – shortened, poetic form of the Father’s Name. It can be seen in the names of many Old Testament prophets & kings, including IsaiYah, HezekiYah, ZechariYah, JeremiYah, and ObadiYah. |
| Yahshua | – transliteration of the Hebrew Messiah’s Name. It literally means “Yah is Salvation” or “Salvation of Yah.” |

End Notes

^a The Lachish letters are a series of letters written in Ancient Hebrew with carbon ink on clay fragments. Discovered in 1938, they date back to the 6th

century B.C. and are the oldest known Hebrew writing on record containing the sacred Name. Not only were they written in Ancient (Paleo) Hebrew, but they were also vowel-pointed, which is very rare for a document that ancient. The vowel-pointing clearly shows the pronunciation of YHWH as ‘Yahweh’.

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